Government Response to the School Education Advisory Committee Report on Safe and Supportive Schools

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Background
On 18 March 2019 the Minister for Education and Early Childhood Development (the Minister) established a School Education Advisory Committee, the Safe and Supportive Schools Advisory Committee (Advisory Committee), to provide independent advice to the ACT Government on opportunities to strengthen safe and supportive school culture in every ACT public school. The Committee was set up under the parameters of the Education Act 2004 which allows the Minister to establish school education advisory committees as required to provide advice to the Minister about school education or related matters.

The Advisory Committee was asked to review current policies, procedures and processes, with a focus on the Positive Behaviours for Learning (PBL) framework and other specific interventions that support the implementation of the Safe and Supportive Schools Policy in ACT public schools.

Alongside the Advisory Committee, on 4 April 2019 the ACT Legislative Assembly, on motion of the Minister, referred the issue of management and minimisation of bullying and violence in ACT schools to the Standing Committee on Education, Employment and Youth Affairs for inquiry and report. While the Minister committed to provide the Advisory Committee report to the Standing Committee once it had been received and considered by the government, the Standing Committee reported five weeks earlier than required on 19 September 2019, forestalling an opportunity for the Minister to provide the Advisory Committee report to the Standing Committee for their information.

The Report
On 19 August 2019 the Chair of Advisory Committee provided the ACT Chief Minister and ACT Minister for Education and Early Childhood Development with its final report (the Report). The Report does not contain formal recommendations but rather it includes a series of observations on the Education Directorate’s current approach to achieving safe and supportive schools and opportunities for improvement.

The Report acknowledges the ACT Government’s demonstrated commitment and significant investment, particularly in recent years, in supporting, managing and responding to children with complex needs and challenging behaviours.

The ACT Government’s Future of Education Strategy has, at its core, an acknowledgement of inclusion within our schools, and the need to support and value teachers as expert professionals. The Strategy sets the direction of the government’s efforts to create safe, respectful and inclusive learning environments over the coming ten years.

The Report recognises the strength of the ACT Government’s work in these areas and concludes that “many of the necessary levers [to provide safe, supportive and inclusive schools] are already in place” in our education system, “but that there are also opportunities to enhance, modify or expedite some levers”.

Positive Behaviours for Learning
The Report observes that PBL is “an appropriate approach on which to build a positive environment for all students” and suggests that all ACT public schools implement this framework. The Report states that success of the framework is influenced by the strength of commitment including ensuring that it is appropriately resourced and that schools are implementing the
program with fidelity to its core principles. The Advisory Committee suggested this should also include availability and accessibility of internal and external support services such as training and in-class mentoring to schools. This will allow for consistency in managing incidents effectively.

**Advisory Committee observations**

- PBL is an appropriate approach on which to build a positive environment for all students. It should continue to be a framework that all ACT public schools implement.
- PBL as a framework provides the opportunity for schools to access additional support, strategies, and resources to address individual student and/or family needs as they arise.
- It is clear that culture change of any kind takes time, including the implementation of PBL. The improvements being sought from the implementation of PBL in schools will take 3-5 years to show the real changes expected although already some schools are reporting improved behaviour and a more positive culture in their schools.
- The ACT Government and Education Directorate should “stay the course” in relation to the implementation of the PBL as a framework, allowing adequate time for quality implementation and evaluation.
- The ACT Government and Education Directorate should consider requiring all ACT public schools to begin implementation of PBL within a set timeframe.

The ACT Government will continue the ongoing implementation of PBL. The government currently provides support for PBL in 51 of the 88 public schools and continues to invest in the roll out to remaining schools. The ACT Government committed $4.2 million in the 2019-20 Budget to the implementation of the *Future of Education Strategy*, including the continued implementation of PBL.

The Directorate is currently working with ACT public schools to identify the optimal time for those not currently using PBL to commence, noting that many of the remaining schools currently have other approaches in place in the area of behaviour support and social and emotional learning. This will ensure schools commence PBL in line with international and national best practice that requires a school to be in a position to commit to implementing the framework. A timetable that reflects the timing for remaining schools to commence will be published before 28 November 2019.

**Advisory Committee observations**

- All schools need to specifically teach social skills and strategies to support children and young people to build resilience.
- Schools need to be able to identify when a child needs additional support and be able to access the resources to respond appropriately.
- The understanding of the range of presentations of trauma is already clearly defined and communicated and schools should continue to have access to appropriate professional learning opportunities about trauma-informed practice as and when required.

ACT public schools are required to intentionally teach Social and Emotional Learning approaches to assist students with positive social, emotional and academic outcomes. The Social and Emotional Learning approach is informed by the Collaborative for Academic, Social and Emotional Learning approach, which identifies that effective Social and Emotional Learning strategies should
cover self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, relationship skills and responsible decision making.

The Directorate will also complement existing supports to schools by providing additional information and professional learning on a suite of evidence-based Social Emotional Learning approaches through the Education Support Office. This will build on existing approaches, some of these currently are implemented in conjunction with PBL.

The ACT Government’s commitment to children and young people’s mental health and wellbeing is also evident in ACT schools’ uptake and implementation of the nationally funded education initiative BeYou. This involves resourcing school and Education Support Office Staff time to attend relevant meetings and training opportunities to enable BeYou to be rolled out. BeYou offers educators and learning communities evidence-based online professional learning, complemented by a range of tools and resources to turn learning into action. Beyond Blue, Early Childhood Australia, headspace and Emerging Minds continue to provide additional training opportunities associated with Be You, through both face to face and webinar delivery. Topics include Trauma Informed Practice in your Learning Community and an upcoming Supporting Children and Young People with Complex Needs.

To ensure students requiring additional support are identified, PBL establishes a continuum of support that is proactive in supporting students with diverse academic and social needs. There is a consistent, data-driven approach to develop and implement appropriate interventions. Data is regularly reviewed by the school PBL implementation team that identifies and addresses specific needs at the whole school level, of smaller student cohorts and individual students.

PBL is also aligned with trauma-informed practice because of the emphasis on creating a consistent, predictable, positive and safe environment, and the flexible nature of the support it provides. ACT has integrated neuroscience principles into PBL professional learning to enable teachers to understand the neuroscience of learning, including the impact of trauma on brain functioning and associated learning needs.

All school leaders and teachers have access to relevant professional learning in a range of areas, including trauma-informed practice. As part of the ACT Government’s Future of Education Strategy, the Education Directorate will provide additional programs and communicate clearly about their availability to ensure consistency of approach in supporting children experiencing anxiety and trauma.

**Advisory Committee observations**

- The PBL framework will require ongoing investment to remain sustainable, with the appropriate budget including provision for the increased and ongoing support of the implementation of PBL across all ACT public schools. This should take into account student growth and new schools.
- It is essential that the Directorate and each individual school have clarity on what resources are available to them specifically for the purpose of implementing PBL.

The ACT Government has funded PBL coaches working in the Education Support Office (ESO) who are specifically trained and skilled in supporting schools to implement the various stages of PBL.
The government will consider additional and ongoing investment to provide implementation support for PBL alongside other priorities.

Additionally, each school forms their own internal PBL team who drive the preparation, planning and implementation of PBL with support from their ESO PBL coach. Members of the internal PBL team include a cross-section of staff in addition to the internal coach. This may include an executive staff member, student support team representation and others. This team meets regularly and attend training at the various stages of rolling out PBL. This model allows for the critical expertise required to successfully roll out the framework to be embedded at a school. Schools will continue to resource staffing for this team to allow for a concentrated focus on implementing PBL.

The ESO external coaches attend regular meetings at the school to assist with professional learning, research, data analysis, guidance and support materials as well as problem solving to ensure that PBL schools have the assistance they need to continually improve the systems in their school. Further support for school executive and internal coaches is provided through PBL Network Meetings each term. These meetings are for schools to discuss and share their PBL implementation experience and gain ideas from other PBL schools. External coaches provide quality assurance and evaluative processes to inform the continuous PBL implementation at each school.

As the Report acknowledges, effective PBL-based change will take several years to implement, with multilevel implementation support recommended for three to five years to support sustained long-term implementation. The government is focused on staying the course to ensure maximum benefit of the programs are realised.

**Data and Reporting**

The Report recognises the progress the Education Directorate has made in capturing and using quality data. The ACT Government’s recent $10 million investment in the School Administration System is facilitating an increase in real time data and information about what is happening in schools.

Datasets are now available to the Directorate and schools in new ways, supporting schools in making evidence-based decisions. This includes functionality that will provide the Education Support Office with access to data showing detail of incidents when they are reported by schools. While this use of data is in its infancy, school staff will be trained to accurately and appropriately input data and be supported to better understand and use the data. This system has significantly strengthened the capability of the PBL framework through the provision of data, data that underpins each school’s strategy, priorities and ongoing decision making with respect to their PBL framework.

The government is building schools’ capability to assess multiple sources of data to make informed decisions pertaining to wellbeing and safety. As capability grows and the model matures, the Directorate and schools will be able to take a more proactive approach to aspects of school performance such as incidents, safety matters and student and staff engagement.
**Lead indicators**

The Report supports a continued focus on growing capacity to use lead indicators, including student wellbeing and engagement data, to both monitor and assist individual students and to identify and enable improvements at the system level.

While the majority of indicators of student progress are lag indicators that measure where children and young people are at with their learning at a particular point in time, lead indicators can provide insights at the whole of system level, at the school level and at the individual student level as to what might be important for their progress in the future. Measurement of student wellbeing is a priority of the COAG Education Council, and the ACT is one of only four jurisdictions nationally that collects student wellbeing and engagement data in a structured way.

**Advisory Committee observations**

- The Directorate should continue to develop and collect lead indicators, including student wellbeing and engagement data, to monitor student progress through the educational system.
- The Directorate should also consult with students to identify what information students consider would be valuable to collect in order to better identify positive learning communities. Consideration could be given to incorporating “feedback loops” into data collection processes so people understand how and why their information is being collected.
- Support for school leaders and teachers to better understand the data available is necessary.
- Trend data in relation to incidents, actions and outcomes could be made available more widely to parents and the broader community to present more accurate picture of what ACT schools are achieving that what they are doing to ensure a safe and supportive culture within schools.

The ACT Government routinely seeks the views of students on things that matter to them. For instance, students made up almost half of the 5000 ACT community members who contributed to the conversations leading up to the *Future of Education Strategy*.

Student voice is also heard through the Minister’s Student Congress which consists of student representatives from each ACT public school. The Student Congress provides advice directly to the Minister for Education and Early Childhood Development on issues they consider important. The first Student Congress of 2019 focused on the topic of bullying. The Executive students, who are elected annually to coordinate Congress, chose to dedicate part of the session to hear from students on what makes a friendly and welcoming school. Students provided ideas and feedback relevant to positive learning communities such as developing positive relationships and partnerships within school environments. The Student Congress will directly advise the Minister on their findings.

In addition to consulting directly with students, the Directorate and schools also collect information from students through the Australian School Climate and Satisfaction Measurement Tool. The Education Directorate engaged the Australian National University in development of the Tool which is designed to measure constructs such as School Identity, Academic Emphasis, Emotional Engagement, Behavioural Engagement and Perceived Support and Safety. The
development process involved examination of existing measures, expert input and engagement with the target population and a range of statistical procedures to ensure the assessment tool is fit-for-purpose.

Each year the Directorate uses the Tool to survey students (years 5 to 12 between 2014-18 and years 4 to 12 from 2019), parents and carers, and school staff from across all ACT public schools. Data is used for school improvement feedback and academic research that examines the relationship between the tool domains and academic and wellbeing outcomes. School leadership teams are also provided with their school level findings. This year will be the first year that domain data will be available to schools electronically, making it easier for school leaders to analyse the findings and integrate them into practice.

The government has provided ongoing support and training to schools in reporting of student wellbeing and incidents. The School Administration System is used by school staff to record, review and respond to a range of incidents. Currently the School Administration System school support team is engaging with all schools to improve recording, reporting and monitoring of incidents. This will continue, along with additional training for Principals, School Leaders and Wellbeing Co-ordinators.

Parents, school communities and the broader public can access reporting data through the Education Directorate’s annual report. This includes reporting information on critical and work health and safety incidents as well as information about the Directorate’s progress against key priorities such as providing safe communities for learning. Annually, each school also produces an Impact Report which details progress against school priorities, activities and impact on student outcomes and an Annual School Board Report which makes public information about the school as required by legislation and regulations. Both reports are available on school websites.

Policy governance

The Advisory Committee found the Safe and Supportive Schools policy to be complex with a large number of supporting documents.

**Advisory Committee Observations**

- A review of Directorate policies and procedures needs to be undertaken to ensure currency, simplicity and accessibility for all stakeholders.

The Directorate has convened a specific reference group to manage the Directorate’s policy framework, including considering existing policies and procedures to ensure accessibility for stakeholders. The *Suspension, Transfer or Exclusion Policy* has been reviewed recently. Extensive public consultation was undertaken on this policy including individuals, schools, school communities and key groups with an interest in this policy area, for example: the Australian Education Union, Parents and Citizens Associations (P&Cs), the ACT Human Rights Commission, the Youth Coalition of the ACT, ACT Principals Association and various agencies in the ACT Health Directorate.

As referred to in the Committee’s report, the *Safe and Supportive Schools Policy* and associated procedures cover many areas important to school operations. A revision of this policy will
Bullying and violence- student perspective

The Advisory Committee found that including students’ voices should be a priority when addressing bullying. Students told the committee that they want to see action on bullying: after incidents, outside of school, and before there’s a problem.

Advisory Committee observations

- SEAC encourages students and schools to continue to co-design specific school-based approaches to identifying bullying and violence and communicate broadly their implementation. Students should continue to be empowered to solve their own issues where this is possible and appropriate.
- Schools are encouraged to continue to work with students to develop age-appropriate acknowledgement systems for positive behaviours under the PBL framework.
- Schools should assist students to recognise their role as active bystanders, which is also consistent with the PBL framework.
- Schools should consider how students and parents and carers can report bullying and violence without fear of retribution and receive feedback about what has happened as a result of their report. Online mechanisms for reporting could be investigated.

The government strongly supports improved student agency in learning, which is a key principle of delivering the Future of Education Strategy. At a system level, the government is exploring opportunities for students and parents to collaborate on responses to bullying and violence. The Minister’s Student Congress may have a role in this future work.

At a school level, schools work closely with students to integrate their voice in a range of ways such as through student representative councils, student parliaments and student leadership teams. Schools use different approaches to contextualise how they represent PBL in their school. Students select mascots, themes or specific aspects of their school’s identity to make their PBL relevant and integral to their own school. It is recognised that student buy-in is pivotal, particularly in high school and colleges, to ensure engagement in the framework. Student voice assists the process of creating strong systems and impacts on how students connect and identify with the PBL framework which ensures a positive school culture. For example, reward systems look completely different in high schools and colleges, compared to primary schools and will involve consultation with students to ensure they are motivating, relevant and have social currency.

As part of anti-bullying discussions and lessons, schools discuss ways to be an active or “supportive” bystander, discussing what students could do to assist in different ways if they are witnessing or nearby at the time bullying takes place (either in person or online). For example, saying something (if safe), telling someone or doing something.

Parents and carers are encouraged to raise incidents of bullying and violence with their local school such as through their child’s teacher or principal. This year, the Responding to Parent Reports about Bullying workshop package has been used in schools to increase staff capability and confidence when responding to parent reports of bullying. The package was developed by the
Australian Safe and Supportive School Communities working group in consultation with a psychologist and is publicly available on the Bullying. No Way! website

Families also have the option to directly approach the Education Directorate with their complaint or concern through the Families, Students, Complaints and Feedback team. The government recognises the importance of effective and accountable complaints reporting processes and is currently looking at how these can be improved. A redesign of the Directorate’s complaints management system and case coordination process is currently underway. This work will include consideration of an online solution that will not only provide the avenue to lodge a complaint but also to keep families up to date on actions being undertaken.

Cybersafety

The Advisory Committee examined the impact on young people of having mobile phones in schools, particularly in relation to their self-esteem when incidents of bullying and violence are recorded and shared on social media platforms. The Advisory Committee highlighted the importance of teaching children and young people how they can be active bystanders on social media in addition to being active bystanders in a physical sense.

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<th>Advisory Committee observations</th>
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<td>• Schools should continue to teach students about the appropriate use of technology.</td>
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<td>• Provide more opportunities for all students to have time away from devices, particularly, e.g. recess/lunch time and make time for play and social interaction so that social interaction and social skills can be taught and practiced.</td>
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<td>• There is an opportunity for the Directorate and schools to work with the eSafety Commissioner to enhance the cybersafety and digital technology curriculum.</td>
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Implementing and supporting a coherent, comprehensive and proactive eSafety program for ACT public schools is an important element of the Education Directorate’s approach to supporting safe, supportive and inclusive schools. ACT public schools use a preventative focus including Social and Emotional Learning approaches to digital citizenship programs. Guided by the Australian Curriculum, schools adopt cyber-safety programs which focus on critical thinking and understanding in social situations.

The Directorate has partnered with the Office of the eSafety Commissioner to provide schools an enriching digital program aimed to educate our students about how to be safe online. Schools can access teaching resources from a variety of sources including from the Office of the eSafety Commissioner as well as through ThinkUKnow (Australian Federal Police), and Bullying. No Way! (Safe and Supportive Schools Community). The Directorate also works with these entities to offer several eSafety Webinars and seminars throughout the year for students and parents.

Given the observations made in the Report, the government will further support these programs and making them more widely available for students, teachers and the community. This will include strengthening the information provided for schools to include in their communications out to parents and families. The Directorate will continue to work with the eSafety Commissioner to enhance the cyber-safety and digital technology curriculum.

The government is also exploring opportunities to work more closely with students and families on issues relating to eSafety and responding to bullying and violence. This includes work to
understand how best the Education Directorate can engage with parents and respond on these issues going forward.

Families play an important role in discussing digital skills with their children and families are encouraged to talk about expected behaviours at home. Family resource materials and support contacts are available through the Directorate and schools. In addition, parents are provided with policies around acceptable use of ICT and privacy information relating to digital tools used for learning and classroom collaboration.

Communication
The Advisory Committee identified the importance of schools working effectively with parents and communities to support positive school experiences and noted that clear and timely communication is important to school culture. The Advisory Committee is of the view that the successful ongoing implementation of the PBL framework should also focus on communication and engagement with all stakeholders. The Report suggests several opportunities to strengthen this by building capability of schools to authentically engage and collaborate with students and families.

The Directorate will review communication resources relating to PBL and the Safe and Supportive Schools policy to ensure that they are clear, concise and accessible. The Directorate will also ensure that there are a variety of communication channels being used to reach parents and carers, students, teachers and the community.

School Boards and P&Cs have access to data through their school principal. Schools produce a range of data to support student outcomes and are provided with system-level trend data annually by the Directorate. Some of this data is reported publicly through the Annual School Board Report.

Initial Teacher Education, Professional Learning, Induction and Coaching
The Advisory Committee recognised the ACT Government’s recent provision of coordinated professional experience placements for pre-service teachers and saw an opportunity for further investment in training and support for learning professionals in relation to PBL.
The Minister is currently considering a range of areas where more focused initial teacher education and professional learning is required, including in managing and supporting students with complex needs and challenging behaviours.

The ACT Teacher Quality Institute delivers a range of important services to all sectors of school education. This includes professional regulatory services, quality assurance of initial teacher education and professional learning, advice and training on standards certification, accreditation of programs and teacher registration as well as promotion of continuous professional learning and development. The government will work with the University of Canberra to ensure information about the principles of PBL are conveyed to pre-service teachers as part of initial teacher education. A key element of the University of Canberra Affiliated Schools Program is school-based pre-service teacher education clinics to enhance the professional experience component of initial teacher education. Pre-service teachers participate in a number of clinics from their second year of study providing them access to different school settings and their programs including the implementation of PBL.

The ACT Government has invested in the ACT Teacher Scholarship Program, which supports ACT public school teachers to complete their Master of Education with the University of Canberra. The Master of Education is an innovative and specially designed program that aligns with the Future of Education Strategy. Units have been designed to provide rich, rigorous learning opportunities and include topics such as Leading Coaching and Mentoring in Education, Education for Inclusion, Leading and Sustaining Professional Learning Communities, and Issues and Challenges in School Improvement: International Perspectives.

Commencing PBL involves significant teacher education, professional learning, support and coaching. Schools identify the most appropriate staff member to be their internal coach, often this is an executive staff member who has comparatively more flexibility to dedicate to PBL. Principals discuss learning and development needs with their Director of School Improvement which includes individual planning in relation to professional learning, coaching and mentoring. All ACT government staff are required to complete a development plan which aligns with the ACT Public Service Performance Framework and these discussions are reflected in this plan. The

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**Advisory Committee observations**

- Teacher training should have as part of the curriculum for 4th year students modules on PBL, including the philosophy and expectations of ACT teachers in relation to PBL.
- The Directorate and Minister may wish to consider the opportunity to require an additional specialisation in the area of complex needs and challenging behaviours, and/or to require further professional learning for the current teaching workforce in this area as part of a re-registration process.
- PBL resourcing is not just about ‘training modules’. The most effective way of embedding a PBL approach is to provide in-classroom support for teachers including mentoring and feedback. Mentors need to be freed up from their own classrooms, so resourcing must include the provision of relief from face to face teaching.
- Professional learning for principals is critically important for the success of the culture change that PBL brings- for beginning principals in particular. Their Professional Learning can be provided through coaching and mentoring and reflected in their performance management plan.
government will consider how principals’ professional learning plans may be strengthened to incorporate identified areas of need that align with Directorate priorities.

**Community engagement**

The Report identified that schools need to partner with other community services and organisations, such as ACT Policing and P&Cs.

**Advisory Committee observations**

- Bullying and violence is a whole-of-community issue and it is important to work with communities to build trust. Schools should be welcoming and accessible places for parents, carers and communities.
- Schools should work with other community services to support children and young people to access services where this would be valuable. Schools should inform these services about the PBL framework.
- Services run in schools such as out of hours school care should also receive key information about the PBL framework.
- Community Coordinators are available in a small number of schools and SEAC suggests this approach could be examined by the Directorate for possible expansion across schools.

The ACT Government recognises that bullying is a whole-of-community issue and requires a whole-of-community response. Schools can and should draw on the help and expertise of other community organisations to respond to bullying and violence. Schools engage with their communities to develop anti-bullying policies, plans and activities such as the National Day of Action against Bullying and Violence.

The ACT Government acknowledges that there is also opportunity to strengthen understanding of PBL approaches to community providers, particularly those involved with schools such as Outside School Hours Care providers. The Directorate will look to strengthen information provision in this area to facilitate greater understanding of PBL approaches.

As the Report identified, a small number of schools have utilised community coordinators to provide outreach and support to families. As highlighted in the *Future of Education Strategy*, the government is already exploring the roles community coordinators play as one of the opportunities for enhanced connection to the community.

**Supporting and educating parents**

The Advisory Committee found that positive relationships between families and schools is beneficial to student learning and wellbeing. The Report acknowledged that schools already manage complex relationships with parents in flexible ways, but the Report included observations on possible improvements.
ACT public schools are focusing on establishing and maintaining respectful, collaborative relationships with parents and carers, with significant efforts being made to strengthen parent engagement. For example, the Directorate has recently partnered with the ACT Parents and P&Cs in a series of workshops about preventing bullying and other violent behaviours in schools.

P&Cs have a valued role within each ACT public school. In line with its election commitment, in the 2018-19 Budget government allocated funding for a dedicated parental engagement officer. Arising from this the Directorate has appointed two parent engagement officers who will work with schools and P&C groups to promote parent engagement across the ACT as part of the government’s election commitment.

Parents and carers play an important role in the development and articulation of school values during the establishment phase of PBL. Once PBL is established, schools communicate regularly to parents and carers about school behavioural expectations which strengthens the family-school partnership.

In support of the improved collection and reporting of complaints, the Education Directorate is redesigning its complaint management model. This involves ensuring there are clear pathways for the community to provide feedback to schools and the Directorate and that there are processes in place to ensure that schools and the Directorate “close the loop” on issues that are brought to their attention. It will also ensure that there are appropriate avenues for escalation for all complaints, including bullying and violence. The redesign will also include updated policies, procedures and other documents including posters, checklists, improved online content and targeted information for teachers and parents and carers.

**Conclusion**

The Report validates the ACT Government’s position that schools have strong foundations in place to manage and minimise bullying and violence. It acknowledges the considerable investment, effort and progress that the government has already achieved.

The Report provides the ACT Government with clear areas to focus improvement. Specifically, the government will be considering the supports and materials that are available for parents including

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**Advisory Committee observations**

- It is important for schools to develop relationships with families as early as possible and be explicit about policies and procedures. Before new initiatives are implemented in schools, students, parents and carers and teachers should be engaged. Information should be provided in an accessible format.
- Schools could consider adding information about the PBL framework and acceptable behaviours to the induction program for parents and carers at the beginning of the school year, and when students change or join a school mid-way through a school year.
- Parents and carers may benefit from information that helps them understand how they can use the PBL framework and support PBL behaviours in the homes.
- Parents and carers should be able to report incidents and receive feedback about what action has been taken as a result of their report. This feedback should also occur when students report incidents.
their ability to provide feedback to schools and the Directorate. In addition, further work is required to ensure consistent connection between the community and schools and whether successful models such as community coordinators could be rolled out more widely.

Notably, the Report emphasises the importance of genuine and full commitment to the policies and frameworks that are already in place to ensure their success. The Advisory Committee reiterated that cultural change and systemic reform takes time, patience and ongoing iterative refinement. There can be risk in diverting from the path and or adopting additional courses of action too soon.

The ACT Government is deeply focused on ensuring the safety of students and staff in ACT public schools. The safety of staff and students is paramount. This focus is reflected in the ACT Government’s Future of Education Strategy that has at its core an acknowledgement of the human diversity amongst students and supporting and valuing teachers as expert professionals who are highly skilled at working with students throughout their schooling. It is well established that truly inclusive educational environments deliver better academic, social and wellbeing outcomes for all students and are a key part of making our schools safer.

The ACT Government acknowledges and thanks the Advisory Committee for their commitment and rigour in developing their observations. The government is grateful for the opportunity to reflect on these opportunities for improvement.