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Education Directorate

To: Minister for Early Childhood Development
Minister for Education and Youth Affairs

Tracking No.: **FILE2022/16**

Date: 13 April 2022

From: Director-General

Subject: Minister's Weekly Brief – Week ending 15 April 2022

Recommendation

That you note the information in this brief and attachments

Noted / Please Discuss

Yvette Berry MLA/...../.....

Minister's Office Feedback

Key Topics/Emerging Issues

1. Department of Education, Skills and Employment (DESE) Survey on the Impact of COVID-19 on Parents and Child Care Subsidy (CCS) Users

On 6 April 2022, DESE provided CECA with an in-confidence summary of the 2022 ECEC Parent Survey on COVID Impacts. The survey period was from 23 February to 8 March 2022 and closed with a final response rate of 43 per cent (or 6,432 responses) nationally. The results of the survey are for internal use only.

CECA has identified similar trends to the CECA Financial and Operational Viability Survey conducted with the ACT education and care sector from 28 February to 15 March 2022 (FILE2022/3151).





2. Development Application for Amendment to proposed Mitchell ECEC

On 6 April 2022, CECA received an application for amendment to the Development Application for a three storey ECEC service at Mitchell. The original Development Application from Konstantinou Developments was granted conditional approval in May 2018, due to concerns from Environment Protection Authority (EPA) and the Health Protection Service (HPS). The concerns related to soil and air contamination, associated with surrounding industrial activities.

The proposed site is opposite a gardening wholesale business that has a large open compost mound. The conditions on the Development Approval, which required testing and monitoring of air and soil samples during construction, were subsequently appealed and overturned at ACAT on 15 April 2019.

The application for amendment seeks to decrease the service to two storeys and reduce the number of approved places for children. Although the conditions have been removed, CECA has maintained the position that an industrial zone is not a safe or appropriate site for an education and care service. Advice will be sought from the EPA and HPS on receipt of any application for approval of an education and care service on this site.

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If the Environment and Sustainable Planning and Development Directorate (EPSDD) impose further conditions on the Development Approval, or an application for an education and care service approval is subsequently refused, it is highly likely that this matter will be subject to further litigation.

3. Village for Every Child

The Village for Every Child Initiative is expanding its membership and influence across government and the community sector. The Village March Newsletter ([Attachment E](#)) highlights the supporting role the Village is playing in key government initiatives, including *Set up for Success* and the *First 1000 Days Strategy*. The Leadership Group has expanded to include senior executives from ACT Health, and more recently has welcomed Aunty Victoria (Vicky) Bradley from Yerrabi Yurwang Child and Family Aboriginal Corporation.

The Improved Transitions to School Working Group and the Improved Service and School Connections with Families Working Group are working locally with early adopter ECECs and schools to build communities of practice and better understand the experiences of children and families in the Belconnen community.

The Better Data Working Group is preparing to deliver a data workshop series to develop a Belconnen Child and Family Community Profile to inform areas of focus for the Village. The Education Directorate is represented on the Leadership Group and all three working groups, and the Village is progressing with a clear understanding of the workforce pressures on both ECECs and schools at this time.

Infrastructure and Capital Works Projects

4. Capital Upgrades

Duffy Primary School

A new fully accessible bathroom for the increasing number of students in the small group program was handed over to the school and fully operational on 7 April 2022. The project included civil works to locate and connect to an existing sewer. The bathroom includes a toilet, shower and basin and roof rainwater discharges into a water tank, providing irrigation for the students' gardens.

5. Major Projects

COVID impacts on all projects

All current projects have had impacts on their programs due to the construction lockdown period in 2021, material supply shortages and/or labour availability associated with COVID-19. All projects are now continuing construction activities and complying with COVID-19 safety plans and current health directives. Head Contractors are working with project teams to ensure that critical dates are still met, with the option to stage handovers and prioritise 'essential' areas.

Campbell Primary School Modernisation

All new Learning Community buildings are completed with detail cleaning and final defects being closed out. School relocation is programmed during school holidays and managed by a relocation specialist supplied by the project team. Construction fences and contractor's site offices will be offsite by 18 April 2022. The new learning communities and landscapes will be handed over to the school ready for Term 2 commencement.

Transportables 2022 Program

All sites are established, and civil works are progressing well. Due to COVID-19 and material shortages there are significant delays in the manufacturing of the units by the suppliers.

As per current program, target completion dates are as follows:

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- Fraser Primary School – toilet block – late May 2022
- Arawang, Telopea, Weetangera and Mawson schools – transportable buildings – late May 2022
- Ngunnawal Primary School – transportable buildings – mid-June 2022, and
- Cranleigh and Palmerston Schools – transportable buildings – end of July 2022.

Amaroo School Expansion

Certificate of Occupancy was received for the Technology, Arts and Science building, rooms 12 and 16 and the Onyx theatre on 4 April 2022. These refurbished spaces were handed over to the school on 11 April 2022.

East Gungahlin High School

Site works are ongoing with civil creating building pads, installing stormwater box culverts and inground services, as well as installing an all-access weather road. Icon SI is continuing to procure long lead time items to maintain the construction program but there is still pressure on supply chains who have advised of significant delays in production and delivery.

Icon SI and their subconsultants are progressing their design options for the swale and batter in the nature reserve as well as a redesign of the school’s entry road – design option studies were completed on 14 April 2022. The design options for the swale and batter will help address the additional information requested by the Conservator’s Office and ACT Parks and Conservation Services. Redesign works are ongoing to maintain the current program, however there is the risk for program impacts if the Conservator’s Office and ACT Parks and Conservation Services do not approve the redesign or if the entry road works impact the construction works critical path. A design review meeting with all parties has been scheduled for 27 April 2022.

TCCS and their civil contractor have commenced road works on the Albatross Crescent intersection and Well Station Drive. Ongoing works on these roads will result in changed traffic conditions as staged works progress.

Margaret Hendry School Expansion and North Gungahlin High School

A presentation was made to Margaret Hendry School staff on 6 April 2022. It provided an overview of the Margaret Hendry School Expansion and the North Gungahlin High School projects. The Margaret Hendry School website has also been updated with information on the projects which is relevant to families and the wider community. Erection of site fencing began on 11 April 2022 to provide secure separation between the school and the building site.

The North Gungahlin High School site establishment has also begun to enable the works at Margaret Hendry School. Erection of site fencing began on 6 April 2022.

[Redacted text block]

[Redacted text block]

Throsby School

Remaining landscaping works are being handed over progressively to allow staff and students to use these areas during class and break times. Construction defects will be undertaken during the Term 1 school holidays, with remaining works programmed for handover at the start of Term 2, 2022.

Garran Primary School modernisation

Purdon Planning (town planner) has commenced their community engagement process for the partial Territory Plan Variation due to the required rezoning of a portion of land adjoining the current school site. The consultation information went live on the Purdon Planning website on 11 April 2022, with flyers also being delivered to the community during the week of 11 April 2022. Purdon Planning has contacted relevant community organisations within the Garran and wider Woden areas. A community drop-in session will take place on 28 April 2022 from 5:30-7:30pm in the school library.

Key Meetings and Engagement Activities

6. Inclusion Education Update – A Community Conversation

The Community Conversation consultation and survey, facilitated by Strategic Development Group for the Directorate, has now concluded. Phase Two of the survey closed on 31 March 2022 and 100 new submissions were received, with 94 adults and six children submitting responses to the survey during term 1 2022. A total of 522 adults and 47 young people participated in the survey in Phases One and Two.

The consultation was promoted to schools and external stakeholders including the Disability Education Reference Group. The conversation also involved discussion sessions that were run throughout March; for parents, community, students and recent graduates to join and have their say, either in an individual or small group format. An optional postcard activity for children to draw a school that is 'best for everyone' has been completed by some students in ACT public schools. Students were invited to participate through methods such as drawing, writing a story or poem, or an audio recording.

Strategic Development and Contentgroup are now collating and analysing the information received through the various mediums and are considering options for how to present the information. While it is early in this process, they have feedback that the discussion groups provided rich information articulated through stories and experiences that was overwhelmingly constructive, demonstrating the participants' intent to contribute to strengthening the system for students with disability.

To support accessibility, it is anticipated the information will most likely be presented via a webpage that connects to the EDU website, including a short animation to describe the consultation and conversation excerpts. There will also be a more formal report available. A draft plan of the webpage set-out will be shared with your office for consideration and input. The consultation findings will help to inform the Directorate's *Inclusive Education Strategy*.

Reports

7. Release of the National Report on Schooling in Australia 2020 and refresh of the ANR Data Portal for 2021

ACARA released the National Report on Schooling in Australia 2020 (ANR) on 13 April 2022. ANR 2020 is the first edition following the signing of the Alice Springs (Mparntwe) Education Declaration.

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The ANR reports on progress against the key performance measures in the Measurement Framework for Schooling in Australia and consistent with previous years, the information included is already in the public domain due to the lag before the ANR release. The release of the ANR 2020 coincides with the April refresh of the ANR data portal with the most recent data available.

Due to the impact of COVID 19, no 2020 NAPLAN or attendance data is included in ANR 2020. The limited number of KPMs available for 2020 do show dips in the participation of young people in education and training. The more recent data included in the ANR Data portal from 2021 shows that the school education sector responded well to the challenge of the COVID 19 pandemic with minimal impact to the measures.

FOR NOTING

8. Fraser Primary School Boundary Expansion – Board, P&C and Community consultation

The ACT Government has committed to investigate expansion of the Fraser Primary School site to increase available outdoor play space. The Directorate has been progressing site investigations and a Draft Variation to the Territory Plan for expanding the school's boundary.

You wrote to the President of the Fraser Primary School P&C recently to assure them that they will be regularly informed on progress by the Directorate (FILE2022/2279). Ongoing engagement with the school Executive will be supplemented by a presentation to the School Board on 24 May 2022 and subsequently to the P&C Committee.

A notice will be placed in the school newsletter regarding the planned boundary expansion, nearby residents will receive an information letter, and a community information session will be led by EDU during Term 2, 2022. The formal statutory public notification of a Draft Variation to the Territory Plan will occur later in 2022 by the Environment, Planning and Sustainable Development Directorate (ESPDD).

Signatory Name: Katy Haire

Action Officer: Caitlin McGarvey

Attachments

Attachment	Title
Attachment A	Freedom of Information requests
Attachment B	EDU Cabinet Forecast
Attachment C	EDU Legislative Assembly Forecast
Attachment D	COVID-19 Report
Attachment E	A village for every child – March newsletter

Choose a Directorate:

To:	Minister for Education and Youth Affairs	Tracking No.: FILE2022/3359
Date:	20/04/2022	
CC:	DDG, EGM School Improvement, EGM Business Services	
From:	Director-General	
Subject:	Census of ACT schools, February 2022	
Critical Date:	29/04/2022	
Critical Reason:	Release of census publication on the Directorate website following noting of the brief by the Minister.	

Recommendation

That you:

1. Note the information on the February 2022 Census contained in this brief.

Noted / Please Discuss

2. Note that the census publication will be published on the Directorate website following your consideration of this brief, including the publication at Attachment A.

Noted / Please Discuss

Yvette Berry MLA/...../.....

Minister's Office Feedback

Background

1. In February each year, the Education Directorate conducts a census of enrolments in ACT public and non-government schools. This year, the census was conducted on Friday 18 February 2022.
2. The census provides information about student enrolments and is used to guide the allocation of funding and resources to schools and to support planning and other functions by the Directorate and by other stakeholders.

Issues

3. The report on the Census of ACT schools, February 2022 is at [Attachment A](#). Please note, the publication has been restructured to improve readability. The new 'executive summary' includes a more extensive analysis of enrolment trends over time.

ACT school enrolments – all sectors

4. At February census 2022, there were 82,175 students enrolled in ACT public and non-government schools from preschool to year 12, representing an increase of only 301 students (0.4%) since February 2021.
5. Annual enrolment increases in ACT schools were consistently over two percent from 2016-2020, however growth has slowed, particularly in the last 12 months. This is partly explained by a change in the annual rate of growth in the estimated resident population (ERP) for school aged children, from around two percent in previous years to less than one percent between June 2020 and June 2021 (Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS), National, state and territory population).
6. The most noticeable change in enrolment growth is in preschool, where enrolments across the Territory fell by 490 students (-8.0%) overall. The decrease in the enrolment growth rate occurred across the public and independent sectors. In the Catholic sector preschool enrolments increased by 10 students (1.6%). Reduced preschool enrolments in 2022 follow two years of near zero growth in preschool enrolments across the ACT.
7. Preschool enrolment is not compulsory. The reduced enrolments in preschool were most likely due to a combination of the following factors:
 - A reduction in the ACT ERP for preschool aged children (ABS, National, state and territory population) due to falling birth rates in recent years. For example, the estimated number of 3-year-old children in the ACT in June 2021 was 300 less than the estimated number of 3-year-old children in June 2020.
 - Some parents choosing not to enrol their children in preschool in 2022, possibly because of fears related to the risk of contracting COVID-19, particularly given children under 5 years old were not yet eligible for a COVID-19 vaccination. In addition, some parents may have chosen to keep their preschool aged children at home while predominantly working from home. It will remain to be seen whether this continues over time and forms a trend.

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8. The *Preschool Education, Australia 2021* publication, released by the ABS in March 2022, reported that whilst enrolments in dedicated preschools in the ACT fell from 2020 to 2021, there was an increase in enrolments in centre-based-care. Changes in interstate enrolments in ACT schools and/or enrolment capacities were not significant contributors to the fall in preschool enrolments in 2022.

ACT public schools

9. There were 51,088 students enrolled in ACT public schools (P-12), representing a decrease of 65 students (-0.1%) since February 2021. However, this reduction was entirely due to the fall in overall preschool numbers described above. For students of compulsory school age (K-12), there were 46,863 students enrolled in ACT public schools an increase of 350 students, or 0.75%.
10. There were:
- 31,820 students enrolled in public primary schools (P-6). This represents a decrease of 394 enrolments (-1.2%) since February 2021.
 - preschool enrolments decreased by 415 students (-8.9%) since 2021, following a 1.8% increase from 2020 to 2021,
 - kindergarten to year 6 enrolments increased by 21 students (0.1%) since 2021, following a 1.3% increase from 2020 to 2021
 - 12,612 students enrolled in public high schools, an increase of 359 enrolments (2.9%) from February 2021 to February 2022.
 - 6,356 students enrolled in public colleges, a decrease of 30 enrolments (-0.4%) from February 2021 to February 2022.

Public school enrolment growth over time

11. In 2022, overall public school enrolments (P-12) decreased by 64 students (-0.1%). Growth remained strong for high schools, with an additional 359 students, or 2.9 percent (7-10), but fell in primary school, due to the fall in preschool enrolments, and very slightly (-30 students) at college levels.
12. The recently released ABS Schools publication indicated similar trends across Australia in 2021, with the public sector market share falling from 65.6 percent in 2020 to 65.1 percent in 2021. The ABS attributed the general decline in growth to a similar decline in ERP growth rates and changes in migration.
13. Enrolment growth for the public sector college level (year 11-12) was -0.4 percent compared to 3.9 percent in the non-government sector. This is a change from the usual pattern of a net increase from students transferring from the non-government sector to the public sector at college level.
14. The change in enrolment growth observed over the last two years is not significant enough to have a material impact on school enrolment planning. However, this is constantly monitored and included in forecasting methodology so that any more significant future enrolment growth changes will be reflected if necessary.

Non-government schools, February 2022

15. There were 31,087 students enrolled in ACT non-government schools, representing an increase of 366 students (1.2%) since February 2021.
16. This comprised:
- 15,446 enrolments in the Catholic sector, an increase of 115 students (0.8%) compared with 2021
 - 15,641 students enrolled in independent schools, an increase of 251 students (1.6%) compared with 2021.
17. The largest relative increases in non-government school enrolments between 2021 and 2022 occurred for college aged students, with an additional 151 enrolments (3.9%). Similar to the public sector, there was a 5.2 percent decrease in non-government preschool enrolments (75 students), with 85 fewer students enrolled in independent preschools and an increase of 10 students in Catholic systemic preschools.

Sector Affiliation Rates

18. The slight drop in overall public school enrolments means that the public school sector share of total enrolments has fallen to 62.2 percent, following the previous two years at 62.5 percent, indicating the slowing in the growth of enrolments has been very slightly proportionally more in the public school sector, particularly at the college level.

Table 1: Proportion of enrolments (P-12) in ACT public schools, 2017 to 2022 (%)

2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
61.7	62.2	62.4	62.5	62.5	62.2

Non-school education

19. Over the last two years there has been an increase of 91 students (28.3% increase) being home educated in the ACT, up from 322 in 2020 to 413 in 2022. This increase may reflect an increase in the number of parents and carers choosing to home educate their children during the COVID-19 epidemic.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students, February 2022

20. At the 2022 February school census there were:
- 2,800 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students enrolled in the ACT schools, an increase of 72 students (2.6%) compared with 2021
 - 2,156 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students were enrolled in ACT public schools, representing 77.0 percent of all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students in schools in the ACT.
 - 83 students enrolled in Koori preschool programs; with 45 children taking up the option to attend both Koori and universal preschool programs (22 children at the same school and 23 children at different schools).

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Public school capacities and student-teacher ratios

21. Current public school capacities are included in Annex 1 (page 20) of the report that will be made public. (Attachment A). These figures confirm that no public school is operating above its total available school capacity.
22. In addition, the public schools student to teacher ratios for each school are included in Table 8 (pages 17-19) of Attachment A. These figures are all well below the class size policy settings with Garran being the highest at 17.4. Per the class size policy, maximum class sizes range from 21 to 30 in primary schools and from 30 to 32 in high schools and 25 in colleges.

Financial Implications

23. Results from the school census are used to inform the allocation of funding and resources to schools.

ConsultationInternal

24. Business managers and principals in ACT public schools verified students enrolled.
25. The following areas within the Directorate; Disability Education, International Education Unit, Flexible Education, Non-Government Education, Universal School Support, Digital Strategy, Services and Transformation, People and Performance Infrastructure and Capital Works, Enrolments and Planning, and Media and Communications.

Cross Directorate

26. Shared Services ICT regarding Sentral data extracts.

External

27. Non-government schools and Catholic Education, Canberra and Goulburn verified students enrolled.
28. Canberra Institute of Technology for students enrolled in school equivalent courses.

Work Health and Safety

29. Nil response.

Benefits/Sensitivities

30. Nil response.

Communications, media and engagement implications

31. Following noting of this brief, the census publication (Attachment A) will be released through the Directorate website.
32. A media release is included at Attachment B for your consideration.

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Signatory Name: Katy Haire Phone: 6205 9158
Action Officer: Robert Gotts Phone: 6207 6197

Attachments

Attachment	Title
Attachment A	Census of ACT schools February 2022 publication
Attachment B	Media release Census of ACT schools February 2022

Education Directorate

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To:	Minister for Education and Early Childhood Development	Tracking No.: FILE2022/3419
Date:	20/04/2022	
CC:	Click here to enter text.	
From:	Director General	
Subject:	ACAT decision in <i>Wonderschool v the ACT Education Directorate</i> : legislative options to address the issues.	

Recommendations

That you:

1. NOTE the information contained in this brief including the three options for legislative reform in paragraph 15;

Noted / Please Discuss

2. [REDACTED]

Agreed / Not Agreed / Please Discuss

3. Authorise CECA to prepare standalone amendments for the ACT if [REDACTED] does not wish to advance a multi-jurisdictional approach.

Agreed / Not Agreed / Please Discuss

...../...../.....

Minister's Office Feedback

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Tracking No.: FILE2022/3419

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Background

1. On 21 December 2021 ACAT handed down their decision supporting Wonderschool (Dickson) Pty Ltd's application for 95 places within a multistorey building in Dickson. The Tribunal overturned CECA's decision to approve 72 places. CECA's decision was based on the nominated outdoor space not providing a natural environment, in accordance with the *Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010* (the *National Law*) and the ACT's Outdoor Guidelines. The area concerned was entirely overhung by the floor above and has little access to natural sunlight.
2. ACAT's decision is problematic for multiple reasons. In particular, the lack of reasoning and consideration of the intent of the National Quality Framework (NQF). The Tribunal's decision did not engage with the relevant statutory provisions when determining an education and care service approval application.
3. Specifically, the Tribunal's decision gave no guidance on how outdoor space and the natural environment may be applied in a multistorey setting. Consideration of Regulation 108, (the requirements for outdoor space) appears to be based on a mathematical calculation of placement numbers per floor area. No consideration was given to Regulation 113, which requires that the outdoor space provides children with the opportunity to explore and experience the natural environment. Dr Sue Elliott and Dr Sue Packer provided expert evidence on this issue to the Tribunal.
4. The Tribunal's decision does not assist the Regulator, ECEC providers or developers with certainty on how to address future decisions. The decision may encourage developers to repeat the same design elements in other multistorey settings. The uncertainty of the decision is likely to result in further matters appearing before ACAT. CECA is concerned that future matters will also be considered solely through a planning and development lens.
5. Transecting this issue is the standing of property developers determining the availability of land for ECEC services in the ACT. Sites are being selected by developers for offer to the ECEC sector, rather than ECEC providers selecting sites. As a result, site selection is dominated by financial considerations rather than best practice and the best interests of children. The inclusion of education and care services in multistorey buildings is a substantially cheaper option than a single storey or standalone development.
6. The growth in the number of developers seeking to place ECEC services above ground floor is a relatively new phenomenon. In the three years from 2013 to 2016 there were only three development applications for multistorey proposals assessed by CECA. In 2019, 16 development applications were assessed with 13 of those being situated in multistorey buildings. Since 2020 development applications have been significantly impacted by COVID-19.

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- 7. Sector growth is being driven by the property market rather than education and care providers responding to demand. Developers build the service then lease it to the highest bidder, often selling the building on, soon after completion, and tenanted at a return of over 5% of the value of the property.
- 8. The increase in property costs is one significant driving factor for cost of ECEC services in the ACT, and it is one that the sector has little control over. It is also pricing community-based providers out of the market. You were briefed on this issue on 17 September 2021 FILE21 4604.

Issues

- 9. [REDACTED] legislative change would be the most suitable resolution to address the complexity of these issues. For the NQF to have a continued and critical influence in the changing dynamic of service sites and location, clarity around the issues, as arose in the *Wonderschool* case, is needed.
- 10. Multistorey settings pose inherent risks to children’s safety and welfare in the event of an emergency evacuation and rarely offer a quality outdoor area with access to a natural environment. [REDACTED]
- 11. [REDACTED]
- 12. [REDACTED] Presently, there is no definition of outdoor space at regulation 108 of the *Education and Care Services National Regulations*. The lack of a definition in regulation 108 meant that CECA had to argue for the intent of the meaning of outdoor space at ACAT: a meaning that was easily contested by *Wonderschool*.
- 13. [REDACTED]
- 14. This brief seeks your endorsement on an approach to make a statutory definition address the uncertainty created by the *Wonderschool* case.

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- 15. [Redacted]

- 16. [Redacted]

- 17. [Redacted]

Design and Planning Guidelines

- 18. A brief is being prepared for your endorsement of an ECEC Design and Planning Guide that was settled with EPSDD prior to the impact of COVID-19.
- 19. The guide outlines the principles and requirements of the NQF in a non-legislative format. It is designed to be accessible and provide clear information about what the Law, Regulations and Standards require. The guide is a comprehensive document that encapsulates all things necessary for a developer to know when planning for an ECEC service in a range of settings, including multistorey settings.
- 20. Following your endorsement, the guide will be published for the use of architects, developers, builders and the broader ECEC sector.

Work Health and Safety

- 21. Nil.

Benefits/Sensitivities

- 22. As highlighted under 'issues', above, the ACAT's decision does not set out how to apply the NQF to outdoor spaces and natural environments, in multistorey settings. Consequently, CECA and other stakeholders still do not have practical or operational clarity on these matters.
- 23. Developers are likely to be encouraged by the decision to propose developments that maximise placement numbers over the best interests of children.

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Communications, media and engagement implications

24. CECA will prepare any necessary responses or talking points, should these issues be raised by the media.

Signatory Name: Katy Haire

Action Officer: Sean Moysey

Phone: 

Attachment	Title
Attachment A REC/37197	ACAT Decision <i>Wonderschool (Dickson) Pty Ltd v ACT Education Directorate</i>

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Education Directorate

To: Minister for Early Childhood Development
Minister for Education and Youth Affairs

Tracking No.: **FILE2022/16**

Date: 20 April 2022

From: Director-General

Subject: Minister's Weekly Brief – Week ending 22 April 2022

Recommendation

That you note the information in this brief and attachments

Noted / Please Discuss

Yvette Berry MLA/...../.....

Minister's Office Feedback

Key Topics/Emerging Issues

1. Chief Minister's Reading Challenge (CMRC)

A total of 27,260 students across 77 ACT schools have been registered in the 2022 Chief Minister's Reading Challenge. The Directorate has seen an increase in interest in the Challenge from senior secondary students.

This year's ambassadors are Jack Heath, Emma Grey, Tania McCartney, Harry Laing, Irma Gold, Emma Batchelor, Tracey Hawkins and Stephanie Owen Reeder. Approximately 12 schools will participate in virtual or pre-recorded Ambassador sessions hosted by the CMRC. In addition, all schools participating in the Challenge will have access to pre-recorded (non-hosted) presentations by Irma Gold, Tania McCartney and Stephanie Owen Reeder. Paperchain Bookstore Manuka continues to sponsor the CMRC.

2. Community Use of Facilities – Throsby School

In November 2021, the Directorate conducted a Request for Expression of Interest (REOI) for the use of school facilities at Throsby School.

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The REOI closed in January 2022 with five responses received. The Directorate assessed the responses and were able to accommodate four respondents (ACT Dragons Volleyball Club, Badminton ACT, Basketball ACT and Volleyball ACT). The fifth respondent – Canberra Youth Theatre – was not able to be accommodated at this time due to the requested space being used by out of hours school care during their preferred times.

Throsby School will reconsider this request in 2023 when all construction activities are completed, and school enrolments increase. The Directorate will make enquiries to see if another school might be suitable and is able to accommodate the request.

Infrastructure and Capital Works Projects

3. Capital Upgrades

Charnwood Dunlop Primary School

Playground accessibility improvements have been completed to provide easier access for students in wheelchairs. Two ramps were installed to provide access to the playground and the oval increasing wheelchair accessibility.

Evatt Primary School

Fence and access gates to the front of the school have been completed.

4. Repairs and Maintenance

Wanniassa School (senior campus) was subject to a break and enter on 12 April 2022. No damage was found, and two youths were detained by security. Police attended the site and transported the youths home. Submission of an incident report by the school is pending.

Namadgi School was subject to vandalism on 11 April 2022. The damage included a smashed window and stolen wheelie bin. The incident was reported to police and the school submitted an incident report on 12 April 2022.

Alfred Deakin High was subject to vandalism on 11 April 2022. Two windows were damaged, and police were notified. The school submitted an incident report on 12 April 2022.

Wanniassa Hills Primary School was subject to a break and enter on 9 April 2022. Leader Security responded to multiple alarm activations and detained three youths onsite. No damage was identified, and nothing appeared to have been stolen. The youths advised they had entered through [REDACTED]. Police attended and contacted the youths' parents who collected them from the school. The school was secured, and no further action was taken. Submission of an incident report by the school is pending.

5. Major Projects

East Gungahlin High School

Site works are ongoing with civil creating building pads, installing stormwater box culverts and inground services, as well as installing an all-access weather road. Icon SI is continuing to procure long lead time items to maintain the construction program but there is still pressure on supply chains who have advised of significant delays in production and delivery.

Design options for the swale and batter in the nature reserve, as well as a redesign of the school's entry road was completed on 14 April 2022. Design options will be reviewed and assessed by the project team prior to the Conservator's Office and ACT Parks and Conservation Services meeting on 27 April 2022. The design options for the swale and batter will help address the additional information requested by the Conservator's Office and ACT Parks and Conservation Services.

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Redesign works were completed within the current program, however there is the risk for program impacts if the Conservator's Office and ACT Parks and Conservation Services do not approve the redesign or if the entry road works impact the construction works critical path.

TCCS and their civil contractor are continuing with road works on the Albatross Crescent intersection and Well Station Drive. Ongoing works on these roads will result in changed traffic conditions as staged works progress.

Margaret Hendry School Expansion and North Gungahlin High School

The Margaret Hendry School website has been updated with information on the projects relevant to families and the wider community. Fencing of the site has now been completed.

The North Gungahlin High School site establishment commenced on 11 April 2022 with site fencing being installed and grading for the site compound to take place in the coming weeks ready for site sheds to be installed.

Throsby School

The Multiple Purpose Hall and associated landscaping works are currently programmed for handover in the week commencing 26 April 2022 pending Certificate of Occupancy and Use.

Garran Primary School modernisation

Purdon Planning (town planner) has commenced their community engagement process for the partial Territory Plan Variation of the currently zoned urban open space to the west of the school site. The rezoning of a portion of land is required to accommodate the expansion of Garran Primary School, as well as assisting in amalgamating the current primary school and preschool blocks.

FOR NOTING

6. Academy of Future Skills work with UC pre-service teachers

The Academy of Future Skills developed and delivered professional learning on 12 April and 13 April 2022 for 80 UC pre-service teachers on how to deliver quality teaching programs in STEM education.

The students were invited to the Mungga-iri Jingee STEM centre for a tour of the facilities, to see the resources available to public schools and to participate in the hands-on workshops.

7. Australian Curriculum Version 9.0 endorsed

On 1 April 2022 final revisions for the updated Version 9.0 of the Australian Curriculum (AC v9.0) were approved. The ACT has been involved throughout the Australian Curriculum review process since 2020, with Directorate representatives regularly participating in meetings with all jurisdictions and providing feedback about proposed changes.

While the AC v9.0 will be made available via an updated Australian Curriculum website in Term 2, 2022, an in-principle agreement was made between the Catholic Education Canberra and Goulburn (CEO), the ACT Association of Independent Schools (AIS) and the Education Directorate, that the AC v9.0 would be implemented in its entirety for Semester 1, 2023.

Content for the Service Portal that will provide awareness of the coming changes will be uploaded early term 2, 2022. The Directorate will provide support to schools including information and professional learning sessions. These will be advertised early Term 2, 2022.

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8. Affiliated Schools Program Master of Education Intensive Period

Each year, the Directorate offers scholarships for teachers and school leaders to undertake a Master of Education at the University of Canberra through the Capital Region Scholarships and the Affiliated Schools Program. The scholarship program is an element of the Affiliated Schools Program and applications are open to all eligible teachers and school leaders across the Directorate.

Between 9 April and 14 April 2022, 49 ACT teacher scholarship recipients in their first and second year of a Master of Education postgraduate degree undertook two, three-day sessions of intensive face-to-face study as they learnt together to build the capacity of the ACT Education system.

Signatory Name: Katy Haire

Action Officer: Caitlin McGarvey

Attachments

Attachment	Title
Attachment A	Freedom of Information requests
Attachment B	EDU Cabinet Forecast
Attachment C	EDU Legislative Assembly Forecast
Attachment D	COVID-19 Report

Education Directorate

To: Minister for Education and Youth Affairs Tracking No.: FILE2022/4396

Date: 20/04/2022

CC: Executive Group Manager, School Improvement
Acting Executive Group Manager, Business Services

From: Executive Group Manager, Service Design and Delivery

Subject: Calwell High School project plan

Critical Date: ASAP

Critical Reason: To update you on the actions being undertaken to support Calwell High School from 26 April 2022, for the beginning of Term 2

- DG .../.../...
- DDG .../.../...

Recommendations

That you:

1. Note the actions being undertaken to support Calwell High School to be implemented from the beginning of Term 2.

Noted / Please Discuss

Yvette Berry MLA/...../.....

Minister's Office Feedback

Background

1. The COVID-19 pandemic over the past two years has caused unprecedented challenges for workforces in all sectors.

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2. The Education Directorate has responded to the pandemic with clear health guidelines for schools, developed collaboratively with the ACT Chief Health Officer and key education stakeholders such as the ACT Council of Parents and Citizens Associations, the ACT Principals Association, the Australian Education Union, Catholic Education, and the Association of Independent Schools.
3. Public health orders such as isolation requirements have exacerbated the existing national teacher shortage, which has been impacting government and non-government schools in all jurisdictions.
4. The Education Directorate continues to respond to the national teacher shortage through the establishment of the Teacher Shortage Taskforce and ongoing recruitment campaigns.
5. Calwell High School has been receiving support to manage workforce pressures in recent months, including priority access to relief staff.
6. As previously briefed, a serious incident occurred at Calwell High School on 24 March 2022 resulting in injury to one student and three staff members. The incident was referred to police and a student was suspended for 15 days.
7. On 31 March 2022 WorkSafe ACT attended Calwell High School to undertake a workplace inspection in response to information received by WorkSafe regarding issues at the school relating to student incidents and staffing shortages. During this visit WorkSafe also identified concerns regarding access to fire suppression equipment.
8. On 31 March 2022 WorkSafe ACT issued the Directorate with a Prohibition Notice (N-0000003584) prohibiting Year 7 and Year 8 student cohorts from being on the school premises (excluding vulnerable children, children of emergency workers, and all children in the Learning Support Unit) until the school could
 - a. demonstrate, and provide evidence of, the ability to comply with the Directorate's Class Size Policy.
 - b. provide information as to why, noting class collapses and staff shortages, the Directorate did not move the school to level 4 of its COVID-19 Planning for staff shortages matrix.

Evidence to demonstrate the risk of occupational violence towards teachers and staff had been reviewed and mitigated as far as reasonably practicable.
9. On 31 March 2022 WorkSafe ACT issued the Directorate with an Improvement Notice (N-0000003585) giving directions regarding the fire suppression equipment at the school.
10. On 1 April 2022 WorkSafe ACT issued the Directorate with a section 155 notification (INV/E- INV/I-2022-4) requiring the directorate to give information and provide documents.

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11. On 5 April 2022 WorkSafe ACT subsequently issued the Directorate with an additional Improvement Notice (N-0000003618) in relation to the risk of occupational violence in the workplace, outlining the school must
 - a. Review and revise the application of the safe system of work that controls the risk of occupational violence in the workplace
 - b. Consult with workers on the proposed new safe system of work
 - c. Provide information, training and instruction to the school staff on the new safe system of work
12. On 5 April 2022 WorkSafe ACT subsequently issued the Directorate with another Improvement Notice (N-0000003620) in relation to class size arrangements due to teacher shortages, outlining the school must
 - a. Review and revise the application of the safe system of work that controls the risk of worker shortages in the workplace
 - b. Consult with workers on the proposed new safe system of work
 - c. Provide information, training and instruction to the school staff on the new safe system of work
13. The Directorate met the obligations of Improvement Notice (N-0000003585) giving directions regarding the fire suppression equipment at the school, and provided evidence that all safety issues had been addressed to WorkSafe ACT on 14 April 2022. WorkSafe ACT responded on 22 April 2022 confirming they that the improvement notice had been complied with and no further action required in relation to this notice.
14. The Directorate has committed to meeting its WorkSafe ACT obligations and transitioned Year 7 and 8 students to remote learning for the final week of Term 1, while also providing wellbeing supports to staff and students through onsite counselling and telehealth access to psychologists. This measure has been agreed to for the purpose of ensuring the safety and wellbeing of the staff and students at CHS.

Next Steps

15. A series of immediate actions to ensure the safety of staff and students have been identified for implementation in Term 2, which begins on 26 April 2022. These are set out in the project plan at [Attachment A](#).
16. At the Directorate level, related and consequential system actions will be undertaken, which you will be advised on separately.

Financial Implications

17. Any costs incurred for additional staffing and acquiring external expertise will be met internally by the Directorate. Calwell High School will not be required to provide funds for the additional resources/costs.

Consultation

Internal

18. Consultation has occurred with School Improvement, Business Services, Media and Communications, People and Performance, Student Engagement, Learning and Wellbeing Policy and Design Branches, the Office of the Deputy Director-General and Calwell High School in relation to the issues at Calwell High School.

Cross Directorate

19. The Directorate is working closely with WorkSafe ACT to ensure it meets all obligations. WorkSafe ACT are being provided with material proactively to support the work required to see the lifting of the prohibition notice and the improvement notices.

External

20. Regular engagement with the school community, unions and WorkSafe will continue to occur in relation to all activities.

Work Health and Safety

21. The project plan for Calwell High School aims to address the concerns listed by WorkSafe ACT in the prohibition and provisional notices by ensuring the school has safe systems of work. As listed above, these notices are
 - a. Prohibition Notice - N-0000003584
 - b. Improvement Notice - N-0000003585 which has been satisfied. This was confirmed by WorkSafe ACT on 22 April 2022
 - c. Improvement Notice - N-0000003618 which the response is due 6 May 2022
 - d. Improvement Notice - N-0000003620 which the response is due 6 May 2022
 - e. Section 155 Notification - INV/E- INV/I-2022-4 which the response is due 6 May 2022

Benefits/Sensitivities

22. The Directorate is committed to taking action to meet its work health and safety obligations, however, any change will be occurring in the context of significant staff and community fatigue in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic and teacher shortages.
23. A shared understanding of the actions and supports under way at the school will be important to maintain the confidence of stakeholders, including the school community and unions.

Communications, media and engagement implications

24. The Directorate will provide ongoing support for the school to communicate proactively with its community.

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Signatory Name: Mark Huxley

Phone:

Attachments

Attachment	Title
Attachment A	Calwell High School Project Plan

Education Directorate

To: Minister for Education and Youth Affairs Tracking No.: Click here to enter text.

Date: 20/04/2022

CC: Executive Group Manager, School Operations
Acting Executive Group Manager, Business Services

From: Deputy Director General

Subject: System-level reforms in response to recent WorkSafe notices

Critical Date: 30/04/2022

Critical Reason: To seek your endorsement of system-level reforms proposed to respond to recent WorkSafe notices.

- DG .../.../...
- DDG .../.../...

Recommendations

That you:

1. Endorse the planned short and medium term Directorate-level reforms at Attachment A

Agreed/Not Agreed / Please Discuss

2. Note the information in this briefing and attachment.

Noted/Please Discuss

Yvette Berry MLA/...../.....

Minister's Office Feedback

Background

1. The COVID-19 pandemic over the past two years has caused unprecedented challenges for schools in all sectors.
2. The Directorate has responded to the pandemic with clear health guidelines for schools, developed collaboratively with the ACT Chief Health Officer and key education stakeholders such as the ACT Council of Parents and Citizens Associations, the ACT Principals Association, the Australian Education Union, Catholic Education, and the Association of Independent Schools.
3. Public health orders such as isolation requirements have exacerbated the existing national teacher shortage, which has been impacting government and non-government schools in all jurisdictions. In the ACT this has manifested largely in issues around the availability of relief staff to backfill absences.
4. The Directorate is responding to the national teacher shortage through the establishment of the Teacher Shortage Taskforce and ongoing recruitment campaigns.

Issues

5. WorkSafe ACT has recently attended a number of ACT public schools in response to occupational violence and workforce shortage concerns.
6. WorkSafe has issued prohibition and improvement notices at Calwell High School. Your endorsement is currently being sought for a project plan with actions to begin in Term 2 at Calwell High School (FILE2022/4396).
7. The Directorate has committed to meeting its work health and safety (WHS) obligations, and a number of targeted Directorate-level reforms to address occupational violence concerns are proposed for your endorsement at Attachment A.
8. There are three key immediate actions:
 - a. a reminder and checklist for completion was provided to all schools on Tuesday 26 April, setting out their WHS obligations including those relating to occupational violence
 - b. the establishment of a Safe@Work Taskforce to manage and oversee an elevated response to WHS and OV
 - c. following the finalisation of work at Calwell High School, an immediate and rapid process to replicate or confirm the endorsed 'safe systems of work' to all schools in the ACT.
9. The purpose of the Safe@Work Taskforce is to lead and drive an elevated response to WHS and occupational violence, including cultural change to establish a safety culture

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in addition to the immediate and medium term system and process improvements. The Head of Service has approved the establishment of an additional Band 2 executive position for an initial period of six months to lead this work.

10. The Directorate's current resources that manage instances of WHS and occupational violence related activities for the Directorate are dispersed across different business units. Bringing all these resources together under one executive lead will create greater consistency and improve Directorate line of sight to ensure effective management of incidents in schools, and, importantly, shift the dial from response to prevention.
11. Any structural change will be subject to the usual consultation mechanisms for organisational change.
12. Proposed projects for the Taskforce include the remodelling and refocus of the current work associated with managing occupational violence; a redesign of the current support plan process for schools; and a review of policies, procedures, post-incident processes and some Directorate roles. Change management and communication are also high priorities for the proposed Taskforce.
13. The establishment of the Taskforce will send a clear message about the seriousness with which the Directorate is approaching its response.
14. Further medium and longer term reforms and actions will be developed and agreement sought once the initial phases of these actions have concluded.

Financial Implications

15. Costs will be associated with establishing the Taskforce and resourcing its work including external expertise required to review processes. You have endorsed the development of a business case relating to WHS which will include the costs of the system-wide reforms, plus the Calwell High School review, and further augmentation of the Directorate's online curriculum resources.

ConsultationInternal

16. Consultation has occurred with School Improvement, Student Engagement, and People and Performance Branches, Procurement, ACT Policing, CMTEDD and the Office of the Deputy Director-General.

Cross Directorate

17. The Directorate is working closely with WorkSafe ACT to ensure it meets all obligations.

External

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18. Engagement will occur with the Australian Education Union (AEU), Community and Public Sector Union (CPSU), ACT Council of P & C Associations and ACT Principals Association in Term 2.

Work Health and Safety

19. The proposed actions seek to address occupational violence concerns at ACT Public Schools and to create a culture of schools as safe environments for students and staff. .

Benefits/Sensitivities

20. The Directorate is committed to taking action to meet its work health and safety obligations and make systemic improvements to its safety culture, however, change will be occurring in the context of significant staff and community fatigue in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic and teacher workload concerns.

Signatory Name: Jane Simmons

Phone:

Attachments

Attachment	Title
Attachment A	Planned Directorate-level actions

Education Directorate

To: Minister for Education and Youth Affairs Tracking No.: FILE2022/4339

Date: 21/04/2022

CC: Deputy Director-General

From: Director-General

Subject: Rollover of Recurrent Funding from 2021-22 to 2022-23

Critical Date: 27/04/2022

Critical Reason: Budget Memorandum 2022/08 requires that Ministerially endorsed rollovers are provided to Treasury by Thursday 28 April 2022

- DG .../.../...
- EGM, BSG 22/4/22

Recommendations

That you:



3. Note that you will be further briefed on projects that have had delays as a result of COVID-19 in coming weeks.

Noted / Please Discuss

Yvette Berry MLA/...../.....

Minister's Office Feedback

Background

3. The Directorate is preparing an update for you on projects and key commitments that have been delayed by COVID-19, including the projects in this briefing.

Issues



Financial Implications



Consultation



Work Health and Safety



Benefits/Sensitivities



Communications, media and engagement implications



Signatory Name: Katy Haire Phone: x51958

Action Officer: Thao Le Phone: x73042

Attachments

Attachment	Title
Attachment A	Education Directorate Recurrent Rollover Requests
Attachment B	Summary - Education Directorate Recurrent Rollover Requests

Portfolio: Education and Youth Affairs

KENNY HIGH SCHOOL DELAY

Talking points

- The ACT Government has undertaken a review of the construction program for the new high school in Kenny.
- Since the start of construction, the completion of site works have been delayed by 13 weeks due to the impacts of wet weather and the Omicron Covid-a9 variant on subcontractor labour.
- The project was originally scheduled for completion prior to the commencement of the 2023 school year. It has been confirmed that due to these program impacts, the project will not be completed within this timeframe.
- The current construction program lists the projected completion date for the high school as 7 April 2023 at the earliest forecast date. The current program includes delays noted above, approved extensions of time (as at 9 February 2022) and contract timeframes. The actual completion timeframe is likely to be later given this does not consider the final design and construction approval along the southern boundary, or the operational commissioning time required to establish a new school.
- The Education Directorate has considered enrolment forecasts and confirmed existing Priority Enrolment Area (PEA) arrangements at nearby schools (in particular Harrison School 7-10) are able to accommodate enrolments from students who might otherwise have enrolled at the new high school in Kenny for term 1, 2023.
- The construction of the new high school may well be finalised to the extent that it could open later during the 2023 school year, however given the disruption this would present to students already established at other high schools part way through the school year, it is not recommended to open until term 1, 2024.
- A cross-agency governance group meeting with representation from Education, Transport Canberra and City Services, Environment, Planning and Sustainable Development Directorate and Major Projects Canberra considered the anticipated completion timeframes on 18 March 2022.
- Based on the program delay impacts, Education has subsequently recommended the school opening be deferred to 2024.
- A PEA for the new high school will be developed and shared with the community ahead of enrolments opening during the 2023 school year for Term 1 2024.

Portfolio/s: Education and Youth Affairs

VENTILATION IN SCHOOLS

Talking Points

- Improving air quality in ACT public schools is a priority to enable onsite learning and teaching in accordance with COVID-19 Health Advice.
- Ventilation is one component of a multilayered approach that has been implemented to prevent transmission of COVID-19 in schools.
- All learning spaces (about 3500) across the school portfolio have been checked to ensure adequate ventilation.
- Every school has its own Indoor Air Quality Plan (see example at end of brief) which lists actions undertaken by EDU (e.g. HVAC systems change) and actions for schools to undertake each day to improve air quality. The Plans can be found on each schools' website.
- Updated Indoor Air Quality Plans are being prepared for winter.
- Indoor Air Quality actions are being prioritised at preschools due to the potential vulnerability of this cohort.
- In line with expert advice, ventilation is being maximised by opening windows in classrooms, adjusting HVAC systems and turning on exhaust fans in rooms that have them.
- Winter ventilation solutions are currently being scoped for sites where ventilation is predominantly via opening of windows. Solutions include supplementary mechanical ventilation such as Heat and Energy Recovery Ventilation units (HRV and ERV), and the use of CO₂ monitors. HRV units allow fresh air to be provided while windows are closed, with the first retrofits completed at Macquarie Primary School in February 2022. CO₂ monitors can assist in ensuring adequate ventilation is provided from windows while retaining thermal comfort conditions in winter.
- The routine use of portable **HEPA filters** is not supported at this time, as the evidence for the additional public health benefit of these units over other public health measures and maximising fresh air is currently limited.
- UV-C light units have been installed at priority sites where mechanical ventilation does not introduce fresh air. UV-C lights have been used extensively in health settings to inactivate viruses as they pass the light unit. Units have been selected that do not produce ozone to ensure the safety of students.
- UV-C light units have been installed at 31 preschools and other priority sites in schools. Mobile units (43) will be distributed to priority sites to secure air quality while long term solutions are planned and procured.
- EDU will continue to be guided by ACT Health and AHPPC advice and the evolving evidence on the specific benefit of these devices in addition to other public health measures in a school setting.

Cleared as complete and accurate: 26/04/2022
Cleared for public release by: Executive Group Manager
Contact Officer name: Andrew Parkinson
Lead Directorate: Education
TRIM Ref: FOL22/959

Key Information

- Supply chain delays and stock availability has delayed the the work program.
- The CHO, AHPPC, World Health Organisation and Safe Work Australia recommend ensuring fresh air ventilation is optimised in all settings, including through adjusting mechanical systems to increase fresh (external) air supply and reduce air recirculation, and use of natural ventilation such as opening windows and doors.
- EDU has developed an Indoor Air Quality (IAQ) framework to assess the IAQ of all public schools commencing with ACT public colleges. All public school learning areas have been assessed under the IAQ framework.
- Site specific IAQ plans were provided to all ACT public colleges on 1 October 2021.
- Site specific IAQ plans were provided to all other ACT public schools on 22 October 2021.
- IAQ Plans were updated to include actions undertaken in term 4, 2021 and over the summer break and reissued to schools.
- From this work, EDU is confident that fresh air flow can be increased in all public school classrooms to improve ventilation.
- Cooler classroom temperatures during cool weather and warmer classroom temperatures during hotter weather are expected to result from increasing fresh air to learning environments.
- Higher energy bills were experienced across sites with mechanical ventilation over the summer period. Gas bills are expected to increase over the winter period.
- EDU is monitoring air quality in learning spaces to achieve the best ventilation for ACT public schools while managing energy costs and thermal comfort.

Background Information

- To support schools to prepare for return to on campus learning following lockdown in 2021, the ACT Government allocated **\$5.7 million to support essential supplies** such as masks and hand sanitiser, improved ventilation and additional relief teacher hours. **\$2.9 million of this funding was allocated to improve ventilation** in ACT public schools. This includes building works, CO₂ monitoring, and changes to outdoor air introduced by heating, ventilation, and air conditioning (HVAC) systems.
- ACT public schools are very well placed as there has been an extensive program of work underway to improve school ventilation since the 2019-2020 bushfires.
- In early 2020, **400 Dyson air purifiers** were distributed to all public schools (88 at the time) for use in classrooms and other spaces to provide relief from smoke effects. These air purifiers have a HEPA filter contained within the unit. Filters require active management and replacement to ensure they don't have unintended consequences such as spreading mould spores.
- EDU has been progressively upgrading building controls in 65 schools to increase remote management of the Heating, Ventilation and Cooling (HVAC) systems.

Cleared as complete and accurate: 26/04/2022
Cleared for public release by: Executive Group Manager
Contact Officer name: Andrew Parkinson
Lead Directorate: Education
TRIM Ref: FOL22/959

QUESTION TIME BRIEF

- In 2018, EDU commenced a program of installing CO₂ sensors in schools (CO₂ sensors, provides a proxy for ventilation). To date CO₂ sensors with remote monitoring and management systems have been installed across 56 public schools. Installation of CO₂ sensors is progressing at a further nine ACT public schools. This will mean 73 per cent (65 of 89) schools will have CO₂ sensors to the monitor and manage indoor air quality.
- EDU has commissioned design work across 18 school that rely on natural ventilation via operable windows and integrated indoor air quality parameters into the specification documents for new whole of school heating, ventilation and cooling systems.

Canberra High School Indoor Air Quality Plan (example)	
Background:	<p>As part of the return to on campus learning in Term 4 2021, ACT Health has advised that schools optimise fresh air circulation as one of the controls to reduce the risk of COVID-19 transmission in schools.</p> <p>The risk of COVID-19 transmission is higher in crowded and poorly ventilated spaces where people spend long periods of time together in close proximity. Good ventilation is one part of a suite of controls to minimise transmission in schools, like vaccination, physical distancing, student cohorting, good hygiene, cleaning and mask use.</p> <p>This Plan identifies actions that have been undertaken at your school by the Education Directorate and provides additional measures for the school to undertake to optimise the fresh air ventilation in the school in Term 4.</p>
Health Advice:	<p>The Chief Health Officer, the Australian Health Protection Principal Committee, World Health Organisation and Safe Work Australia all recommend good indoor air quality to reduce the chance of COVID-19 transmission.</p>
Advice:	<p>The ventilation systems at Canberra High School have now been assessed by the Directorate in accordance with the WHO guidance.</p> <p>Fresh air ventilation will be achieved through a mix of natural (opening windows and doors) and mechanical (cooling and ventilation systems).</p> <p>The settings for the Heating, Ventilation and Air Conditioning systems have been reset to achieve good fresh air supply and <u>should not be altered by the school</u>.</p> <p>Increasing the fresh air to classrooms may increase energy costs. Classrooms are also likely to experience lower room temperatures during cooler weather and higher room temperatures in warmer weather.</p> <p>Learning and teaching spaces with fresh air ventilation from either natural or mechanical systems meet the COVID-19 Health Advice. The school is to prioritise the use of these spaces for indoor teaching and learning along with outdoor spaces.</p>
Daily actions to be undertaken by the school in Term 4:	<p>Additional daily measures the school will undertake include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Opening windows and doors in teaching spaces and other shared spaces of the school to supplement fresh air. Windows above ground level are to be opened only where window restriction is in place to ensure student safety. In line with the National Construction Code, window opening is to be 125mm or less. • Improving air circulation through use of ceiling fans and split system air-conditioning units, only when windows are open. • Ensure bathroom, kitchen and any other exhaust fans are on and operating at full capacity while the school or program is operating and for some time before and after occupancy.

QUESTION TIME BRIEF

Actions undertaken:	<p>The following actions have been undertaken by the Directorate and its service providers to increase fresh air ventilation in the indoor teaching and learning spaces at the school:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• air handling units have been programmed to supply additional fresh air via the mechanical ventilation systems• evaporative cooling in the school will provide full fresh air when operating in either cooling or fan mode. When not in operation, fresh air is to be provided by opening windows• contractors will continue work to audit and enhance the operation of the ventilation systems.
Support or further advice:	<p>For further advice, schools can contact their ICW Network Officer or email ACT.Education@act.gov.au</p>

Caveat Brief

To: Minister for Education and Youth Affairs
Subject: Calwell High School – Week 1 Term 2 Update
Date: 26 April 2022

WorkSafe visit - Background

- On Thursday 31 March 2022 WorkSafe ACT issued the Education Directorate a Prohibition Notice in relation to Calwell High School (refer FILE2022/3275).
- In response, the Directorate stood up an incident management team (IMT) to coordinate a response and recovery. The Executive Group Manager School Improvement is the incident controller reporting to the Deputy Director General.

Calwell High School Staff Program Week One

- Staff were onsite at CHS today and participated in day one of a four-day program to consult, workshop and induct staff on localised procedures related to workforce shortages, behavior management, and occupational violence.
- Staff were engaged with a high level of participation and enthusiasm.
- EAP had two support staff onsite and a number of school staff took the opportunity to meet with them.

WorkSafe Improvement Notices and Engagement

- On 14 April the Directorate submitted an evidentiary response to Improvement Notice N-0000003585. On 22 April WorkSafe responded saying they were satisfied with the response and no further action is required.
- On Friday 22 April ESO emailed WorkSafe and the unions with a copy of the agenda for the four-day program.
- The Unions were invited to meet and discuss, they have not yet taken up the invitation. The AEU have responded via email saying members feel there is genuine interest from the employer to consult and listen to them.

Remote Learning

- Students engaged in remote learning today.
- Eight students attended site today, a risk assessment was undertaken and were supervised to engage in the remote learning program developed by the ESO.

Signatory Name: Mark Huxley
Title: Executive Group Manager, School Improvement
Date: 26 April 2022

Portfolio: Education and Youth Affairs**CALWELL HIGH SCHOOL WORKSAFE IMPROVEMENT NOTICES****Talking points**

- Our priority at Calwell HS is to ensure it continues to be a safe, productive and enjoyable learning and work environment for the school community. The health and wellbeing of our staff and students has always been our top priority.
- All year levels at Calwell HS used remote learning for the first week of term 2 2022.
- This decision was made to enable the school to focus on staff consultation and training.
- Staff spent the week reorienting themselves with Education Directorate policies and work health and safety processes. The Directorate is working with the team at Calwell HS to review local processes and support a best practice approach.
- Year 9 and 10 students returned to campus this week.
- Year 7 and 8 students are continuing with remote learning in Week 2.
- The Directorate is working to get Year 7 and 8 students back on campus as soon as possible. In the meantime the Directorate is working with Worksafe ACT on ensuring the safety of the working and learning environment –this decision is also subject to the WorkSafe ACT Prohibition Notice being lifted.
- Over the last two weeks the Education Directorate has been wrapping supports around the school. Specific new measures will be in place in term 2 including:
 - An additional school leader to support the school Principal
 - A senior teacher
 - Two additional teaching staff
 - A Youth Worker
 - Reorientation and ongoing training for staff
 - Increased wellbeing, psychology and social supports – for staff, students and families – including telehealth and EAP
- The school is also committed to improving student engagement and implementing its Positive Behaviours for Learning (PBL) program.
- I acknowledge the dedication of the public education workforce and the important contribution they make each and every day to the learning of young people.
- In relation to Calwell high School, like so many schools, it has also experienced the impacts of COVID-19 on its workforce.
- There's no doubt that the constantly changing COVID-19 situation is making life difficult for teachers and school staff. Especially in the broader context of the current national teacher shortage.
- As with all schools, the Directorate and school leadership have been closely monitoring teacher absences and responding on a daily basis.

QUESTION TIME BRIEF

- Where needed the school has made local adjustments, and accessed priority relief staff.
- The presence of COVID-19 in the community, and the impact it's had on the school staff has no doubt exacerbated the challenges faced by the school.
- WorkSafe ACT attended the school following a rare but serious violent incident. That visit took place on 31 March 2022 and following the visit, the Directorate received notices from WorkSafe ACT regarding a number of matters at the school. The Education Directorate is continuing to work with all WorkSafe ACT requirements and is committed to ensuring safe systems are in place to ensure safe learning environments at ACT schools.
- I would like to thank teachers, staff, students and families at Calwell High and across all ACT Public Schools for their resilience and support throughout term 1 as we continue to face and respond to any and all COVID-related challenges together.
- I care deeply about all of our public school communities and I'm committed to working with our stakeholders, staff, students and families to ensure every school provides safe learning and working environments, where everyone can flourish.

Key Information

- Key stakeholders – including the Australian Education Union, CPSU, Principals and the P&C Council – continue to work collaboratively with the Education Directorate to produce the best possible outcomes for our school communities.
- A Directorate coordination team has been established to respond to the events at Calwell High School.

Background Information

- On 31 March 2022 WorkSafe ACT attended Calwell High School to undertake a workplace inspection in response to information received by the AEU regarding issues at the school relating to student incidents and staffing shortages.
- During this visit WorkSafe also identified concerns regarding access to fire suppression equipment. This has since been satisfied, with confirmation received from WorkSafe ACT on 22 April 2022.
- Improvement Notices were issued to the Directorate on the three issues raised.
 - Workforce shortages
 - Occupational Violence
 - Fire suppression equipment.

Portfolio/s: Early Childhood Development**EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION AND CARE AND OUT OF SCHOOL HOURS
CARE SUPPORTS****Talking points**

- The spread of COVID-19 and the necessary response have had a substantial impact on the early childhood education and care (ECEC) sector, including outside school hours care (OSHC).
- Throughout the COVID-19 pandemic the ACT Government has engaged with ECEC stakeholders to hear their concerns, including; educators safety and wellbeing; issues about viability of services; and the impact restrictions have had on children experiencing vulnerability and disadvantage.
- ECEC Services have undertaken risk assessments to ensure the safety of children and staff. Children's Education and Care Assurance (CECA) has provided a model policy to assist services in managing the risk of COVID19 transmission, and guidance on what to do in the event of an exposure and temporary closure
- From mid-December 2021 to mid March 2022, CECA was operating from 8am–8pm seven days a week to offer support and guidance to the sector on COVID–19 related issues. This has now been scaled back to 8am–6pm weekdays.

Omicron Wave

- **Between 4 December 2021 and 22 April 2022, a total 104 ECEC services had to close for one to five days.** Decisions to close were made on the basis of risk of COVID-19 transmission or inability to operate due to quarantining staff.
- **A further 196 services (ECEC, OSHC and FDC educators) partially closed (room or rooms but not whole service).**
- From 26 April 2022, ACT Health ended *the ACT Health Guidelines for Schools and Early Childhood Education and Care*. The requirement for ECEC educators to wear facemasks was also lifted.
- ECEC providers are no longer required to distribute ACT Health approved COVID-19 exposure letters to staff and families. However, as with any infectious disease, they must continue to communicate positive cases to their ECEC community.
- Providers are now only required to notify CECA of the impact of positive COVID-19 cases if a child requires urgent medical attention or if the operation of the service is affected, for example if a service has to close a room due to staff absences.
- Services must continue to take every reasonable precaution to prevent the spread of COVID-19, and should follow advice in the CECA COVID-19 infection control model policy to develop relevant policy and procedures for their service.

Delta Wave

- Between **12 August and 3 December 2021**, a total of **33 ECEC services** were directed to close.
- A further **62 services (ECEC, OSHC and FDC educators)** closed for part or all of the **lockdown time at provider discretion**. For many of these services, providers consolidated attending children to one site.
- From **25 October 2021**, ECEC services in the ACT were able to return to full operation. OSHC had a **graduated return between 25 October 2021 and 1 November 2021**. This was based on ACT Health advice.

Key Information

Supporting the ECEC Sector

- The ACT Government welcomed financial support offered to the ECEC sector by Commonwealth Government during the COVID-19 pandemic, and the announcement of additional allowable absences (unlimited during January and February), and the further grounds for services' allowance to waive gap fee.
- Despite this viability remains a concern for many services due to the ongoing impact of COVID-19 and there continues to be a need for Commonwealth Government support for services required to temporarily close or provide a reduced service.
- Prior to the lifting of *the ACT Health Guidelines for Schools and Early Childhood Education and Care*, ECEC services could choose to waive gap fees if children were unable to attend due to close contact quarantine directions. This allowed services to continue to claim CCS payments, making up an average of 60% of their income.
- Now that the guidelines are lifted, services will have to charge the gap fee if they exclude children who are known to be household contacts to reduce the risk of transmission. This could result in some families un-enrolling children from the service and a further loss of income for the services. The Commonwealth Government are unable to change this position during Caretaker.
- On 23 March 2022, the Commonwealth Government announced increased funding for the Community Child Care Fund (CCCF) Special Circumstances. This funding supports services experiencing vulnerabilities and financial hardship, including COVID-19. Applications are limited to vulnerable regions, which for the ACT only includes East Canberra (Canberra Airport, Majura, Symonston), Charnwood and Richardson.
- CECA has sought advice from the Commonwealth Government on the availability of CCCF COVID-19 funding for ACT services.
- On 17 January 2022, the ACT Government announced prioritisation of the ECEC sector in the booster vaccine rollout. This followed the Chief Health Officer's mandate in October 2021, for COVID-19 vaccinations for staff working directly with children in ECEC and OSHC. This decision continues to be well received by the ECEC sector and the ACT community.

- On 31 January 2022, the ACT Government announced the provision of Rapid Antigen Tests (RATs) to all ECEC staff, working directly with children. During the following weeks CECA worked with ACT Health to supply ECEC services with RATs for staff members for two sets of two week periods. Further consignments have been distributed directly services on an as needed basis.

Children's Education and Care Assurance

- In response to the COVID 19 pandemic, CECA established work streams responsible for monitoring and supporting ACT ECEC services, and focus on the safety of children. The four streams are:
 - **Capacity** and recovery— Planning contingencies for the strategic delivery of ECEC during the response to COVID-19, and recovery from.
 - **Support** — Proactively providing advice and support where possible to education and care services who may be experiencing operational difficulties. Assisting with applications to enable ongoing operation of the service.
 - **Child Safety** — Upholding child safety in ECEC settings. Maintaining and strengthening communication and coordination with key child protection agencies in a context where face to face may not be possible.
 - **Communication** — Timely, regular and relevant communication with the sector through different platforms. A communication plan has been developed to ensure that there is consistent ongoing communication.
- CECA has supported services in planning for their transition out of lockdown and children's return to education and care settings, including re-visiting their COVID-19 Risk Assessments.
- On 3 September 2021, Chief Minister Andrew Barr MLA announced that the ACT Government was prioritising the ECEC workforce in the vaccination rollout. This commitment recognises the critical service early childhood educators provide children and families in the ACT.
- On 20 October 2021, the Chief Health Officer announced mandated COVID-19 vaccinations for staff working directly with children in early childhood education and care and outside school hours care through the *ACT Government Public Health (ACT Schools or Early Childhood Education and Care Workers COVID-19 Vaccination) Emergency Direction 2021*.
- The Health Direction applies to teachers, educators, pre-service teachers on placement, administrative staff, allied health professionals (including psychologists, speech therapists etc.) and cleaners.
- CECA completed an audit of 33 providers on the processes they have in place to comply with the Chief Health Officer's direction.
- An audit was completed in November 2021 of emergency contact numbers for 50 selected providers. This process includes offering support and advice on the process required if services are subject to a COVID-19 exposure identified by ACT Health.

QUESTION TIME BRIEF

- From 15 March 2022 Children’s Education and Care Assurance (CECA) recommenced all standard regulatory functions including compliance audits.

Communication with the sector

- Comprehensive communications tailored to the sector’s needs during this time will be ongoing to keep providers, service leaders and educators well informed.
- A snapshot of CECA’s communications and engagements reach to providers, services, and educators from 12 August 2021 to 22 April 2022 is below:

Communication Channel	Reach	Target Audience
Targeted emails, alerts, updates, and notifications	96 emails in total distributed to targeted and sector wide email contacts. Reach ranges between 155 -1,000 per each distribution.	Education and care providers, service leaders and educators
Tailored phone calls	36 calls to services directed to close on ACT Health advice or voluntarily closed due to health concerns	Education and care services leaders and providers
Support calls	All non-government services will receive a wellbeing call to provide target support. Approximately 241 calls to services and providers have been made so far.	Education and care services leaders and providers
Education and care COVID-19 webpage	Overall page views 6,482 (as at 26 January 2022)	Education and care providers, services leaders, educators, families, and wider Canberra community.
Online forums and meetings	<p>Three have been held since 12 August 2021.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1 September 2021 Sector forum with Minister Berry Attendance: approximately 150. 6 October 2021 Supporting children and families experiencing vulnerability forum. Attendance: approximately 150 Recorded video: reach 56 views 14 January 2022 Sector COVID-19 management forum with ACT Health. Attendance: approximately 230 Recorded video: reach 57 views 3 March 2022 Sector COVID-19 management forum with ACT Health. Attendance: approximately 110 Recorded video: TBC 	Education and care providers, service leaders, peak bodies and educators.
Surveys	Four surveys delivered to gauge sector viability, child attendance and staffing levels.	Education and care providers and services leaders

QUESTION TIME BRIEF

Communication Channel	Reach	Target Audience
Facebook	<p>Approximately 201 COVID-19 related posts distributed since 12 August 2021</p> <p>Overall page reach between 12 August 2021 and 26 January 2022 - 6,329</p> <p>Overall post reach between 12 August 2021 and 26 January 2022 - 62,965</p> <p>Overall page engagement 5,669 - reach between 12 August 2021 and 26 January 2022</p>	<p>Existing audience of 1,199 individual education and care providers, service leaders and educators. Page and content reach is beyond this audience.</p>

Sector viability and support payments

- Australian Government ECEC Viability Support Package provided support for services in the ACT between August and October 2021. This package provided payments of either 25% or 40% (depending on service type) of pre-lockdown revenue to support services who met the package's eligibility criteria.
- During this period, the Australian Government also provided additional allowable absences for children, and allowed services to waive gap fees for children who were not attending ECEC (meaning that families did not need to pay while they were not accessing the service).
- On 9 November 2021, the Australian Government announce an additional 10 allowable absences for children in the 2020-2021 financial year and changes to the law that would allow service to waive gap fees for children who cannot attend because they, or a member of their household, is required to isolate, or when the service or room at the service is closed.
- On 27 January 2022, the Australian Government extended the support for the early childhood sector by:
 - Providing allowable absences throughout January and February 2022, in response to the Omicron wave;
 - Increasing the reasons a service can waive gap fees for families to also allow children at higher risk of severe disease for COVID-19; a service or room closure, including on the guidance of state or territory government agency or because the child ratios cannot be safely met as educators must isolate; and
 - Allowing payment of CCS for absences at the start or end of an enrolment backdated to the 1 December 2021 until 30 June 2022.
- The Commonwealth Government has advised CECA, that services will no longer be able to waive gap fees for families isolating with the removal of *the ACT Health Guidelines for Schools and Early Childhood Education and Care*. This is particularly relevant for providers whose policies and procedures exceed the minimum health requirements set by ACT Health.

QUESTION TIME BRIEF

- Throughout the pandemic the ACT Government has taken feedback from the ECEC sector through surveys. The responses show that viability is consistently a concern as services return to full operation, particularly for circumstances where services are required to temporarily close or children are unable to attend due to exposure to COVID-19.
- The ECEC sector surveys also highlighted concern for educator wellbeing, and for families experiencing vulnerability at this time. The ACT Government is providing support to services to help address these issues.
- The ACT Government continues to monitor this issue and is working collaboratively with the Australian Government to ensure the needs of the ACT sector are met.
- Eligible providers (ACT Property Group tenants) have the option to access rent relief through the extension of the Rental Relief Initiative. This initiative provided a waiver of rents for 1 September 2021 to 30 September 2021 (inclusive).

Portfolio: Education and Youth Affairs

MANAGING WORKFORCE SHORTAGES

Talking points

- Like all parts of the ACT community, our schools have been impacted by COVID-19 and experienced limited teacher availability at stages throughout term 1.
- We anticipated the workforce shortages and the subsequent workload pressure in schools during term 1.
- Before the commencement of the school year we worked with Principals and the Australian Education Union (AEU) to put in place structures outlining how decisions would be made when the shortages were realised.
- We have an agreed framework in place which identifies four levels that a school can be categorised as. This determines whether a school can maintain face-to-face learning as shortages increase.
- These levels also identify various strategies available to a school, including the ability to access a central relief pool of staff. This pool was established at the beginning of term 1 as a proactive measure established to limit the impact of the predicted shortages.
- Our schools monitor staff and student attendance daily and make workforce decisions in the best interests of staff and students. This also includes Directorate visibility to ensure proactive interventions are in place where necessary.
- During term 1 we had numerous schools triaged as level 3 in the framework which meant these schools transitioned to part-school remote learning.
- We expect we will continue to see temporary remote learning used in more schools this term, where a circuit breaker is needed to overcome a significant short-term teacher shortage.
- Parents should expect these strategies to continue throughout the school year, especially as we head into the colder months and anticipate further COVID-19 spikes will impact our workforce.

Background Information

- The COVID-19 Planning for staff shortages framework was agreed with the AEU before the commencement of term 1.
- We have systems in place to help support the implementation of this framework, including centralised visibility over daily absence data.

Portfolio: Education and Youth Affairs

WORKSAFE ACT AND ACT SCHOOLS

Talking points

- Every weekday more than 50,000 school students attend Canberra public schools which are, by and large, safe and supportive learning environments.
- The Education Directorate has formal mechanisms in place to reduce the risk of occupational violence against staff and support the work health and safety of our entire workforce and student population.
- The Education Directorate acknowledges the important role Worksafe ACT plays in ensuring workplaces are as safe as they can be and is committed to working with Worksafe where any opportunities for improvement are identified to ensure safe learning and work environments for all staff and students.
- The Education Directorate is continuing to work with Worksafe ACT regarding the Prohibition and Improvement Notices received in relation to Calwell High School regarding: (*refer to Calwell QTB for further information*).
 - Workforce shortages
 - Occupational Violence
 - Fire suppression equipment.
- The Education Directorate is continuing to work with all WorkSafe ACT requirements and is committed to ensuring safe systems are in place to ensure safe learning environments at ACT schools.
- In addition to Calwell, WorkSafe ACT also visited the following four ACT public schools at the end of Term 2 2022:
 - Amaroo School
 - Kingsford Smith School
 - Namadgi School
 - Wanniasa School
- No improvement notices have been issued as a result of these additional visits.
- On 26 April 2022 Worksafe ACT also indicated they would visit Maribyrnong Primary School in relation to playground equipment. At the time of the visit on 28 April 2022 it is understood Worksafe suggested contacting the equipment manufacturer to work with them to request a set of steps be constructed to improve access to the flying fox and that the out of school hours care provider [REDACTED].

Key Information

- The Education Directorate continues to work collaboratively with key stakeholders including the Australian Education Union, CPSU, principals and the P&C Council to produce the best possible outcomes for our school communities.

Cleared as complete and accurate: 28/04/2022
Cleared for public release by: Executive Group Manager
Contact Officer name: Daniel Ackland
Lead Directorate: Education
TRIM Ref: FOL22/959

Background Information

- The Directorate continues to deliver audit and assurance programs in order to identify improvements to our workplace health and safety management system.
- All new employees participate in both workplace health and safety and occupational violence induction programs.
- The Directorate has in place broad and systematic workplace health and safety governance and consultation mechanisms.

Portfolio: Education and Youth Affairs**MANAGING VIOLENCE IN ACT SCHOOLS****Talking points**

- Teachers, school-based staff and students are the core of our education system. We want (and need) to make sure that they are safe in our schools.
- Any instance of violence or harassment in a school is unacceptable and every incident is treated seriously.
- Violent incidents of the sort we have seen reportedly recently are rare in ACT public schools and are responded to where they occur..
- ACT public schools are well resourced to deal with matters relating to bullying and violence.
- The Directorate provides training and resources to all school-based staff about how to prevent incidents from occurring, what types of incidents should be reported and what to do if you do experience occupational violence in the workplace.
- Schools are required to report to the Directorate any incident, whether critical or non-critical in nature, that results in serious harm or injury or puts the safety of students, staff or visitors at significant risk, or poses a real threat to property or the school environment occurs.
- ACT Policing are called when serious incidents occur in our schools that may require police intervention, action or further investigation.
- The Education Directorate and ACT Policing are committed to ensuring schools in the ACT are safe for our students, their parents, staff, and the community.
- The senior executives of both agencies are working together to enhance existing relationships and measures following recent incidents. This is in addition to the on the ground relationships between schools and the police in their areas.
- ACT Policing has always been connected with our schools and the Directorate but as we continue to take stock of the effect the pandemic has had on our community, both agencies are looking to see what else they can do.
- This work will include assessing the arrangements and training in place for responding to incidents in schools; how to improve information sharing between schools and police and whether the relationship needs to be formalised through a memorandum of understanding.

Key Information

- ACT public schools adopt a whole school framework to identify and teach expected behaviours and build a culture of respect. Reports of bullying or violence are managed by schools in accordance with Education Directorate policies and procedures, and the school's processes and procedures.

QUESTION TIME BRIEF

- It is important to note that the term ‘occupational violence’ encompasses a broad range of incidents and includes issues such as intimidation, threats and harassment via electronic media. Types of incidents can range from offensive language through to physical violence.
- **Over 2,100 incidents have been reported at public schools in 2022.** The increased number of reported incidents is a positive reflection of the work we are doing to encourage a stronger reporting culture across all of our schools.
- It is also important to note that every staff member who is impacted by an incident, either directly or indirectly, is required to report the incident. As such, the same incident can be recorded multiple times. Each of these is considered an individual record.

Background Information

- The ACT Government is committed to ensuring the safety of students and staff in public schools, and ensuring an equitable, inclusive, and accessible education system, reinforced by the ***Safe and Supportive Schools Policy***.
- The *Safe and Supportive Schools Policy* requires each ACT public school to:
 - develop processes and procedures to address and prevent bullying, harassment and violence.
 - identify Safe and Supportive School Contact Officers (SASSCOs). SASSCOs are trained to provide support to students who may be experiencing or involved in bullying of any sort. Each school has at least one female-identified and one male-identified teacher or executive teacher in the role of SASSCO. Larger schools identify additional SASSCOs.
- The Education Directorate continues to work on embedding a comprehensive and robust safety management system framework. The directorate continues to focus on developing and sustaining safe and supportive teaching and learning environments for everyone in ACT public schools.

Portfolio: Education and Youth Affairs**CENSUS OF ACT SCHOOLS****Talking points**

- The annual school census shows that COVID-19 has had a clear impact on total school enrolments across the ACT.
- In 2022, there are 82,175 students enrolled in ACT public, Catholic and independent schools.
- From 2012 to 2021, the annual growth rate in ACT school enrolments was consistently around two percent. From February 2021 to 2022 there was very little (0.4%) growth in the number of enrolments across ACT schools across government and non-government sectors.
- This is partly explained by a change in the annual rate of growth in the ABS estimated resident population for school aged children, from around two percent in previous years to less than one percent between June 2020 and June 2021
- The most noticeable change in enrolment patterns relates to preschool, where enrolments decreased by 490 students (-8.0%) overall. This reduced enrolment in preschool was likely due to a range of factors, including:
 - The reported reduction in the ACT estimated resident population for preschool aged children. According to the Australian Bureau of Statistics, the estimated number of 3-year-old children in the ACT in June 2021 was 300 less than the estimated number of 3-year-old children in June 2020.
 - Some parents choosing not to enrol their children in (non-compulsory) preschool because of the impacts of the pandemic, particularly given children under 5 years old were not yet eligible for a COVID-19 vaccination and increased case numbers in early 2022.
- The proportion of Canberra families choosing public education has remained relatively stable against the longer term trend, with 62.2 per cent of all students enrolled in a public school in 2022.
- The annual census provides the Government with information concerning student enrolments across public and non-government schools and is used to allocate funding and resources to schools.

Key information

- In 2022, there are 2,156 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students enrolled in public schools (77 per cent of total). This is an increase of 269 students (14.3 per cent) from 2018.
- The change in enrolment growth observed over the last two years is not significant enough to have a material impact on school enrolment planning. However, this is

constantly monitored and included in forecasting methodology so that any more significant future enrolment growth changes will be reflected if necessary.

Background Information

- In February each year, the Education Directorate conducts a census of enrolments in ACT public and non-government schools. This year, the census was conducted on Friday 18 February 2022.
- The census provides information about student enrolments and is used to guide the allocation of funding and resources to schools and to support planning and other functions by the Directorate and by other stakeholders.

Portfolio: Education and Youth Affairs

WORKLOAD REDUCTION STRATEGY

Talking points

- The Education Directorate have finalised the workload reduction strategies to reduce the administrative workload on schools going into term 2 2022.
- System-wide ACT Public School workload reduction strategies were provided to Principals to commence implementation in week 1 of term 2.
- These strategies include targeted reductions in administrative requirements and red tape for teachers and schools.
- Schools have been advised that all workload reduction strategies are mandatory for implantation with the exception of the strategy relating to School Review; where schools have the option to opt out.

Key Information

- Workload reduction strategies have been identified in the following key areas:
 - Reducing student academic reporting requirements.
 - Up to two non consecutive additional school staff planning days during Term 2 for teachers and school leaders to complete student reporting and undertake planning.
 - Revised timelines for annual performance and development discussions.
 - Schools will have the option to 'opt out' of school reviews in 2022 with school review panels modified to include retired principals where possible.
 - Roll over previously agreed enterprise agreement implementation plans.
 - Continuation of of the central relief pool in term 2 to ensure allocation of relief staff to schools on a priority basis.
- All relevant stakeholders have been consulted with on the strategies and support the approach.

Background Information

- The strategies are critical in supporting schools and staff to reduce additional pressures as a result of increased absences due to COVID-19.

Portfolio/s: Education and Youth Affairs

SCHOOL FUNDING - COMMONWEALTH SCHOOLING RESOURCING STANDARD

Talking points

- **ACT Government funding** to all public and non-government schools is **at or above** the minimum required levels of **80 per cent** and **20 per cent** of the schooling resource standard (SRS) respectively.
- **The Commonwealth** is transitioning funding to **ACT public schools up to 20 per cent** of the SRS by **2023**.
- **Commonwealth funding to non-government** schools currently funded **below** 80 per cent of the SRS will transition **up to 80 per cent** by **2023**.
- **Commonwealth funding to non-government** schools currently funded **above** 80 per cent of the SRS will transition **down to 80 per cent** by **2029**.

Key Information
Public Schools

- Commonwealth funding to ACT public schools is currently below the minimum required amount of 20 per cent of the SRS. The **Commonwealth Government** will transition funding to ACT public schools up to 20 per cent of the SRS by 2023. In 2021 funding was provided at **18.7 per cent** of the SRS and in 2022, funding is estimated to increase to **19.3 per cent** of the SRS.
- **ACT Government** funding to public schools is currently above the minimum required level of 80 per cent of the SRS. For **2020**, the most recent available data, ACT funding to public schools was **89.90 per cent** of the SRS.

Non-Government schools

- The Commonwealth is transitioning non-government schools that are funded below 80 per cent of the SRS up to 80 per cent by 2023. For non-government schools funded above 80 per cent of the SRS, the Commonwealth will transition these schools down to 80 per cent of the SRS by 2029.
- The ACT Government is transitioning all non-government schools to 20 per cent of the Commonwealth Schooling Resource Standard by 2023.
- The table below provides detail on the amount of ACT funding provided to the non-government sector between 2017 and 2020.

School	2017	2020	Funding Growth
Catholic Systemic Schools	\$33,529,633	\$38,958,454	16.19%
Independent Schools	\$24,328,042	\$25,303,231	4.01%

- The amount of ACT funding provided to the non-government sector beyond 2020 is dependent on school enrolments and demographics.

All Schools

- This transition path for both sectors aligns with the *Commonwealth Education Act 2013* and the Bilateral Agreement between the ACT and Commonwealth Governments' signed in December 2018.
- ACT Government contributions to public and non-government schools is reviewed each year through the Section 22A compliance report.

Background Information

- In December 2018 the ACT Government signed a bilateral agreement around schools funding and reform principles with the Commonwealth.
- The bilateral agreement makes a commitment to transition government schools to their share of Commonwealth funding under the Schooling Resource Standard (SRS) by 2023 with non-government schools transitioned by 2029. This provides long term certainty for schools surrounding Commonwealth and Territory funding arrangements.
- The Commonwealth's funding to ACT public schools is currently lower than 20 per cent of the SRS baseline. However, as they are a minor funding provider to this sector, the anticipated annual increases to this sector are relatively small.
- The Commonwealth's funding for most ACT non-government schools is currently higher than 80 per cent of the SRS baseline for most schools. This position is due to historical funding arrangements and the removal of special arrangements for the calculation of some ACT non-government schools, capacity, most notably the ACT Catholic Systemic Schools.

Caveat Brief

To: Minister for Education and Youth Affairs
Subject: Calwell High School – Week 1 Term 2 Update
Date: 29 April 2022

WorkSafe visit - Background

- On Thursday 31 March 2022 WorkSafe ACT issued the Education Directorate a Prohibition Notice in relation to Calwell High School (refer FILE2022/3275).
- In response, the Directorate stood up an incident management team (IMT) to coordinate a response and recovery. The Executive Group Manager School Improvement is the incident controller reporting to the Deputy Director General.

Calwell High School Staff Program Week One

- Today was the final day of the four day program for staff onsite at CHS.
- The following six procedures have been developed/updated as a result of staff consultation and feedback:
 1. Staff shortages
 2. Inbuilt relief
 3. Riskman
 4. Staffing hours
 5. Executive on Deck
 6. Responding to Student Behaviour.
- Today all staff were provided with copies of the draft procedures and given the opportunity to provide feedback via a Google form. This feedback will be considered on Monday and procedures altered as necessary.
- Student feedback gathered (in week 10) on safety within the school was provided to staff today.
- Staff were engaged with a high level of participation throughout the week.
- EAP had two support staff onsite each day and a number of school staff took the opportunity to meet with them.

WorkSafe Improvement Notices and Engagement

- Working towards responding to PIN and other notices by May 6 (Friday week 2).
- Further direct engagement between ESO and WorkSafe ACT Is planned for Tuesday next week (May 3).
- WorkSafe ACT made a phone call to [redacted] staff at the school this afternoon enquiring about [redacted] that resulted in a staff member suffering [redacted] from last year.
- The Directorate has engaged a consultancy to undertake a review of ACT public school based work health and safety policies and procedures.
- They have reviewed relevant documentation, have been briefed by Directorate staff and will engage in a full site Risk Assessment at the school on Monday next week (May 2) as a first step.

Remote Learning

- Year 9 and 10 will return to site next week (week 2).
- Operational communications are being sent to community today about the structure of remote learning for year 7 and 8 next week.
- Letter to the community was sent yesterday (28 April 2022) about next steps for all year levels.

Flexible Education Offering

- [REDACTED] students scheduled to commence alternative program on Monday (May 2). They will be accompanied by 4 staff members
 - two youth workers
 - one teacher
 - one Learning Support Assistant.
- The flex ed program designed for these students is offsite from the school and complies with the requirements set out in the WorkSafe prohibition notice for students in year 7 and 8.
- [REDACTED]
- The students remain enrolled in Calwell HS and the program is being supported by Calwell High School Staff so it remains an education program from the school, delivered in school hours and is thus considered attendance at school and rolls will be marked accordingly.
- [REDACTED]
- Staff were advised today of the students who will be participating in the flexible education offering.

Signatory Name: Mark Huxley
Title Executive Group Manager
Date 29 April 2022

Education Directorate

To:	Minister for Education and Youth Affairs	Tracking No.: FILE2022/4158
Date:	02/05/2022	
CC:	Nil	
From:	Director-General	
Subject:	Disability Royal Commission Notice to Produce #2 – Education Directorate Submission	
Critical Date:	06/05/2022	
Critical Reason:	To ensure you are briefed prior to the submission being provided to the Royal Commission as required on 6 May 2022	

- DDGSPR 01/05/22

Recommendations

That you:

1. Note the Education Directorate Submission plus Attachment 1 and Appendices at Attachments A will be provided on 6 May 2022 to the Disability Royal Commission as requested by the Notice to Give (Attachments B).

Noted / Please Discuss

2. Note that preparation is underway for the public hearings that have been scheduled in Canberra for 6-10 June on the topic of “the experience of children and young people with disability of different education settings”.

Noted / Please Discuss

Yvette Berry MLA/...../.....

Minister’s Office Feedback

Background

1. The Disability Royal Commission issued the Education Directorate a second Notice to Give Information on 11 April 2022 at Attachment B. Western Australia was the only other jurisdiction to receive the same notice.
2. The Notice requests information regarding:
 - a. disability policy and procedure;
 - b. enrolment advice for students with disability;
 - c. support for students with disability, particularly those with complex communication needs;
 - d. restrictive practice; and
 - e. Directorate actions related to the recommendations of Schools for All.
3. Unlike the first Notice to Produce submitted in March 2022, which was an extensive data request, this Notice is focussed on narrative and policy responses with supporting documentation requested.
4. The Royal Commission submission deadline is 6 May 2022. A request for extension was made but not granted as this submission will help inform the public hearings of 6-10 June and the Royal Commission did not agree to any extended any.

Issues

5. The Notice contains 28 primary questions on a range of topics relating to the experiences of students with disability in the public education system. All questions have been answered mostly with publicly available information and relevant supporting documentation.
6. Questions 11 and 15 which requested information from 2010 to 2021 have been responded to for 2016 to 2021 only due to speech language pathologists only being employed by the Directorate from 2016 as part of the Schools for All response. For question 12 a behavioural therapist has been employed from 2020.
7. Questions 13 and 14 relate to students with complex communication needs and have been responded to using a different methodology and definition than that provided by the Royal Commission which was “a student with disability who is non-verbal or has little or no functional speech”. This definition does not match any data that was able to be provided by the Directorate and so it was agreed with the Royal Commission that the Directorate would provide the best matching response from Student Centred Appraisal of Need (SCAN) data. This was determined to be using communication access and communication participation categories within SCAN and students who were categorised as group 4 in both categories. This method captures a broader range of students than the definition provided by the Royal Commission and affects the ratio response of speech language pathologists to students with complex communication needs. The differing methodology and categories are explained in full within the submission.
8. All other questions have been responded to in full as per the request with supporting documentation as requested in the Appendices. The submission, once agreed, will be provided

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to the Royal Commission via the Counsel Assisting by email from the Royal Commission Response Team inbox as per the previous Notice.

Financial Implications

9. Nil.

ConsultationInternal

10. Strategic Policy collated information from individual branches including People and Performance, Universal School Support, Analytics and Evaluation, Student Engagement and Enrolments and Planning.

Cross Directorate

11. CMTEDD have liaised with GSO and the solicitors assisting the Royal Commission to seek clarifications on parts of the request and attempted to negotiate an extension of time. Shared Services assistance was sought to respond to question 15 related to speech pathologists employed over a twelve-year period.

External

12. Nil.

Work Health and Safety

13. Nil.

Benefits/Sensitivities

14. Disability support and policy remains an area of significant concern for schools and the community. While the great majority of information provided in the submission is public information it will receive extra scrutiny by stakeholders and the Commission including anticipated questioning at the next hearing. The data generated for questions 11-15 has not been released or produced prior to this request.

Communications, media and engagement implications

15. The communications team are aware of the Notice and potential media ramifications if and when published. Responses to any media or community concerns will be prepared in anticipation of topics from the public hearings. If witnesses are called for from the Directorate the Royal Commission Response Team will coordinate with GSO and branches on witness preparation.

Signatory Name: Nicole Moore

Phone: 54999

Action Officer: ChrisD Jones

Phone: 70333

OFFICIAL

Attachments

Attachment	Title
Attachments A	Education Directorate Submission to Disability Royal Commission CTH-NTG-00210 Attachment 1 spreadsheet response to questions 13-14 Attachment A Appendices List and Supporting Documents
Attachments B	FORMAL NOTICE DRC CTH-NTG-00210 and Cover Letter

Portfolio/s: Education and Youth Affairs

CAMPBELL PRIMARY SCHOOL MODERNISATION PROJECT PROCUREMENT

Talking points

- Audit processes are an important part of the accountability and transparency framework for the ACT public service.
- The ACT Government acknowledges the Auditor-General's Performance Audit Report into the procurement of the Campbell Primary School Modernisation Project.
- The Education Directorate and Major Projects Canberra fully cooperated with the audit and worked constructively with the Auditor-General and the ACT Audit Office throughout the process.
- The ACT Government has responded to the findings of the Audit, which included six recommendations for improvement. The Government Response was tabled in the ACT Legislative Assembly on 7 April 2021.
- The procurement of vital school infrastructure is appropriately subject to scrutiny to ensure both value-for-money and effective public administration.
- The ACT Government has acknowledged the findings made by the Auditor-General regarding probity and process issues and the need for robust supporting documentation on decision making.
- The Education Directorate will take further action to ensure the probity of procurement processes.
- The Education Directorate is committed to audit any further individual procurements where delegates have not accepted or amended the recommendations of a tender evaluation panel in previous procurement.
- The Education Directorate acknowledges the Standing Committee of Public Accounts Committee Inquiry into the Auditor General's report.

Key Information

Public Interest Disclosure – Annual Report Hearings

- The Standing Committee on Education and Community Hearing into the Education Directorate's Annual Reports 2021-21 was held on 25 February 2022.
- At the hearing, Executive Group Manager Business Services, Mr David Matthews, declined to provide the information to the question '*what has happened to that delegate in terms of either disciplinary action or referral of that delegate to the Integrity Commission*' as the directorate considered it may not have been in the public interest to provide this information.
- The Chair of the Education and Community Inclusion Committee wrote to you on 29 March 2022 requesting you provide information to substantiate this action noting this may have been declined as a claim of public interest immunity.

Cleared as complete and accurate: 02/05/2022
Cleared for public release by: Executive Group Manager
Contact Officer name: Genevieve Cuddihy/
Andrew Parkinson
Lead Directorate: Education
TRIM Ref: FOL22/959

QUESTION TIME BRIEF

- [REDACTED] a response has been prepared to the Chair of the Education and Community Inclusion Committee.

Canberra Times article (5 April 2022)

- It is not appropriate that a Minister receive real time updates on the details of an audit being undertaken by the ACT Auditor General until it has been finalised.
- During the course of this audit ACT Government officials, including those in the Education Directorate, were specifically prevented from disclosing protected information about the audit in line with section 35 of the Auditor-General Act 1996.
- The Minister was kept informed about the process of the audit as it occurred but not the details. The the audit report finding around lacking probity was only known when the audit was finished.
- The Education Directorate commenced an external review of the probity of the Campbell Primary School modernisation procurement process based on documents identified through an FOI request.
- The Directorate is not aware of any legal action being taken against the ACT Government over the procurement process for Campbell Primary School modernisation.
- The Freedom of Information Act 2016 provides a right of access to government information unless access to the information would, on balance, be contrary to the public interest.
- The Information Officer's initial decision made on 12 February 2021 under the Freedom of Information Act 2016 to not release information relating to Lendlease's scores and prices was based upon the consideration that the public interest factors in accordance with section 17 of the Act, favoured non-disclosure as release of the information was considered prejudicial to Lendlease's business affairs and the competitive commercial interests of the Directorate.
- Applicants who are dissatisfied with an initial decision have the right to request a review by the ACT Ombudsman who will confirm the decision, vary the decision or set aside the decision and make a substitute decision. In this case, the Ombudsman varied the decision

Background Information

- The Auditor General released a Performance Audit Report into 'Campbell Primary School Modernisation Project Procurement' on 22 December 2021.
- The audit considered the procurement for design and construction services for the Campbell Primary School Modernisation Project.
- Lendlease and Manteena submitted tenders for the Campbell Primary School Modernisation Project. The project was awarded to Lendlease.

Cleared as complete and accurate: 02/05/2022
Cleared for public release by: Executive Group Manager
Contact Officer name: Genevieve Cuddihy/
Andrew Parkinson
Lead Directorate: Education
TRIM Ref: FOL22/959

QUESTION TIME BRIEF

- The audit found that the decision to award the tender was not based on the weighted evaluation criteria with which the Territory approached the market and sought tenders; the evaluation criteria were effectively re-weighted and re-prioritised. Accordingly, probity was not demonstrated in the procurement process to ‘deal fairly, impartially and consistently with suppliers’.
- The audit also found a number of governance and administrative shortcomings in the procurement process. These relate to the documentation of roles and responsibilities, procurement risk management (including probity risk management), the use of Confidentiality and Conflict of Interest Undertaking forms by participants and communication processes with tenderers.
- The report makes six recommendations for improvement.

Campbell Primary School works

- The Education Directorate is confident in the quality of the modernisation work that is currently being undertaken at Campbell Primary School.
- The project will deliver new classrooms that support both group and independent learning, a dedicated STEM classroom, and connection to outdoor education and play areas.

Portfolio: Education and Youth Affairs

VACCINATIONS

STAFF MANDATORY VACCINATION

Talking points

- As at 16 February 2022, approximately **98 per cent school-based employees have complied with the mandatory COVID-19 vaccination** or have provided an approved exemption. There are a total of **37 staff members who have not provided** the mandatory information comprising 2 school leaders, 25 classroom teachers and 10 non-teaching staff.
- Any ACT public school staff who choose not to be vaccinated without an approved exemption have been assigned alternative duties, been redeployed into non mandated sites or have taken leave.
- The Education Support Office (ESO) within the Education Directorate has been working to implement the Public Health Direction on behalf of schools including ensuring any new employees and employees transferring to mandated sites are compliant with the public health order.
- At the time of implementation of the Public Health Direction, the Education Directorate sent information to all impacted staff, including casual staff, about how to comply with this Public Health Direction.
- Systems continue to be in place to ensure all new employees are compliant with the Public Health Direction and provide evidence of their vaccination status or approved exemption.
- Job advertisements and recruitment processes have been updated to ensure compliance with the Public Health Direction for new employees.
- Education Directorate employees, along with all workers in the ACT impacted by the ACT Chief Health Officer's Public Health Direction about mandatory vaccination, were consulted prior to the direction being signed on 19 October 2021.
- On 19 October 2021, the ACT Chief Health Officer (CHO) enacted the *Public Health (ACT School or Early Childhood Education and Care Workers COVID-19 Vaccination) Emergency Direction 2021* mandating COVID-19 vaccinations for workers in certain school and early childhood education and care settings. Following an initial extension until 12 February 2022, the **Public Health Direction was extended for a further 90 days until 13 May 2022.**
- Staff identified in the Public Health Direction were required to provide proof of vaccination or an approved exemption to their employer and have their first dose by 1 November 2021, and a second dose by 29 November 2021.
- Exemptions to the mandatory vaccination for staff based on medical grounds will no longer be approved by the Director-General. Changes to the administrative process for individuals seeking medical exemptions from the Public Health Direction came into

effect on 4 April 2022. The new process requires the individual's medical practitioner to assess and consider whether a patient meets an ATAGI exemption. Once assessed the medical practitioner completes and uploads a medical exemption form to the Australian Immunisation Register (AIR) which loads into the individual's immunisation record. This record can then be provided as evidence electronically when completing the ACT Gov smartform to confirm vaccination status.

- Changes to the administrative process will be communicated to any staff seeking a medical exemption.
- Under the COVID-19 Vaccination Public Health Directions, workers who have been diagnosed with COVID-19 within the previous 4 months are able to attend their place of work regardless of their vaccination status. An exemption is not required in this circumstance. Following the completion of this 4 month period, workers must meet the vaccination requirements in place under the relevant Public Health Direction, or hold a valid exemption in order to work at their work premises.
- The mandatory vaccination requirement may cease with the removal of the Public Health Directions. The Directorate is consulting with relevant stakeholders regarding impacts this may have on staff who will be effected by the cessation of the mandate.

STUDENT VACCINATION

Talking points

5-11 year old students

- From 10 January 2022 children aged 5-11 became eligible to receive Pfizer and Moderna COVID-19 vaccinations at ACT Health Clinics, General Practitioners and Pharmacies.
- As at 25 April 2022 **80.7 per cent of 5-11 year old children have received their first dose of the COVID-19 vaccine.**
(<https://www.covid19.act.gov.au/updates/act-covid-19-statistics>)
- As at 25 April 2022 **64.3 per cent of 5-11 year old children have received their second dose of the COVID-19 vaccine.**
(<https://www.covid19.act.gov.au/updates/act-covid-19-statistics>)

Specialist Settings Program

- An **in-reach vaccination program** has been provided for **5-11 year old** students in the two specialist primary settings.
- First doses for these students were administered at Malkara School and Cranleigh School in the period from 24-28 January 2022. A total of **32 students were vaccinated** in the **first dose clinics**.
- Second doses were administered at Malkara School and Cranleigh School in the period from 21-24 March 2022. A total of **17 students were vaccinated** at these clinics. **16 students** received their **second dose** and **one student** received their **first dose**.
- An **in-reach program** was provided for **students aged 12 years and above** from specialist high school settings in 2021 with first doses administered in the period from

13 to 17 September 2021, and second doses administered in the period from 5 to 8 October 2021.

- A **total of 322 Pfizer COVID-19 vaccinations were administered via the program** for students from high school settings.
- Three **in-reach programs** were offered during the week commencing **7 March 2022**, for a small cohort of **16-17 year old** students in Specialist settings for their **booster clinics**.
- There were 21 students and staff members of the Education Directorate who received their booster shots.

12 Years Old and Above Students

- Pfizer and Moderna COVID-19 vaccinations became available to students aged 12 years and above during the week 13-20 September 2021.
- As at 25 April 2022, **96.9 per cent of 5 year old and above** of the ACT population have received two doses of vaccine.

16-17 year old students

- On **3 February 2022**, following advice from the Australian Technical Advisory Group on Immunisation (ATAGI), the ACT Government announced that mass vaccination clinics are now providing **16-17 year olds** with bookings for **their booster shot**.
- As at 25 April 2022, **75.1 per cent of 16 year old and above** of the ACT population have received three doses of vaccine.

Year 12 Students

- In 2021, a total of **2,720 year 12 students** made **appointments via ACT Health** to receive their Pfizer COVID-19 vaccination.

Caveat Brief

To: Minister for Education and Youth Affairs
Subject: Calwell High School – Day 1 Week 2 Term 2 Update
Date: 2 May 2022

WorkSafe visit - Background

- On Thursday 31 March 2022 WorkSafe ACT issued the Education Directorate a Prohibition Notice in relation to Calwell High School (refer FILE2022/3275).
- In response, the Directorate stood up an incident management team (IMT) to coordinate a response and recovery. The Executive Group Manager School Improvement is the incident controller reporting to the Deputy Director General.

Calwell High School Staff Program Week One

- Friday 29 April was the final day of the four day program for staff onsite at CHS.
- The following six procedures have been developed/updated as a result of staff consultation and feedback:
 1. Staff shortages
 2. Inbuilt relief
 3. Riskman
 4. Staffing hours
 5. Executive on Deck
 6. Responding to Student Behaviour.
- All staff were provided with copies of the draft procedures on 29 April and given the opportunity to provide feedback via a Google form. This feedback has been collated, recommended amendments developed and consultation with school executive will occur on 3 May.
- Student feedback gathered (in week 10) on safety within the school was provided to staff on 29 April.
- Staff were engaged with a high level of participation throughout the week.
- EAP had two support staff onsite each day and a number of school staff took the opportunity to meet with them.
- An AEU subbranch meeting is scheduled to be on site 2 May 2022.

WorkSafe Improvement Notices and Engagement

- Working towards responding to PIN and other notices by May 6 (Friday week 2).
- Further direct engagement between ESO and WorkSafe ACT Is planned for Tuesday 3 May.
- WorkSafe ACT made a phone call to [redacted] staff at the school on Friday 29 April enquiring about an [redacted] that resulted in a staff member suffering [redacted] from last year.
- The Directorate has engaged a consultancy to undertake a review of ACT public school based work health and safety policies and procedures.
- They have reviewed relevant documentation, have been briefed by Directorate staff and engaged in a full site Risk Assessment at the school today as a first step.

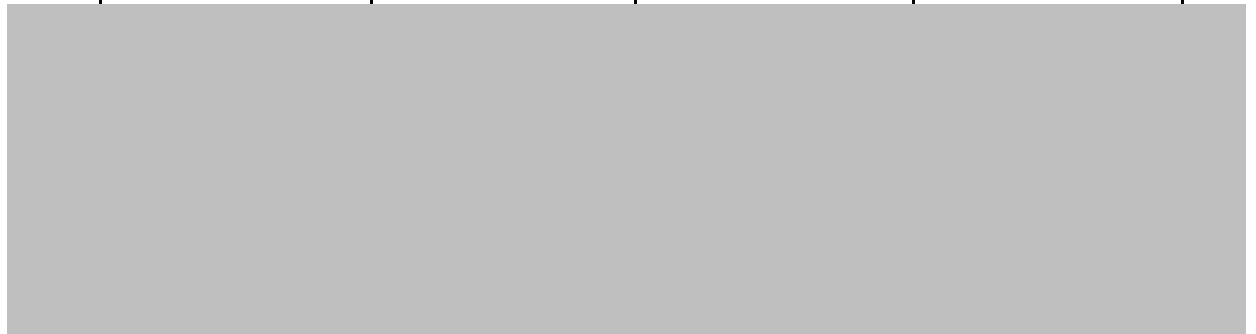
Remote Learning

- Year 9 and 10 have returned to site today.
- Operational communications were sent to community on Friday 29 April about the structure of remote learning for year 7 and 8 this week.
- Letter to community sent yesterday about next steps for all year levels.

Flexible Education Offering

- [REDACTED] students have been identified for the flexible education program:

Student	Year	Parent Permission	Status
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- [REDACTED] students commenced the alternative program today. They are being accompanied by 4 staff members
 - two youth workers
 - one teacher
 - one Learning Support Assistant.
- The flex ed program designed for these students is offsite from the school, risk assessments for each of the delivery locations were completed on 29 April and the program complies with the requirements set out in the WorkSafe prohibition notice for students in year 7 and 8.
- [REDACTED]
- The students remain enrolled in Calwell HS and the program is being supported by Calwell High School Staff so it remains an education program from the school, delivered in school hours and is thus considered attendance at school and rolls will be marked accordingly.
- Staff were advised on Friday 29 April of the students who will be participating in the flexible education offering.

Signatory Name: Jane Simmons

Title Deputy Director-General

Date 2 May 2022

Caveat Brief for School Incidents

To: Minister for Education and Youth Affairs

Subject: Incident at Mount Stromlo High School

Date: 2 May 2022

- A [REDACTED] student was the victim of a physical assault in the [REDACTED] toilets at school on [REDACTED] 2022. The incident was filmed by [REDACTED] students and another student was a bystander. The incident was reported to School Operations on [REDACTED] 2022.

Incident details

- Video provided to School Operations by the school principal shows a [REDACTED] student being physically assaulted by a [REDACTED] student.
- The footage (Attachment A) shows the victim [REDACTED] and was struck multiple times.
- [REDACTED] students in [REDACTED] filmed the incident.
- [REDACTED] student was a bystander.
- At no time does the footage indicated any students attempted to intervene or support [REDACTED] student.

Context

- The assault reportedly occurred in response to a claim that the victim had [REDACTED]

Next Steps

- The school made a report to ACT Policing and provided the video footage. Parents of the victim were also encouraged to make a report to ACT Policing.
- The video footage was deleted from student phones and the school is confident this was not shared on social media.
- School Operations informed the E-Safety team of the potential for footage to be shared on [REDACTED] 2022. No evidence of sharing has been identified at this time.
- The student was provided first aid treatment at school and did not require additional medical treatment. The student has returned to school following the incident.
- [REDACTED] students were suspended including the perpetrator of the assault, the [REDACTED] students who filmed the incident and the bystander.
- The situation will be monitored by the school following re-entry meetings for the suspended students.

Signatory Name: Kris Willis

Title Director School Improvement

Date 3 May 2022

This record is not released in accordance with sections 16 and 17 of the

Freedom of Information Act 2016

Schedule 2, 2.2(a)(ii)

Portfolio/s: Education and Youth Affairs

RETURN TO REMOTE LEARNING
Talking points

- The health and wellbeing of our staff and students is our top priority.
- During the week ending Sunday 1 May, 210 cases of COVID-19 were reported to 60 ACT public schools (K-12). Further details can be found on the ACT Education website.
- The Directorate continues to closely monitor staff and student attendance in ACT public schools and have established additional strategies place to support staff shortages.
- Parents can expect periods of remote learning to continue throughout the school year, and we anticipate further COVID-19 spikes will impact our workforce.
- COVID-19 is an ongoing and often unpredictable challenge that is impacting all parts of the community. Our schools are not immune, but it's a challenge we anticipated and are well prepared for.
- Children of essential workers and vulnerable students continue to be able to attend school during any remote learning periods.
- Five ACT public schools moved some cohorts of students to temporary remote learning at the end of term 1 2022.
- The following ACT public schools have utilised temporary periods of remote learning in term 2 2022:

School	Affected students	Remote Learning Period
Calwell High School**	Years 7-10	26-29 April 2022
	Years 7-8	2-6 May 2022
Cranleigh School	2 classes	4-6 May 2022
Charles Weston School	Years 5-6	4-10 May 2022
Margaret Hendry School	Years 3-6	4-10 May 2022

**Remote learning in this instance is not COVID related.

- Several non-government schools also employed temporary remote learning to alleviate workforce pressures during term 1 2022.

Key Information

- At the start of the year, the Directorate worked in consultation with Principals and Unions to develop plans to support schools that might experience staffing pressures, particularly coming into the winter months.

QUESTION TIME BRIEF

- The Directorate has established a centralised staff relief pool, developed comprehensive plans to support schools with higher absences and, has introduced workload reduction strategies.
- One of the scenarios planned for in all schools is a switch to temporary periods of remote learning where staff absences prevent normal face-to-face learning from continuing.
- The Directorate has built a comprehensive suite of online learning materials which are tailored to year level, and updated weekly.
- Access to google classrooms, chromebooks and online resources all support the transition to remote learning.
- The Directorate will be introducing a range of measures aimed at reducing pressure on schools so teachers can focus on teaching and learning.
- School based RAT distribution will continue throughout term 2, enabling students and staff to access RATs as they need them.
- The Directorate has ongoing consultation with key stakeholders including:
 - CPSU
 - AEU
 - UWU
 - ACTPA
 - ACT P&C Council
 - AIS and CEO

Return to school in 2022

Date	Milestone
24 January 2022	The ACT Government announced that students would be returning to face to face learning for Term 1 2022, supported by the provision of Rapid Antigen Tests for the first 4 weeks of Term 1. The return to school was also supported with updated Health Guidelines and the Term 1 Plan.
31 January 2022	New students commenced face to face learning.
1 February 2022	Returning students commenced face to face learning.
17 February 2022	The ACT Government announced that Rapid Antigen Tests would continue to be provided until the end of Week 8 of Term 1.
15 March 2022	ECEC exposure management processes changed with children and staff are no longer recommended to quarantine following a COVID-19 exposure in their service
17 March 2022	Education relaxed restrictions on school excursions and school activities
22 April 2022	Announcement: Term 1 restrictions will continue in ACT Public Schools for the first few weeks of Term 2
26 April 2022	ACT public schools returned for term 2 2022

This record is not released in accordance with sections 16 and 17 of the

Freedom of Information Act 2016

Schedule 2, 2.2(a)(ii) and 2.2(a)(xv)

This record is not released in accordance with sections 16 and 17 of the
Freedom of Information Act 2016
Schedule 2, 2.2(a)(xvi)

This record is withheld due to third party consultation required by
section 38 of the *Freedom of Information Act 2016*

Caveat Brief for School Incidents

To: Minister for Education and Youth Affairs

Subject: Missing Student – [redacted] Primary School

Date: 5 May 2022

- School Operations were notified on [redacted] of a [redacted] student from [redacted] Primary School who has not been seen since [redacted] on [redacted].
- Subsequently the student was found safe and well on [redacted].

Incident details

[redacted]

Context

[redacted]

Actions taken

- The school maintained contact with the student's [redacted] while the student was missing.
- The deputy principal liaised with staff and students to identify any individuals who may have required additional support.
- School Operations liaised with Student Engagement to coordinate wellbeing check-ins as required.

Signatory Name: Mark Huxley

Title Executive Group Manager, School Improvement

Date 09/05/2022