

The Professional Teachers Association of the Northern Territory (PTANT) appreciates the opportunity to provide feedback on the review of the Education Act.

PTANT is the peak body for professional teaching associations operating in the Northern Territory. Members of associations include government and non-government teachers, and the professional learning opportunities provide opportunities for cross-sector engagement of teachers and school leaders.

We note that many of the questions in the review relate to issues that don't relate to the work of professional teaching associations. Our emphasis is on teacher professional development and we are not well placed to provide an authoritative opinion regarding matters of non-government school registration, finance and similar. Therefore, our submission to the review is limited.

Response to Section A – Child safety, wellbeing and behaviour management Question 1

Some professional teaching associations operating in the Northern Territory provide support to teachers regarding safety, wellbeing and behaviour management. This support is often in the form of professional learning opportunities on topics including trauma informed practice, classroom management or support for students with additional needs.

Some of the Child Safe Standards such as Standards 5 and 7, as well as National Principles for Child Safe Organisations 5 and 7, require support for teachers and educators including professional development, and PTANT member associations will play a role in providing this. Therefore, we believe that consistency between government and non-government schools is important to ensure that professional learning opportunities meet the needs of all teachers. As a smaller jurisdiction, it is frequently necessary for professional learning events to target both government and non-government teachers to obtain sufficient numbers, so consistency of content and message will be of value to our members.

All teachers appreciate the need for students to be safe, that their wellbeing is prioritised and that appropriate support and guidance is available for managing student behaviour. PTANT would support the Child Safe standards being applied to all schools.

Response to the remaining questions

While some individual teachers and school leaders who are members of teaching associations may have opinions regarding other sections of the review, PTANT believes that these are outside the scope of our work and offers no opinion on these questions.

Supporting the implementation of any changes

PTANT notes elements of the review that would benefit from teachers and school leaders engaging in ongoing professional learning. As mentioned, this is directly relevant to issues of child safety, wellbeing and behaviour management; however, professional teaching associations provide professional development opportunities on curriculum implementation, teaching, learning and student assessment.

Newly registered schools could benefit from close engagement with professional teaching associations to assist them in meeting their requirements of registration as well as ensuring ongoing success in meeting the needs of students. We recommend that if changes are made that attention is given to the role that professional teaching associations can play in achieving some of the aims of the review.