

POLICY

BACK TO SCHOOL PAYMENT SCHEME

Responsibility of: School Support Services
Effective Date: September 2017
Next Review Date: September 2020
Target Audience: Corporate and School Staff/Parents

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This document should be read in conjunction with the **Back to School Payment Scheme guidelines**.

1. POLICY

The Back to School Payment Scheme (the scheme) is a Northern Territory Government initiative to assist families with certain school related costs at the beginning of the school year.

The scheme provides eligible students with an entitlement to receive educational items in each school year. Educational items can only be purchased from the eligible student's school. Schools are required to acquit the scheme on an annual basis, with the principal and school representative body confirming their compliance with the scheme's policy and guidelines.

At the commencement of each school year, schools will be funded for the scheme based on actual enrolment numbers taken from the August age/grade census data collection from the previous year.

Schools will be provided with additional scheme funding if more enrolments than predicted has resulted in the school providing the scheme entitlement to more parents/students than initially funded. Unused scheme funding must be returned to the department.

The scheme entitlement is to the value of \$150 of eligible goods and services per enrolled student and is redeemable from the school at which the student first attends in the year. Goods and services must assist with educational outcomes.

The *Education Act* (the Act) states that the standard curriculum program of government school education is to be free. The scheme entitlement is not intended to support the provision of standard curriculum or to redeem parent voluntary contributions.

2. BUSINESS NEED

This policy and its associated guidelines are needed to provide clarity for schools and parents about the obligations and expectations associated with the government's scheme.

3. SCOPE

All students attending Northern Territory Government schools, non-government schools and home educated students from preschool to Year 12 are entitled to the scheme.

The scheme must be used within the following timeframes:

Student	Payment Scheme must be used by:
Preschool students	Enrolment in any Term within 10 school weeks from commencement date for Term Two and Three and within six weeks for Term Four.
Transition to Year 12 students	End of Term One

4. DEFINITIONS

Eligible school means a Northern Territory Government school or non-government school established under the Act.

Eligible student means a student enrolled in an **eligible school**.

Preschool means quality early childhood education delivered for 15 hours per week (600 hours per year) as part of a school.

School representative body is an incorporated body under the Act and, therefore, is its own legal entity. This means its functions, responsibilities and obligations are governed by the Act and Regulations.

Parent signifies a child's father, mother or any other person who has parental responsibility for the child, including a person who is regarded as a parent of the child under Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander customary law or tradition.

Parental responsibility (in regards to the definition of parent) refers to a person who has:

- a) daily care and control of the child, or
 - b) is entitled to exercise all the powers and rights, and has all the responsibilities, in relation to the long-term care and development of the child, or
 - c) has daily care and control of the child and the entitlement and responsibilities at (b)
- and includes a person who has been given the above responsibilities under another state or territory law.

School community means the teaching staff, parents, students and other persons who have a direct involvement or interest in the school.

School record of payment form is used to keep a record of how much of the \$150 scheme entitlement has been redeemed by the parent/student.

Standard curriculum program is the provision of teaching and learning activities, instructional support and instructional materials for delivery of the following:

- (a) the Early Years Learning Framework
- (b) the Australian Curriculum
- (c) the senior secondary Northern Territory Certificate of Education and Training
- (d) Vocational Education and Training.

5. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Please refer to the Back to School Payment Scheme guidelines for roles and responsibilities.

6. RELATED POLICY, LEGISLATION AND DOCUMENTS

Department of Education	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Back to School Payment Scheme Guidelines• Back to School Payment Scheme Acquittal and Compliance template• Back to School Payment Scheme Record of Payment• Back to School Payment Scheme Frequently Asked Questions
Northern Territory	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• <u>Education Act</u>• <u>Education Regulations</u>