

Back to school payment scheme - policy

Read this document with the Back to school payment scheme procedures.

Policy

The Back to school payment scheme (the scheme) is a Northern Territory (NT) 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 procedures.

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 and students than initially funded. Unused scheme funding must be returned to the department.

The scheme entitlement is to the value of \$200 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 2015* 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.

Business need

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

Scope

All students attending NT 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 2 and 3 and within 6 weeks for Term 4
Transition to Year 12 students	End of Term 1

Definitions

Term	Definition
Eligible School	NT Government school or non-government school established under the <i>Education Act 2015</i> .
Eligible student	A student enrolled in an eligible school.
Parent	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 Island customary law or tradition.
Parental responsibility	A person who has: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> daily care and control of the child, or 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 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.
Preschool	Quality early childhood education delivered for 15 hours per week – 600 hours per year – as part of a school.
School community	The teaching staff, parents, students and other persons who have a direct involvement or interest in the school.
School record of payment form	Document to keep a record of how much of the \$200 scheme entitlement has been redeemed by the parent or student.
School representative body	An incorporated body under the Act and, therefore, is its own legal entity. This means its functions, responsibilities and obligations are governed by the <i>Education Act 2015</i> and <i>Education Regulations 2015</i> .
Standard curriculum program	The provision of teaching and learning activities, instructional support and instructional materials for delivery of the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> the Early Years Learning Framework the Australian Curriculum the senior secondary Northern Territory Certificate of Education and Training Vocational Education and Training.

Roles and responsibilities

Refer to the Back to school payment scheme procedures for roles and responsibilities.

Related legislation

Legislation

- *Education Act 2015* – <https://legislation.nt.gov.au/en/Legislation/EDUCATION-ACT-2015>
- *Education Regulations 2015* – <https://legislation.nt.gov.au/Legislation/EDUCATION-REGULATIONS-2015>

Acronyms	Full form
NT	Northern Territory

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Version	Date	Author	Changes made
1	2017	School Support Services	First version
2	2022	Corporate Support	Minor changes
3	October 2023	Financial Services	50:D22:101473 Administrative amendments made to align roles and responsibilities to the structural alignment in effect from 1 July 2022 including NTG template and minor formatting.
4	January 2024	Financial Services	Update voucher amount.