

# POLICY

## LITERACY AND NUMERACY IMPROVEMENT

**Responsibility of:** School Support Services  
**Effective date:** 30 August 2011  
**Next review date:** 30 August 2013  
**Target audience:** Schools/Regions

**DoE File:** FILE2015/276  
**DoE Doc:** EDOC2015/13326  
**VERSION NUMBER:** 1.0

### 1. POLICY

Literacy and numeracy are the foundations upon which learning is built. Being literate and numerate provides young people with access to learning, community participation and work. It is essential that students in government schools are provided with a program that maximizes their access to literacy and numeracy learning so that they gain the skills they need to be literate and numerate as early as possible in their time at school.

It is essential that students who are not able to demonstrate the literacy and numeracy skills deemed critical by the end of each year of school from Transition to Year 9, are provided with targeted teaching to assist them to catch up and keep up.

Five priority areas form the core of the policy.

#### **PRIORITY AREA 1 – School Literacy and Numeracy Plans**

- annual plans that set out expectations for whole-of-school literacy and numeracy improvement practice;
- the plans identify data-informed targets for literacy and numeracy improvement, including actions to achieve these targets.

#### **PRIORITY AREA 2 – Student Monitoring and Assessment**

- Standard Australian English (SAE) literacy and numeracy achievement of individual students is regularly monitored against the expectations of the T-9 Net and NAPLAN data;
- the monitoring and assessment of English as an additional language (EAL) learners' literacy and numeracy achievement takes into account their linguistic and cultural backgrounds.

#### **PRIORITY AREA 3 – The Early Years**

- schools obtain early assessment data and implement targeted evidence-based teaching programs and strategies;
- community early years planning is a feature of Strong Start Bright Futures colleges.

#### **PRIORITY AREA 4 – Quality Teaching**

- teachers know what literacy and numeracy skills students need to learn, and how to teach these skills;

- teachers deliver learning programs that maximize the opportunity for all students to develop SAE literacy - reading, writing, listening and speaking [oracy], and numeracy, and to meet Northern Territory and national age-cohort expectations as described in the T-9 Net;
- targeted teaching is delivered for individuals and groups of students not meeting literacy and numeracy expectations.

### **PRIORITY AREA 5 – School Leadership and Improvement**

- principals are instructional leaders of whole-of-school literacy and numeracy improvement practice;
- parents and the community are active participants in literacy and numeracy teaching and learning;
- professional learning is available for teachers and leaders focused on student demographic and achievement data.

## **2. BUSINESS NEED**

Updated policy is required to ensure all schools take action in response to the Department of Education and Training (DET)'s *Prioritising Literacy and Numeracy* strategy, and the recommendations of the 2011 Masters' Report *Improving Educational Outcomes in the Northern Territory*. Both documents identify the need to prioritize literacy and numeracy improvement as core business, use data as the basis for literacy and numeracy improvement practices, and implement strategies aimed at continuous improvement.

## **3. SCOPE**

The policy applies to the teaching and learning of literacy and numeracy for students in government schools in the T-9 years.

## **4. DEFINITIONS**

### **English as an additional language (EAL)**

Refers to the teaching and learning of English for students whose first or main language is not standard Australian English.

### **Literacy**

Conventionally referred to reading, writing, speaking, viewing and listening effectively in a range of contexts. In the 21<sup>st</sup> century, the definition of literacy has expanded to refer to a flexible, sustainable mastery of a set of capabilities in the use and production of traditional texts and new communication technologies using spoken language, print and multimedia. Students need to be able to adjust and modify their own language use to better meet contextual demands in varying situations (ACARA 2009).

### **Numeracy**

The capacity, confidence and disposition to use mathematics to meet the demands of learning, school, home, work, community and civic life. This perspective on numeracy emphasizes the key role of applications and utility in learning the discipline of mathematics,

and illustrates the way that mathematics contributes to the study of other disciplines (ACARA 2009).

### **School Literacy and Numeracy Plan**

Developed by each school as part of its Annual Operational Plan, it confirms system expectations and sets explicit, data-informed targets for literacy and numeracy improvement, including actions to achieve these targets. The plan is developed in consultation with, and endorsed by, the Regional Director.

### **Standard Australian English (SAE)**

Standard Australian English (SAE) is the form of written and spoken English characterised by spelling, syntax and morphology common to all English dialects, with some minor variations relative to the Australian context. SAE is the national language of Australia and the medium of instruction in Australian schools. All students have the right to be taught to communicate effectively in SAE, to understand how the English language works, to think in and learn through English and to be given access to the cultural understandings that it carries.

### **Targeted teaching**

Programs, pedagogies and strategies implemented to meet an identified learning need. Targeted teaching consist of two parts: the *diagnostic phase* where children are identified as being significantly above or below year-level expectation and a *teaching phase* where appropriate action is taken at an individual or group level. Targeted teaching usually involves changes to teacher practice.

## **5. RELATED POLICY, LEGISLATION AND DOCUMENTS**

Australian Curriculum

Accountability and Performance Improvement Framework

Assessment of Student Competencies

Department of Education and Training (DET) Strategic Plan 2011-2014

DET Literacy and Numeracy Strategy

T-9 Net

Evidence Based Practices Framework

National Assessment Program Literacy And Numeracy

Northern Territory Education Act

#### Northern Territory Curriculum Framework

- Assessment policy statement NTCF Overview
- Curriculum policy statement NTCF Overview
- Pedagogy policy statement NTCF Overview

Strong Start Bright Futures

## **6. EVALUATION**

School support Services and Regional Directors will monitor the ongoing implementation of the policy, including a two-yearly policy review.