

# **DUAL CAMPUS COLLEGE MODEL IN PALMERSTON**

## **FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS**

### **Why is the dual campus college model being implemented in Palmerston?**

In 2016, the Department of Education, with Rosebery Middle School and Palmerston Senior College started working towards forming a dual campus college to commence operation from Term 1, 2018.

The dual campus forms one college with one leadership team over two campuses. It retains the success of the middle school campus and senior school campus to create the secondary college of choice in Palmerston.

The primary objective of the dual campus college is to improve student outcomes and provide Palmerston families with a contemporary, competitive and high quality education service, including clear and continuous learning pathways and specialisation, consistently high expectations and experiences, and longer term relationships from Year 7 to Year 12.

The focus is on improving student engagement and outcomes through:

- an aligned school improvement plan and focus on sustained improvement in student outcomes across both campuses;
- a consistent and wider range of curricular and extracurricular programs across both campuses;
- strong transition partnerships with primary schools to develop positive relationships with students that will continue across both middle years and senior years campuses; and
- providing students, parents and the community with continuity of education from Year 7 to Year 12, through the development of a shared vision, mission, expectations and practices across both campuses.

The dual campus college will also provide teachers and support staff with greater opportunity for professional growth and shared networking across both campuses.

### **What is the background and context for the decision to create a dual campus college in Palmerston?**

NT-wide data indicates continuing attrition of Year 6 students from the government into the non-government school sector at Year 7. There is a risk of residualisation of government secondary education as parents with the means to do so enrol their children in non-government colleges.

A number of non-government schools have commenced operation in Palmerston in recent years offering wider education provider choices. Since 2012, enrolments at Rosebery Middle School and Palmerston Senior College decreased by 166 and 160 respectively. In 2016,

Mackillop Catholic College grew by over 100 enrolments (2015 Annual Report), yet Rosebery Middle School and Palmerston Senior College experienced only modest growth (50 and 25 respectively).

NAPLAN data for Rosebery Middle School indicates that student attainment is pooling at the lower end of the performance scale. Northern Territory Certificate of Education and Training (NTCET) results for Palmerston Senior College has seen limited representation in the Top 20.

School reviews conducted at both Rosebery Middle School and Palmerston Senior College have highlighted areas for improvement including school planning, consistent pedagogical frameworks, expanded subject offerings, consistent approach to classrooms management strategies, student to teacher ratios, embedding a sense of community, changing community perceptions.

The Northern Territory middle years schooling review conducted in 2014 identified opportunities to strengthen the quality, effectiveness and efficiency of middle year's education with outcomes sought to progress aspects of quality improvement between middle years and senior years stages of schooling as well as primary years.

### **Whose decision was it to introduce a dual campus model?**

The dual campus college model is a Department of Education initiative.

The primary objective is to improve student outcomes and provide students and their families in Palmerston with a clear, continuous learning pathway from Years 7 to 12.

### **What is the process to create a dual campus college?**

As per Section 96 of the *Education Act* (the Act), the Minister for Education may, on any terms and conditions that the Minister considers appropriate amalgamate two or more government schools.

If the Minister proposes to exercise the power under Section 96 (1). The Minister must consult on the project with:

- the principal and the staff of the school or schools affected by the project;
- the students enrolled in the school or schools affected by the project and their parents; and
- any bodies that the Minister considers to be representative of the principal, staff, students or parents and/or the community in which the school or schools affected by the project is located.

### **When will the consultation and engagement process commence?**

Consultation and engagement commenced in early 2016 with the establishment of a steering committee, meeting fortnightly. The steering committee composition includes internal stakeholders and both principals.

External stakeholders such as the Australian Education Union and Council of Government Schools Organisation were consulted through the department's monthly meetings held with the Chief Executive. These stakeholder groups continue to receive monthly project updates.

In Term 2, 2016, staff, students and councils were briefed on the project and invited to provide feedback through their principals. Staff were also provided with the option to nominate to participate in subcommittees.

Eight subcommittees were established in Term 2, 2016, co-chaired by the principals of Rosebery Middle School and Palmerston Senior College and department representatives, and includes staff representatives from both schools and department representatives. The subcommittees have met every two to four weeks since the beginning of Term 3, 2016.

Staff at both schools have been provided with regular briefs from their respective principals about the progress of the project and work undertaken by the steering committee, subcommittees and joint school executive team. In addition, monthly internal updates commenced circulation to staff at both campuses to share the work of the subcommittees and profile subcommittee members to enable staff representatives to further explore topics of interest.

Palmerston city primary school principals receive regular briefs through principals' meetings and continue to engage and contribute to the development of project. Community engagement through primary schools has included cobranded and signed letters from primary, middle and senior college principals. The letters were sent to all Year 6 parents inviting them to discuss options for Year 7. Additional questions were also asked in the 2016 parent and student surveys.

In line with government election caretaker guidelines external consultation was put on hold in August 2016.

Community engagement is now into the next phase and is expanding to a wider group of external stakeholders. This includes public information sessions available for all interested parties to attend. In addition, focus groups will take place with teachers, staff, families and students of the relevant schools. All interested parties will be able to provide feedback.

Feedback from the information sessions, focus groups and online will be collated to inform the operational planning for the commencement of dual campus college from Term 1, 2018.

Further opportunities for engagement will continue throughout 2017 on various operational elements of the dual campus college.

### **How can I become involved in the planning process?**

Community engagement will be conducted with school staff, school council, parents, students and the broader Palmerston community to contribute to certain elements of dual campus college operation.

The purpose of community engagement is to present options in relation to the enrolment process, subject offerings, leadership and organisational structures, school improvement plans and human, physical and financial resources for the dual campus college model. Participants will have the opportunity to provide feedback and ask questions.

Register to attend a focus group or public information session available on 23 or 24 November 2016 for Rosebery Middle School and Palmerston Senior College community and the broader Palmerston community session are available on 30 November, 1 December and 2 December

2016. Sessions are available during the day and after hours. All sessions will be facilitated by an external provider. Session times are available at [www.education.nt.gov.au](http://www.education.nt.gov.au) or email [Sarah.bartlett@ntschoools.net](mailto:Sarah.bartlett@ntschoools.net)

Public notices were issued in the NT News and Palmerston Sun, letters sent to parents and caregivers and other stakeholders, and students and staff through meetings and assemblies inviting all interested parties to register their interest to partake in information sessions or focus groups.

The information and focus group sessions will provide feedback on the operational elements of the dual campus college model.

Further opportunities for engagement will continue throughout 2017 on various operational elements of the dual campus college.

### **Will the dual campus college model be implemented across the Northern Territory?**

Not at this stage.

### **Does the project to create a dual campus college model support the middle year's objectives?**

Yes. The dual campus college model complements key actions of the [Work Like The Best - Teaching and Learning Strategy 2016-2018](#).

### **How will this impact on programs?**

The creation of the dual campus college will provide students with access to a wider range of curricular and extra-curricular programs that a larger college can offer. This includes more subject choices, programs, resources and increased access to specialist teachers.

Programs currently running will continue to be maintained at both campuses in the initial stages of the establishment of the dual campus college. The community engagement process will provide the opportunity to discuss program and pathway alignment between both campuses with the focus being on creating a seamless pathway for students from Year 7 to Year 12.

### **Is this a cost saving measure?**

No. The primary objective is to improve student outcomes and provide students and their families in Palmerston with a clear, continuous learning pathway from Years 7 to 12.

A dual campus college in Palmerston will create a school of 1100 students which has the potential to create additional flexibility in the school's budget.

A larger student population can create some economies of scale and opportunity for a wider range of curricular and extracurricular programs for students including increased

subject choices, programs, pathways, resources, facilities and teaching and learning specialities.

A larger campus college has the potential to provide additional flexibility for the principal relating to staffing, budget management and increased buying power and bulk ordering through a single global school budget.

**Will the dual campus college model result in an increase or a decrease to the overall budget for the schools?**

No. The global school budget model is based on student numbers, and budget increases or decreases are dependent on the total number of students attending the dual campus college and their particular needs.

**Is this a rebranding exercise?**

No. The primary objective is to improve student outcomes and provide students and their families in Palmerston with a clear, continuous high quality learning pathway from Years 7 to 12.

**What difference does a change in name make?**

The focus is not on the name change. It is on improving student outcomes and establishing a dual campus college that provides continuity and high standards in the teaching and learning programs from Year 7 through to Year 12.

**Will staff lose their jobs?**

No staff will lose their jobs; this is not a cost saving measure.

**Who will be the principal of the dual campus college?**

Initially, the current principal of Palmerston Senior College has been appointed as the dual campus college principal. Sue Healy has assumed this role since June 2016 to ensure that a dedicated and strong principal is leading the development and transition to the dual campus college.

To ensure minimal disruption to Palmerston Senior College's current operations, an additional Assistant Principal has been appointed and will continue throughout 2017.

The acting principal of Rosebery Middle School will continue in this role until the end of 2017 and support the transition to a dual campus college.

**Where do I find further information and how do I provide further feedback?**

For more information, including an online survey, visit [www.education.nt.gov.au](http://www.education.nt.gov.au)