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'TELLING OUR STORY' NARRATIVE

ACT Public Schools

- Every ACT public school is a great school. Here in the ACT, we have a high performing public school system that gives children and young people a great education.
- We want to make sure that all students get what they need to learn and succeed at school, and get the best start to life.
- We know that all children are different, and that all children have different learning styles, strengths, and challenges when it comes to succeeding at school.
- Our public schools use a student-centred education model that responds to each student's individual needs, so that every child and young person can be engaged and have the best opportunity for learning.
- ACT public schools are flexible and dynamic places to learn. Teachers are experts in finding the best ways for their students to learn and use a range of techniques, approaches, and tools. Their goal is to develop confident and empowered students, who have the capacity to succeed in their learning.
- The ACT public school system continues to deliver a high-quality education to all children under the Australian Curriculum, with a strong focus on literacy and numeracy.

Future of Education

- The *Future of Education* strategy is a decade-long vision for education that focuses on improved wellbeing and education outcomes for all children and young people in the ACT.
- The Future of Education seeks to support children to overcome and achieve regardless of background or circumstance by responding to the needs of each individual student in order to develop capable adults who have learnt to learn, live productively in society, think, create and work in an increasingly digital future.
- In Phase Two our focus is to deeply embed each of the four principles of Equity, Access, Agency, and Inclusion as we continue to place children and young people at the centre of decision making.
- Engaging children and young people in their learning, involves guiding and enabling them to make choices about when, where, and how they learn, to better meet their needs and achieve their personal goals and aspirations.
- In our schools we will see empowered and supported educators, school leaders and allied health professionals, who will be able to meet the needs of children and young people, as a direct result of their access to high quality training, mentoring and professional development.
- We will continue to invest in educators and provide systems that support learning to enable the flexible approaches for educational delivery that are required to meet diverse needs, including resourcing and teaching tools, organisational structures and culture, and reporting.
- We will continue to build collaborative partnerships between schools, government, community service providers and across education sectors to enhance wellbeing, resilience and connections throughout the community. We will also ensure parents and carers are active partners with their school community. Together we will make a difference for all children and young people.
- We have a strong plan that focuses on the right things that will make the most impact for all children, young people and families, ensuring every young person leaves school with the future focused skills they need to lead happy and successful lives.

Set up for Success

- *Set up for Success: An Early Childhood Strategy for the ACT* is a ten-year plan for early childhood education and care in the ACT from 2020-2030. It is grounded in the evidence and aims to set all children up for success and the opportunity for a fair, decent life.
- Set up for Success aligns with Future of Education, creating a comprehensive plan for education in the ACT from birth to 18 years.
- Set up for Success is based on four foundations: a fair start for every child; valuing educators, values children; every child has a story; working together for children.
- Evidence shows that the period from birth through to eight, especially the years from birth to three, sets the foundation for every child's social, physical, emotional and cognitive development.
- When children participate in quality early learning, they are more likely to make a successful transition to school, stay longer in school, continue to further education and fully participate in employment and community life as adults.
- The transformative power of quality early learning is especially strong for children who are experiencing vulnerability or disadvantage.

Teaching and Learning

- ACT public schools use a modern and evidence-based education model known as student centred learning.
- Independent studies of schools engaging in student-centred learning have found students demonstrate greater confidence, more on-task learning behaviours, improved group dynamics and a greater ability to respond to learning challenges.
- Learning looks different for everyone. Whether students are working in groups or individually, teachers provide the structure and support that is needed to match student learning needs, the speed they acquire information and style of learning. Some students will require more structure to assist with their learning and others will require prompts to stretch their knowledge and keep them engaged. This is called differentiated learning and an important way to address the learning needs of all students.
- Teaching in ACT public schools is responsive to the needs of the child or young person.
- Teachers are experts in finding the best ways for their students to learn and use a range of techniques, approaches, and tools to do this.
- Teachers use a range of approaches to achieve the best learning outcomes for our students.
- Teachers plan, strategise, and develop explicit and discreet programs of work that underpin the Australian Curriculum and Early Years Learning Framework to maximise the personalised learning growth of every student.
- All ACT public use the Australian Curriculum with a strong focus on literacy and numeracy skills.

Student outcomes/performance

- Current research indicates a close connection between individual wellbeing and achieving academic learning outcomes, and identifies important future skills, such as critical thinking, digital literacy, and global competence (OECD report).
- A strong sense of identity (belonging) with a school is important. There is a positive correlation between a stronger identification between a student and their school, and the outcomes that the student achieves. Similarly, positive staff identification and parent/carer identification with the school has a beneficial impact on wellbeing and school culture.
- The 2020 NAPLAN tests were cancelled due to COVID-19 but went ahead in 2021. NAPLAN testing provides a snapshot of a student's progress at a point in time and assists the school system understand learning progress across the whole system.
- The best way for families understand the learning progress of their children is to engage with their local school and talk to teachers and school leaders about the progress of their children.

BUDGET ESTIMATES BRIEF

Portfolio: Education and Youth Affairs

DIGITAL ACCESS AND EQUITY

Note: Refer to Estimates **Brief 08.5 – Use of Technology in Schools**

	Future of Education: Digital Access and Equity				Education and life-long learning
	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25	Total
	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000
Capital	4,131	4,413	4,713	5,033	18,290
Total/Net Capital	4,131	4,413	4,713	5,033	18,290
Depreciation	689	2,113	3,633	3,881	10,316
Expenses	641	693	702	714	2,750
Net cost of services	-1,330	-2,806	-4,335	-4,595	-13,066

Talking points:

- The Government will progress the second phase of the Future of Education Strategy by continuing to provide **all new ACT public school students in years 7 to 12 with access to a personal device to support their learning.**
- The Government will also provide free internet access for secondary students requiring the support, and provide additional eSafety supports for students, families and schools. The capital and depreciation components are partially offset by provisions established through the August 2020 Economic and Fiscal Update.
- The Government's *Future of Education, An ACT Education Strategy for the Next Ten Years* was released in 2018. The first phase of the strategy has been delivered. This initiative will build on the first phase and contribute to implementing the 'Systems Supporting Learning' foundation of the strategy's second phase.
- This initiative ensures that every secondary student in Canberra public schools has the same access to a device to enhance their learning through technology. Irrespective of family circumstances, every student will have an equal opportunity to access technology so that they can learn wherever they are and use technology whenever they need it.
- The provision of Chromebooks, and internet connectivity (to those that don't have access to it at home), enables students to develop digital literacy skills to participate in a knowledge-based economy, to be empowered within a technologically sophisticated society and to be ready and supported as a digital citizen. Students require digital literacy, knowledge, skills and confidence to ease their transition to the workforce and help them to be valued contributors to the ACT, national and global economies.
- Critical for digital literacy is strengthening eSafety understanding, which includes students, their parents and carers, and teachers together with the supporting security controls. It also includes a greater understanding of overarching digital

Cleared as complete and accurate: 12/10/2021

Cleared for public release by: Choose an item.

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citizenship concepts, such as access and participation, security and privacy, media and digital literacy, and general health and wellbeing. eSafety combine components of digital citizenship with social emotional learning (specifically five elements: self-awareness, self-management, responsible decision-making, relationship skills, and social awareness). It highlights and addresses specific risks, vulnerabilities, or harms to children online.

- During COVID-19 pandemic ACT public school students have significantly benefited from the Government commitment enabling learning to continue whilst students were in lockdown. ACT is the only jurisdiction that has this initiative Territory wide, making sure no ACT public secondary school student had equal opportunity to continue their learning.

Key Information

- The initiative will provide a device for every new ACT public school secondary student at the commencement of every school year and a replacement device to students whose device three-years old. This initiative includes a Chromebook device, Google chrome license, white-gloving, Tag and test and delivery costs. The initiative will also provide an eSafety expert providing information and resources for teachers, students, parents and carers as well as supply of internet access to secondary students that don't have access to the Internet at home.
- The program will be monitored on an ongoing basis through the Education Directorate's Digital Strategy Committee (DSC), who will provide program oversight for the digital strategy of the Directorate. Operational oversight of the deliverables of the program will be shared through the Service Design and Delivery Group of the Education Directorate.

Background Information

- The Government's Technology-enabled Learning program commenced in term one of the 2018 school year. Since 2019, all students in years 7 through 12 have been supplied with a Chromebook.
- The initiative is a continuation of the Technology Enabled Learning program where devices were provided in the 2018 school year and have been provided to ACT public school students each year since. The existing funding commitment ends in 2021. This initiative continues to ensure all ACT public high school students have access to a device and supports ongoing equity of access to the tools that support education for ACT public school students.
- Old Chromebook devices are used for spare parts, spare devices or replacement devices. Devices that are no longer fit for purpose are responsibly disposed through the CMTEDD hardware disposal program.

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Portfolio: Education and Youth Affairs

DISABILITY EDUCATION REVIEW

Note: Refer to Estimates **Brief 08.7 Accessibility and Inclusion** provides detailed information about this initiative as well as current state.

Talking points:

	Future of Education: Disability Education Review		Education and life-long learning		
	2021-22 \$'000	2022-23 \$'000	2023-24 \$'000	2024-25 \$'000	Total \$'000
Expenses	245	205	0	0	450

- The ACT Government recognises that inclusive education delivers better academic, social and wellbeing outcomes for **all** students and is key to creating a more equitable society.
- The vision of ACT's **Future of Education** is that each individual student gets what they need to learn and succeed at school to get the best start to life, and that all public schools:
 - are welcoming and inclusive
 - have high expectations for all students
 - have leadership and staff capable of making appropriate adjustments to achieve positive learning and wellbeing outcomes
 - have physical environments constructed or modified using 'universal design' principles to maximise access and participation in learning.
- As part of the [Future of Education Strategy](#), the Education Directorate is working with people with disability to create a future of education underpinned by inclusion and equity – where a universal sense of belonging is fostered and students with disability are included in ways that work for them.
- The ACT Government has committed to working with students with disability, their families and the broader community to consider how to deliver the best possible learning opportunities for children and young people with disability in public schools over the next 10 years.
- This strategy will take time to design and implement in collaboration with students with disabilities, their families or carers, and other key stakeholders.
- In the meantime, work will continue to make sure schools are supported to meet the needs of every child and young person, and to focus on cultural change, capacity building, and system supports over the coming months.

Cleared as complete and accurate: 15/10/2021
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Key Information

Key deliverables will include:

- A review of disability education in the ACT
- An Inclusion Strategy and Roadmap

Background Information

- In the ACT there is:
 - growth in the number of students with disability;
 - a steady number of students attending specialist schools;
 - strong and clear community expectations for more inclusive schools;
 - various national policies, legislation and social justice drivers; and
 - operational challenges to achieving inclusion for all students.
- A review of disability education in the ACT is underway, building on the extensive consultation already undertaken in the community.
- Independent facilitator, ContentGroup, has been engaged so that students with disability, their families and carers, and the broader ACT community, can have a say in this phase of consultation.
- This consultation, '*A Community Conversation*' will inform planning for the **modernisation of ACT specialist schools** in the city's north and an **Inclusive Education Strategy** with a detailed implementation plan.
- The first phase of this consultation is commencing in term 4 2021, and will focus on the future of specialist schools. The second phase of consultation will be undertaken in early 2022 with a focus on inclusive education in mainstream settings.

BUDGET ESTIMATES BRIEF

Portfolio: Education and Youth Affairs

EQUITABLE ENROLMENT ADJUSTMENT

Note: Refer to Estimates **Brief 4.2 Student Resource Allocation**

Talking points:

	Equitable Enrolment Adjustment					Education and life-long learning
	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25	Total	
	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000
Expenses	5,173	5,328	5,488	5,652	21,641	

- The Government will continue to support an increase in students with additional needs in ACT public schools.
- The funding will provide the equivalent of **42.4 full-time learning professionals and support staff** to meet significant growth in the ACT school system between 2020 and 2021.
- Support will be targeted at students with disability, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students, students with English as an alternative language as well as students with lower socio-economic status.
- This initiative builds on the Government's ongoing commitment to provide education to all children in the ACT who wish to attend an ACT public school.
- As at February 2021, **51,153 children** were attending ACT public schools across all levels.

Key Information

- This is ongoing funding. The funding will be incorporated into the Schooling Resource Allocation (SRA) model which calculates and provides the annual budget for schools.

Background Information

- This initiative provides for the growth in students with additional needs between 2020 and 2021. Initiatives have been provided in previous budgets for growth in that relevant year.

Cleared as complete and accurate: 12/10/2021
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 TRIM Ref: FILE2021/3889

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BUDGET ESTIMATES BRIEF

Portfolio: Education and Youth Affairs

ESSENTIAL ICT SYSTEMS UPGRADES AND MODIFICATIONS

Talking points:

Future of Education: Essential ICT Systems Upgrades and Modifications **Education and life-long learning**

	2021-22 \$'000	2022-23 \$'000	2023-24 \$'000	2024-25 \$'000	Total \$'000
Capital	400	0	0	0	400
Depreciation	0	40	40	40	120
Expenses	174	179	0	0	353
Net cost of services	174	219	40	40	473

- The Government will invest **\$473,000** over the next four years upgrading the ACT Teacher Quality Institute and Board of Senior Secondary Studies ICT systems to prepare for the registration of early childhood educators and to continue to ensure the integrity of the Senior Secondary Certificate.
- This investment ensures we have systems that support learning.

TQI Preservice Teacher Registration system

- From January 2020, following 2019 changes to the TQI Act, preservice teachers, seeking to undertake professional experience in an ACT school, must be included on the ACT pre-service teacher register (PSTR). This applies to students undertaking initial teacher education (ITE) courses at an ACT university or any university outside the ACT.
- Current inclusion on the PSTR provides to pre-service teachers information about professional standards and a sense of belonging to the teaching profession. This funding strengthens the business system in order that pre-service teachers have access to information about professional development and resources and streamlined transition to ACT teacher registration.
- The PSTR provides data about pre-service teachers that can be used to assist schools and the Government with workforce planning.

Background (including data):

- As at 30 June 2021 there are **1486 preservice** teachers on the register including **121** from universities outside the ACT.
- In August 2018, a commitment from the *Future of Education Strategy* was for TQI to build on its work on ensuring high quality professional experience for ITE students.

Cleared as complete and accurate: 18/10/2021
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 TRIM Ref: FILE2021/3889

- The establishment and maintenance of the PSTR aligns with the second Foundation in the Future of Education strategy: Empowered Learning Professionals. This Foundation acknowledges that ‘a professional teaching workforce requires high quality ITE that attracts the right kind of people and leads to well-prepared and enthusiastic graduates entering the profession.’

ACT Certification System (ACS) - Business as Usual Maintenance and Continuous Improvement

- The investment will be used to continually enhance the user experience of Student Profiles Online portal to increase transparency to students and expand opportunities for student ownership of learning outcomes.
- This expanded funding will give more certainty to digital, data and technology solutions to allocate appropriate ongoing support for ACS.
- The current BAU is unable to account for costs associated with maintenance including fixing bugs, changes in third party software such as browsers, changes in policy, and ongoing functional improvements. This investment will bring support for the system in line with the recommendation for the next two years.

Background

- The ACT Certification System (ACS) is the online database that stores all students’ personal, course, unit, VET competency and assessment item details and results. The ACS database is critical for the operation of the whole ACT Year 11 and 12 Senior Secondary System.
- This investment will assist in clearing the current backlog of over 80 bugs and high priority but modest user interface enhancements. Over 40% of these backlog items have been waiting for over two years.

Cleared as complete and accurate: 18/10/2021
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BUDGET ESTIMATES BRIEF

Portfolio: Education and Youth Affairs

FUTURE OF EDUCATION EQUITY FUND

Note: Refer to [Brief 02.2 – Future of Education](#)

Talking points:

Future of Education: Future of Education Equity Fund **Education and life-long learning**

	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25	Total
	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000
Expenses	3,641	3,524	2,853	2,904	12,922
Offset – Expenses	-852	-877	-899	-915	-3,543
Net cost of services	2,789	2,647	1,954	1,989	9,379

- The Government will progress the second phase of the *Future of Education Strategy* by establishing:
 - a Future of Education Equity Fund to provide grants to families experiencing disadvantage and support them to meet students’ educational expenses; and
 - a pilot program to provide meals in five ACT public schools.

The Future of Education Equity Fund delivers on the ACT Government’s commitment to build strong communities for learning.

- Replacing the high school bursary scheme, the new **\$11.5 million Future of Education Equity Fund** is estimated to reach five times as many students as the previous scheme
- The Equity fund will provide disadvantaged families in ACT public schools with a payment to assist with educational expenses, such as school uniforms, school excursions, sports equipment and activities or music lessons, helping to ensure that no child is left behind in ACT public schools.
- The Government will also deliver a two-year trial at five schools to provide breakfast and lunch for approximately 1500 vulnerable students three days a week. This trial will allow for evaluation of the impact of equity of access to food on wellbeing and learning outcomes for ACT public school students.
- Providing breakfast and lunch to students in school is an effective way to reduce health and social inequalities, by improving the nutrition of children living with high nutritional deprivation. It all creates a sense of community and social connectedness by providing healthy food in a school environment that is nurturing and caring.

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 TRIM Ref: FILE2021/3889

Key Information

- The Equity fund component provides financial support for students in ACT schools to reduce barriers to accessing and engaging in education.
- The equity fund will provide funding for students at all year levels across all schools in the ACT. The Equity fund replaced the bursary scheme which only provided for students in years 7-10.
- Meals in schools will facilitate connectedness by providing healthy food in a school environment that is nurturing and caring. As this can positively impact on students when they are prepared for learning and feel valued, connected and nourished.
- Meals including breakfast and lunch will be provided through this trial three days per week.

BUDGET ESTIMATES BRIEF

Portfolio: Education and Youth Affairs

GENDER EQUALITY IN OUR SCHOOLS

Note: Refer to Estimates [Brief 7.4 Bullying and Violence including Safe and Supportive Schools](#)

Talking points:

Future of Education: Gender Equality in our Schools **Education and life-long learning**

	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25	Total
	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000
Expenses	402	544	551	560	2,057

- The Government will invest just over two (2) million dollars over four years to develop a whole of school approach to preventing domestic and family violence and reducing discrimination and harassment by creating a culture of gender equality and inclusion.
- Through this initiative, the ACT Government is delivering on the commitments outlined in the Future of Education Strategy, by ensuring schools are equitable places where students are safe, included and diversity is celebrated.
- Gender inequality contributes to the underlying conditions for violence against women (gender-based violence). It manifests in every aspect of life, from relationships through to institutions, including schools. Shifting the pattern of violence requires cultural transformation across all areas of society to address the drivers and conditions that contribute to gender-based violence.
- This initiative provides resourcing to establish a team within the Education Directorate that will deliver program leadership, coaching, professional learning and the development of materials that will and support to school based staff to achieve cultural change in ACT public schools.

Key Information

- This initiative will establish a team that will support schools to build the capability of school based staff to:
 - lead school culture transformation to ensure that gender equality is fostered
 - build the capacity of school leaders to lead positive changes in schools to deliver relevant curriculum that supports gender equality and is consistent across school communities
 - embed primary prevention capability across ACT public schools
 - deliver enhanced respectful relationships, sexuality and consent education
 - deliver relevant curriculum that reduces homophobic and transphobic behaviour, and supports students to learn, thrive and live fulfilling lives
 - increase the capacity of school staff to support the needs of same sex attracted, intersex and gender diverse students.

Cleared as complete and accurate: 12/10/2021

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Background Information

- This is a new initiative that builds on:
 - The comprehensive work across the ACT that was undertaken as part of the Safer Families Package with significant achievements such as development of a Family Safety Hub and consulting with community about their needs; and
 - The Safe and Inclusive Schools initiative where the ACT Education Directorate partnered with Sexual Health and Family Planning ACT.

BUDGET ESTIMATES BRIEF

Portfolio: Education and Youth Affairs

HEADSTART PILOT PROGRAM

Talking points:

Future of Education: HeadStart Pilot Program		Education and life-long learning			
	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25	Total
	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000
Expenses	602	797	807	0	2,206

- Many young people are eager to get into the workforce, to start earning money and build-up experience, however achieving a senior secondary certificate is a really important education milestone for their future. Headstart lets young people do both.
- The Headstart pilot program will provide **50 senior secondary school students** with the opportunity to undertake an apprenticeship in a trade occupation, and have the option to take up to three years to complete their senior secondary certificate.
- Headstart students will be provided personalised career education and mentoring over three years, and employers will receive coaching and support to ensure students get high quality on-job learning in a safe and secure working environment.
- The Headstart Program will focus on providing students with the literacy and numeracy skills required by industry, while supporting their individual needs so they can successfully complete school and transition to secure employment.
- Headstart students will be carefully matched with employers in trade occupation areas that align with job demand and/or growth in our region, and the Headstart team will work with local employers to strengthen school to industry partnerships.
- A Headstart Pathway Plan (HPP) will be developed for each Headstart student that will outline the one-on-one support to be provided. The HPP will align with each student's Training Plan and help schools, training providers, employers, and parents to work together to achieve the best outcomes for the student.
- All students and employers participating in the program will have dedicated, individualised support through a Headstart Program team that will work collaboratively with other key government partners; CIT, Community Services Directorate, Services Australia, Skills Canberra and WorkSafe ACT.

Key Information

- CIT is the preferred Headstart training provider. Where CIT does not deliver the qualification required by the employer, a registered training organisation (RTO) with a Skills Canberra *Training Initiative Funding Agreement* will be used.
- This program demonstrates the ACT Government's commitment to support young people at risk to secure meaningful employment in trade occupations and address skills shortages faced by local employers.

Headstart is a stand-alone program with unique elements and support for students, but does not replace existing Australian School-based Apprenticeship arrangements.

Cleared as complete and accurate: 13/10/2021
 Cleared for public release by: Choose an item. Ext:
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 TRIM Ref: FILE2021/3889

BUDGET ESTIMATES BRIEF

Portfolio: Education and Youth Affairs

MORE SOCIAL AND YOUTH WORKERS

Note: Refer to Estimates [Brief 2.2 Future of Education](#) and [Brief 7.3 School Psychologists](#)

Talking points:

	Future of Education: More Social and Youth Workers in Schools				Education and life-long learning
	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25	Total
	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000
Expenses	495	1,669	1,692	3,507	7,363

- The 2021-22 ACT Government Budget is providing funding to employ an additional **25** youth and social workers by 2024-25.
- The Future of education strategy is focused on supporting children where they are through the provision of strong communities with a team of experts. The recruitment of additional social workers and youth support workers, over a **four (4) year period**, will strengthen the access to wellbeing supports offered to our students and families.
- The Education Directorate will establish a centralised service, similar to the school psychologist model will ensure students and families have access to a well-trained professional team who works collaboratively with other support services, including psychologists, occupational therapists and speech pathologists.
- Social workers and youth support workers will provide a range of individual and small group supports to children and young people in schools. They can also work directly with families to support them access the services they require within the broader community.
- Social workers can work directly and confidentially with families which, for some families, can remove the stigma of seeking support. Families can meet with social workers at the school, in a café or even a playground ensuring providing them an opportunity to meet in a location that is safe and comfortable for them.
- Youth support workers provide a wide range of supports for children and young people which can be modified to suit the school community. Examples can include breakfast clubs, running structure playground activities, linking young people to community supports and running drop in sessions.
- These additional supports will be part of the Education Directorates response to the wellbeing needs of all our students, providing strengthened opportunities for students to access the services they want at their point of need.

Background Information

This initiative builds the ACT Government's commitment to providing wellbeing support for ACT public school students by employing **81 school psychologists, and 36 youth workers across 30 ACT public schools.**

Cleared as complete and accurate: 13/10/2021
 Cleared for public release by: Choose an item. Ext:
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 TRIM Ref:

BUDGET ESTIMATES BRIEF

Portfolio: Education and Youth Affairs

MORE TEACHER LIBRARIANS

Note: Refer to Estimates [Brief 8.6 Teacher Librarians](#)

Talking points:

Future of Education: [More Teacher Librarians](#) **Education and life-long learning**

	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25	Total
	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000
Expenses	0	851	1,634	2,420	4,905

- The 2021-22 budget has provided funding for the recruitment of qualified teacher librarians to assist with the delivery of the ACT public school curriculum at student, classroom and school levels.
- The Government will also provide subscriptions to the Encyclopedia Britannica and World Book, ensuring students have access to additional resources in school libraries from 2022-23.
- This initiative builds on recent government actions in this area to provide funding for **10 Master of Education** (teacher librarian) scholarships **each year for five years**, commencing in 2020-21.
- School libraries led by qualified teacher librarians develop 21st century citizens who can locate, evaluate and use information effectively. A qualified teacher librarian improves student learning outcomes regardless of students' socioeconomic status.

A qualified teacher librarian supports the delivery of the curriculum at a student, classroom and school level by enhancing digital and information literacy, resourcing the curriculum and helping students become critical, creative and collaborative thinkers.

Key Information

- This initiative will provide an increase each year in the number of qualified Teacher Librarians employed in ACT Public Schools up to an **additional 25 full-time equivalent** Teacher Librarians in 2025-26 compared to existing numbers.
- Employment of qualified Teacher Librarians will begin in **2022-23** with the employment of **five teacher librarians, increasing to 25 by 2025-26**.

Background Information

- This is a new initiative however this builds on the 2020-21 Budget initiative to provide scholarships for teachers to undertake Teacher Librarian scholarships through a Master of Education (Teacher Librarianship).

Cleared as complete and accurate: 18/10/2021
 Cleared for public release by: Executive Group Manager Ext:
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 TRIM Ref:

BUDGET ESTIMATES BRIEF

Portfolio: Education and Youth Affairs

MULIYAN OFF CAMPUS FLEXIBLE LEARNING PROGRAM

Note: Refer to Estimates [Brief 7.1 Flexible Education](#)

Talking points:

Muliyán Off-Campus Flexible Learning Program **Education and life-long learning**

	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25	Total
	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000
Expenses	2,198	2,242	2,286	2,332	9,058

- The ACT Government will strengthen the Continuum of Education off-campus program by continuing the extension of Muliyán to support **up to 30 students**. This funding delivers on the ACT Government's *Future of Education Strategy* commitment to place students at the centre of their learning by providing individualised supports for vulnerable students.
- The program provides support for students who are disengaged or disengaging from education (due to complex personal challenges and/or circumstances). It provides an educational setting with targeted supports to ensure that students with complex personal challenges or circumstances are engaged and able to continue their education.
- The Muliyán program provides students with a multidisciplinary team of educators, allied health professionals and specialists. Students participating in this program have demonstrated improved learning and wellbeing outcomes resulting in them remaining engaged, and in most cases returning to mainstream schooling.
- The ACT Government will also continue to fund additional assistance and support for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Students who are attending Muliyán in a way that is culturally safe and works with community to reengage these students in their education.

Background Information

- The Muliyán program commenced in Term 4 2018, with **10 students** participating at a Woden based campus.
- This initiative continues the funding received in 2020-21 which provided:
 - uplift from **10 to 20 student** places approved in the 2019-20 mid-year budget review;
 - further extension of the number of student placements from **20 to 30** students; and
 - additional supports for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students.
- Ongoing funding of the program ensures certainty for students, families and staff accessing this important program including the permanent recruitment of staff.
- Muliyán will continue to develop and grow its trauma informed program supporting students to reengage with education and develop positive pathways for the future.

Cleared as complete and accurate: 13/10/2021

Cleared for public release by: Choose an item.

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TRIM Ref:

BUDGET ESTIMATES BRIEF

Portfolio: Education and Youth Affairs

REDUCING VIOLENCE IN SCHOOLS

Note: Refer to Estimates [Brief 7.5 Occupational Violence and Complex Case Management](#)

Talking points:

Reducing Violence in Schools

Education and life-long learning

	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25	Total
	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000
Expenses	1,048	1,369	1,744	1,768	5,929

- The ACT Government prioritises the safety and wellbeing of staff and students in ACT public schools.
- Funding in the 2021-22 Budget is being provided to continue the supports available for students, teachers and school communities to reduce the risk of occupational violence and assist with the management of complex behavioural issues in schools.
- This funding will ensure the continuity of the multidisciplinary Occupational Violence and Case Management Team who provide management, strategic advice and additional support for students to assist with reducing the risk of occupational violence in ACT public schools. In addition this team supports the continued implementation of the Education Directorate's Occupational Violence Policy and Management Plan.
- The Occupational Violence and Case Management Team provides critical supports to schools so that they are able to address complex and challenging behaviours and ensure that schools are safe places for students and staff.

Background Information

- This initiative continues:
 - Funding that ceased on 30 June 2021 received as part of the 2019-20 submission, Education Directorate Work Health Safety Initiatives.
 - Funding that ceased on 30 June 2021 received as part of the 2020-21 Cabinet Submission: *CAB20/40 Supporting vulnerable students – reducing occupational violence.*
- This initiative continues the implementation of the Education Directorate's Occupational Violence Policy and Management Plan which supports the work of the Occupational Violence and Complex Case Management Team to undertake risk assessments and support around the reasonably practicable steps that can be taken to eliminate or minimise risk to the health and safety of individual staff.
- This team, consisting of allied health and educators who undertake trauma informed practice to support staff in understanding presenting behaviours and ensuring mitigation strategies are identified.

Cleared as complete and accurate: 13/10/2021

Cleared for public release by: Choose an item.

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TRIM Ref:

- Occupational violence occurs in a school setting the behaviour of students are impacted by a range of stressors or trauma based experiences. The challenging circumstances of 2020, relating to bushfires, hailstorms and the impacts of COVID-19 which have continued throughout 2021 necessitate continued support to manage the complex and challenging student behaviours.
- The work of the occupational violence and complex case management team forms a targeted support for schools and students which is complemented by a suite of universal and selected supports, which work together to support the needs of students and school staff.

BUDGET ESTIMATES BRIEF

Portfolio: Education and Youth Affairs

SCHOOL LEGAL LIAISON

Note: Refer to Estimates [Brief 2.2 Future of Education](#)

Talking points:

Schools Legal Liaison	Education and life-long learning				
	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25	Total
	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000
Expenses	96	106	116	127	445

- The Government will continue to provide legal supports in ACT public colleges to ensure vulnerable students and their families have access to confidential legal advice and referrals to legal and other services where required.
- Legal liaison officers provide in-school accessible, confidential and free legal services to a targeted cohort of young people and, in some circumstances, their family members. They provides:
 - one on one legal advice to students
 - selected and targeted legal education to students
 - warm referrals of students to other sources of legal and non-legal support.
- The introduction of a legal liaison service in schools reduces barriers faced by children an young people when needing to access legal assistance. This is particularly important for students or family members who are experiencing domestic or family violence.
- By providing legal supports through schools, legal assistance is provided in an easy to access setting. Schools often represent a safe setting for family members of students in circumstances of domestic and family violence. In circumstances of coercive control, school may be one of the few places that victims are able to attend.

Key Information

- This program builds on a pilot project which was a cross-directorate project between the Justice and Community Safety (JACS) and Community Services (CSD) Directorates and the Education Directorate. The pilot was funded through the 2019-20 Mid-Year Budget Review.
- The piloted initiative involved the establishment of a deed of grant with Legal Aid ACT, to provide solicitors that are supervised and employed by Legal Aid ACT to work with the Education Directorate. The program commenced in all ACT public colleges on **1 September 2020**, and over the operating period (Term 3 and Term 4 of 2020) demonstrated highly successful engagement with students.

Cleared as complete and accurate: 13/10/2021

Cleared for public release by: Choose an item.

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- The success of the pilot has led to the ACT Government decision to continue funding to deliver these vital services in ACT public colleges. This program will:
 - Improve access to legal assistance for children, young people and their families through the introduction of a legal liaison service to provide specialist legal advice in schools.
 - Educate young people on legal matters, such as family and domestic violence, criminal activity, unfair treatment, illicit drugs, housing problems, and other issues to which they are particularly susceptible.
 - Remove barriers preventing young people accessing justice, such as lack of specialist legal services for young people, lack of awareness of rights and legal entitlements, the intimidating and formal atmosphere of many legal services and reliance on adults to mediate their access to legal services.

BUDGET ESTIMATES BRIEF

Portfolios: Early Childhood Development

Education and Youth Affairs

Set Up for Success – Early Childhood Program

Refer to Brief [02.3 – Set Up For Success for detailed information on the current state](#) and [2.2 Future of Education](#)

Set up for Success – Early Childhood Program	Education and life-long learning				
	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25	Total
	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000
Capital	200	400	0	0	600
Depreciation	0	0	60	60	120
Expenses	2,578	3,152	3,076	3,067	11,873
Offset – Savings	-1,687	-1,738	-1,790	-1,844	-7,059
Net cost of services	891	1,414	1,346	1,283	4,934

- *Set up for Success: An Early Childhood Strategy for the ACT* outlines the plan for early childhood education and care in the ACT for the next decade.
- The goal of this strategy, in line with the Future of Education Strategy, is to achieve an education system that sets all children up for success and the opportunity for a fair and decent life.
- The Government commenced implementing the first phase of the Set up for Success in early 2020. This has included providing funding for free education for upto 500 priority three year olds for two days per week, 48 weeks per year and 100 places for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children in Koori Preschools.
- The 2021-22 Budget funds a range of initiatives aimed at further delivering on the ACT Government’s commitment to early childhood development, including:
 - Increasing the **daily rate** paid to providers partnered in the three (3) year-old initiative to reflect the costs required to deliver quality early learning;
 - Engaging an expert consultant for development of a Territory-wide **transitions** methodology and framework;
 - Increasing the number of Early Childhood Teacher Degree **scholarships**;
 - Delivering a **Professional Learning Fund** for educators in the sector;
 - Delivering **grants** for educators to support them in understanding their obligations and rights when working with children;
 - Undertaking legislative reform to **recognising early childhood** in the *Education Act 2004*;
 - Providing ongoing funding for two **Early Years Engagement Officers** connecting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families to Child and Family Centres, Koori Preschools and schools; and
 - Progressing legislative and system changes for all **Early Childhood Teachers to be recognised and registered** by the Teacher Quality Institute.

Cleared as complete and accurate: 15/10/2021

Cleared for public release by: Choose an item.

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BUDGET ESTIMATES BRIEF

Key Information

- Set up for Success has four foundations:
 - **A fair start for every child:** ensuring access and equity
 - **Valuing educators, values children:** ensuring a high-quality
 - **Every child has a story:** ensuring seamless transitions for children, particularly between ECEC and later schooling, and creating safe environments for children’s diverse backgrounds and needs
 - **Working together for children:** recognising that connected systems and networks between education, health, community and other services maximise the benefits of early childhood investment
- Under each foundation sits initiatives to be delivered across three phases:
 - First Phase – years one to two (2020-2022)
 - Second Phase – years three to five (2023-2025)
 - Third Phase – years five to ten (2026-2030)

BUDGET ESTIMATES BRIEF

Portfolio: Education and Youth Affairs

EXPANSION OF MARGARET HENDRY PRIMARY SCHOOL AND A NEW TAYLOR HIGH SCHOOL

(Note: Refer to Estimates [Brief 05.7 New and Expanded Schools](#) and [06.1 Major Projects](#))

Talking points:

Expansion of Margaret Hendry Primary School and a New Taylor High School	Education and life-long learning				
	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25	Total
	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000
Capital	15,520	66,260	36,220	0	118,000
Offset – Capital – Provision	-11,000	-75,000	-32,000	0	-118,000
Net Capital	4,520	-8,740	4,220	0	0
Depreciation	0	350	1,530	2,360	4,240

- The Government will invest to expand Margaret Hendry Primary School and construct a new high school in Taylor, adjacent to the Margaret Hendry Primary School.
- The **expansion of Margaret Hendry Primary School will be completed by the start of the 2023** school year to **provide an additional 600 places for P-6 students**.
- The **high school will provide 800 permanent places for students in years 7 to 10** and is **scheduled to open for the 2024** school year.

Key Information

- This initiative builds on recent Government actions to meet enrolment growth in Gungahlin including
 - opening the Margaret Hendry Primary School in 2021,
 - constructing a new primary school (P-6) in Throsby to be open at the start of the 2022 school year,
 - constructing a new high school (7-10) in Kenny which will open in 2023,
 - expanding the Gold Creek senior campus and
 - expanding the Franklin Early Childhood School into a full primary school.

Cleared as complete and accurate: 13/10/2021
Cleared for public release by: Choose an item.
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BUDGET ESTIMATES BRIEF

Portfolio: Education and Youth Affairs

FUTURE PLANNING

Note: Refer to Estimates [Brief 5.7 New and Expanded Schools](#)

Talking points:

Future Planning	Education and life-long learning				
	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25	Total
	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000
Capital	6,285	2,715	0	0	9,000
Expenses	850	870	900	920	3,540

- The Government will invest **\$12.5 million** towards **feasibility studies, master planning and forward design works for new and expanded school capacities in the Inner South, the Inner North, Molonglo and Central Belconnen** regions and for **specialist school services in the north of Canberra**.
- This continues the Government's commitment to meeting public school enrolment growth in schools across Canberra and builds on 2019-20 Budget funding to plan for Canberra's future school needs.

Key Information

- **Nine (9) million dollars** over the next two years is being invested for feasibility studies, masterplanning and forward design works for new and expanded schools including:
 - feasibility and planning for new primary school and high school capacity in the **Inner North** and the **Inner South**;
 - Early planning for future capacity in **Molonglo** for primary schools and the college system to meet the needs of families in the region;
 - Feasibility and design funding for the new Early Childhood to Year 6 school in **Whitlam, Molonglo**;
 - **Create More Space for College Students in Canberra's North** through planning for an expansion of northside college capacity;
 - Planning for additional primary school capacity in central **Belconnen**;
 - Service design planning, feasibility study and planning for **new specialist school** services in the north of Canberra, responding to changing needs and enrolment growth of students with disability.
- **\$3.5 million** in expenses is **four (4) FTE** to support the work.

Background Information

- This initiative builds on recent Government actions to plan to meet enrolment growth in schools across Canberra.
- Through the **2019-20 Budget initiative Planning for Canberra's future school needs**, the Government provided funding for the completion of feasibility studies for new and expanded school capacity in growth regions of Canberra including West Belconnen, the Molonglo Valley, south-east Canberra and Woden town centre areas.

Cleared as complete and accurate: 15/10/2021
Cleared for public release by: Choose an item. Ext:
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BUDGET ESTIMATES BRIEF

Portfolio/s: Education and Youth Affairs

GARRAN PRIMARY SCHOOL REDEVELOPMENT

Note: Refer to Estimates Brief 05.17 New and Expanded Schools

Talking points:

Garran Primary School Redevelopment	Education and life-long learning				
	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25	Total
	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000
Capital	970	0	0	0	970
Capital – Provision	0	NFP	NFP	NFP	NFP

NFP – Not for Publication to ensure competitive tender processes.

- The Government will prepare to **modernise Garran Primary School** including **increasing the school's capacity up to 800 P-6 places** to respond to enrolment growth in the Woden region.
- The school modernisation will seek to replace aging and transportable infrastructure with new permanent buildings.
- The planning and design phase will assess site opportunities to enhance outdoor play and learning spaces and provide community use areas for use out of hours.
- Noting the current challenges associated with the school's proximity to the Canberra Hospital campus, consideration of how to manage access to the school will be a key consideration of this phase.
- Community engagement with the Garran Primary School community will take place in the coming months to inform masterplanning.
- This initiative builds on recent Government actions in this area including **responding to enrolment growth generated by infill development in the South of Canberra** by installing Modular learning Centres, funded through the August 2020 Economic and fiscal Update, at
 - Garran Primary School,
 - Red Hill Primary School,
 - Forrest Primary School and
 - Mawson Primary School.

Key Information

- The **capital cost profile of this initiative has been withheld** in order to secure value for money when the government approaches the market.
- **Final timetable will be informed by completion of master planning work during 2021-22.**

Cleared as complete and accurate: 13/10/2021
 Cleared for public release by: Choose an item.
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BUDGET ESTIMATES BRIEF

Portfolio: Education and Youth Affairs

INCREASING SCHOOL CAPACITY

Note: Refer to Estimates [Brief 6.5 Transportable Classrooms](#)

Talking points:

Increasing School Capacity	Education and life-long learning				
	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25	Total
	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000
Capital	19,800	0	0	0	19,800
Depreciation	990	1,980	1,980	1,980	6,930
Expenses	0	594	594	594	1,782
Net cost of services	990	2,574	2,574	2,574	8,712

- The Government will procure, design, install, and construct new Transportable classrooms across Canberra, in 2021-22 to meet projected enrolment growth.
- **Transportable buildings will be delivered to provide extra capacity and toilets in the 2022 school year.**
- Transportable buildings will be delivered to:
 - Ngunnawal PS
 - Palmerston District PS
 - Black Mountain School
 - Fraser PS
 - Cranleigh School
 - Weetangera PS
 - Arawang PS
 - Mawson PS
 - Telopea Park School
- This initiative builds on recent government initiative for the delivery of **13 Transportable classrooms across 11 schools in Canberra.**

Key Information

- Transportable classrooms provide flexibility to respond to natural peaks in enrolments and medium term and transient enrolment growth. Short term increased in enrolment that are not expected to be sustained can be addressed Transportable classrooms at a significantly lower cost compared to that of an additional building.
- Transportable classrooms are designed to be open spacious comfortable and inviting learning environments.
- They are modern fully insulated and designed to meet current energy targets with the same comforts and technical IT infrastructure as permanent learning spaces.
- They are planned and placed in areas that blend into the overall design and landscaping of the school. Transportable classrooms installed in schools today are built to the same standards (National Construction Code) as permanent structures.

Cleared as complete and accurate: 15/10/2021
Cleared for public release by: Choose an item. Ext:
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BUDGET ESTIMATES BRIEF

Portfolio: Education and Youth Affairs

NARRABUNDAH COLLEGE MODERNISATION

Refer to Estimates [Brief 05.17 New and Expanded Schools](#)

Talking points:

Narrabundah College Modernisation	Education and life-long learning				
	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25	Total
	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000
Capital	600	0	0	0	600

- **\$600,000 in 2021-22** will support planning and design for the modernisation of Narrabundah College to meet the needs of future students, teachers and the community.
- The design work will inform a staged modernisation of the college which, subject to funding, will include the replacement of aged and transportable classrooms with permanent, modern and energy efficient buildings and enhanced community use areas.
- This initiative builds on recent government initiatives to **modernise Narrabundah College which has operated for over 40 years**. This includes **replacing existing contaminated buildings with high quality specialist transportable buildings** and undertaking feasibility studies into the next stages of its renewal.
- Initial feasibility and concept planning is underway which includes feedback from previous community engagement and site investigations.

Key Information

- Final timetable will be informed by completion of master planning work during 2021-22.

Cleared as complete and accurate: 13/10/2021
 Cleared for public release by: Choose an item.
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BUDGET ESTIMATES BRIEF

Portfolio: Education and Youth Affairs

SCHOOL MAINTENANCE AND INFRASTRUCTURE UPGRADES

Talking points:

School Maintenance and Infrastructure Upgrades	Education and life-long learning				
	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25	Total
	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000
Capital	25,455	25,947	22,181	25,417	99,000
Offset – Capital	-16,486	-16,898	-17,320	-17,320	-68,024
Total/Net Capital	8,969	9,049	4,861	8,097	30,976
Depreciation	390	1,217	2,044	2,855	6,506
Expenses	129	968	1,599	2,222	4,918
Net cost of services	519	2,185	3,643	5,077	11,424

- The Government is investing in **renewing ACT public schools to enable school facilities to support a modern, inclusive and high-quality education system.**
- The program of works will include **improving the amenity, functionality and inclusivity of schools, replacing end-of-life heating systems and roofs, improving the thermal comfort of schools, installing solar and battery energy storage systems, and providing bike storage facilities.**
- The Public Schools Infrastructure Upgrade program (PSIU) delivers significant upgrades across the public school network.
- In the 2020-21 financial year, **over nine (9) million** was expended to address a variety of needs in schools such as improving the utility of existing learning areas, addressing barriers to accessibility within a school, improving the sustainability of current infrastructure and optimising heating and cooling of learning environments.

Key Information

- The annual PSIU program enables improvement works of a capital nature to be undertaken in consultation with schools.
- Schools are asked to provide a prioritised list of initiatives, developed with their local stakeholders including the School Board, P&C Association, staff and their industrial representatives, users of school space and their local community.
- The capital upgrades register contains the details of all known requests for capital works in schools. Following the submission of school requests each year, the register is updated with works from schools according to their revised priorities.

Cleared as complete and accurate: 13/10/2021
 Cleared for public release by: Choose an item.
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Background Information

- There are several initiatives with the PSIU that occur each year and an annual provision in the program is made to accommodate these items;
 - **Disability access compliance**, including automatic doors and ramps, conversion of learning spaces to cater to small group programs, the provision of additional accessible toilets for specific needs students and the creation of outdoor sensory areas;
 - **School security improvements**, including door locking systems, separation screens for reception areas, school lock down systems and school fences;
 - **School safety improvements**, including car park modification and expansion;
 - **External learning environments**, including improvements to ovals and irrigation, paving, sport cohorts, playground equipment; and
 - **Sustainability improvements**, including building system tuning, draft proofing, active transport and bush shelter construction and solar panel expansion.

BUDGET ESTIMATES BRIEF

Portfolio: Education and Youth Affairs

STRATHNAIRN PRIMARY SCHOOL

Note: Refer to Estimates [Brief 05.7 New and Expanded Schools](#)

Talking points:

Strathnairn Primary School	Education and life-long learning				
	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25	Total
	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000
Capital	1,000	0	0	0	1,000

- The Government will progress the **design for a new primary school in Strathnairn to meet enrolment growth within the new West Belconnen Ginninderry development.**
- This initiative builds on recent government actions to **meet enrolment growth generated by new greenfield suburbs**, including opening schools in Taylor and Denman Prospect and constructing new schools in Throsby and Kenny.
- Designing and building a school is a major undertaking that considers the physical design aspects of the school and the evolution of education over the years. For example, modern learning is interactive and uses available technology. The school children learn in should reflect that, while at the same time allowing for future growth.
- Comprehensive infrastructure planning takes into account the design of schools as hubs of the community and an integral part of a broader human services system which takes a holistic view of students and families and their needs in the local area.
- The Education Directorate's Infrastructure Specification (EDIS) identifies education-specific functional and technical requirements to inform the design of a new school. EDIS is influenced and informed by educational needs, current pedagogy, 21st century learning and research.
- EDIS has four key education principles – personalised learning, develop community partnerships, honour diversity and foster wellbeing. These translate into a set of Education Facilities Design principles and provide a constant reference point for guiding the design process for a new school.

Key Information

- Final timetable will be informed by completion of master planning work during 2021-22.
- Construction funding to meet the 2024 timeframe will be subject to a future budget process.

Cleared as complete and accurate: 18/10/2021
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BUDGET ESTIMATES BRIEF

Portfolio: Education and Youth Affairs

REMOVING HAZARDOUS MATERIALS FROM SCHOOLS

Note: refer to Budget Estimates [Brief 06.3 Managing Hazardous Materials in ACT Public Schools](#)

Talking points:

Removing Hazardous Materials from Schools	Education and life-long learning				
	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25	Total
	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000
Capital	3,750	3,750	3,750	3,750	15,000

- The Government will accelerate the **removal of hazardous materials including lead paint and asbestos containing materials** from ACT public schools.
- The Government manages the presence of hazardous materials with ACT public schools through a **taskforce within the Education Directorate and a Hazardous Materials Register**.
- The Government also **addresses and remediates Hazardous materials when undertaking upgrades at schools**.
- This allocation of **\$15 million** to accelerate the removal of hazardous material is part of **\$114 million dollars over the next four years** to upgrade school buildings to keep them comfortable and safe.
- This program of work is undertaken by the Education Directorate to maintain and improve schools, which includes hazardous materials management as required (e.g., replacing windows in an older school to improve energy efficiency and student comfort may also result in windows with lead paint being removed).
- The Government has over past years, dedicated a significant amount of resources to the removal of hazardous materials in schools.
- Major projects have included the **Narrabundah College** and **Campbell Primary School** as well as works undertaken through the Public School Infrastructure Upgrades program.

Key Information

- The Directorate has identified **76** schools that contain some amount of asbestos and/or lead paint.
- Work will **continue in priority areas for the next four financial years or until the funding has been exhausted**.
- Final closure report is expected to be delivered in July 2025.

Cleared as complete and accurate: 13/10/2021
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BUDGET ESTIMATES BRIEF

Portfolio/s: Education and Youth Affairs

Early Childhood Development

COMMONWEALTH REDRESS SCHEME

Talking points:

Commonwealth Redress Scheme - continuation	Education and life-long learning				
	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25	Total
	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000
Expenses	161	163	166	168	658

- This initiative is led by the Justice and Community Safety Directorate.
- As part of the Commonwealth Redress Scheme, the ACT Government will provide support to eligible survivors of abuse in Government institutions through a redress payment, counselling and psychological care.
- **Funding for the Education Directorate provides for 1 FTE SOGC** to work within Governance and Community Liaison to support this work.

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BUDGET ESTIMATES BRIEF

Portfolio/s: Education and Youth Affairs

Early Childhood Development

COVID SAFE CLEANING

Talking points:

COVID-19 Response – Continuing the COVID-19 Public Health Response	Education and life-long learning				
	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25	Total
	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000
Expenses	29	-	-	-	29

- This initiative is led by the ACT Health Directorate.
- Funding will support the additional cleaning responsibilities of the Directorate's school cleaning workforce during the ACT's COVID-19 lockdown in August – October 2021.

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BUDGET ESTIMATES BRIEF

Portfolio/s: Education and Youth Affairs

Early Childhood Development

EXTENSION OF TEMPORARY CONTRACT POSITIONS

Talking points:

Extension of Temporary Contract Positions	Education and life-long learning				
	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25	Total
	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000
Expenses	242	-	-	-	242

- This initiative is led by the Chief Minister, Treasury and Economic Development Directorate.
- Funding for this initiative will allow the Directorate to extend temporary contracts due to expire during the ACT's COVID-19 lockdown in August – October 2021.

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BUDGET ESTIMATES BRIEF

Portfolio/s: Education and Youth Affairs

Early Childhood Development

MAINTAINING ACCOUNTABILITY AND TRANSPARENCY OF GOVERNMENT

Talking points:

Maintaining Accountability and Transparency of Government	Education and life-long learning				
	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25	Total
	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000
Expenses	161	163	-	-	324

- This initiative is led by the Justice and Community Safety Directorate.
- Funding for this initiative will provide the Education Directorate with 1 FTE SOGC to work within Governance and Community Liaison to support accountability and transparency requirements under the *Freedom of Information Act 2016*.

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BUDGET ESTIMATES BRIEF

Portfolio/s: Education and Youth Affairs

Early Childhood Development

INFRASTRUCTURE UPGRADES FOR NON-GOVERNMENT SCHOOLS AND PARENT ENGAGEMENT GRANTS

Talking points:

Infrastructure Upgrades for Non-Government Schools and Parent Engagement Grants	Education and life-long learning				
	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25	Total
	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000
Expenses on Behalf of the Territory	280	4,030	3,750	3,750	11,810
Offset - Savings	-	-3,750	-3,750	-3,750	-11,250
Net cost of services	280	280	-	-	560

- The Government will progress the second phase of the Future of Education Strategy by providing capital grant funding for infrastructure upgrades in non-government schools.
- The Government will also provide capital grant funding to non-government parent associations to enhance parental engagement within school communities. This initiative will be partially funded from existing resources.
- This initiative continues the existing *Non-Government School Infrastructure Upgrades program* which was originally funded through the 2017-18 Budget and operates until the 2021-22 financial year by **providing \$15 million for further school infrastructure grants at non-government schools.**
- The current funding provided for the non-government school infrastructure program continues into the 2021-22 financial year. Therefore the extension of funding for this program (\$3.750 million per year) is not included in the table above until 2022-23.

Key Information

- **The first round of parent engagement grants (\$280,000 per year for 2 years) will be provided in the 2021-22 financial year.**
- It is expected that both grants will be administered by the ACT Block Grant Authority in line with the existing infrastructure grants program and similar commonwealth programs. This arrangement provides for an independent assessment of grants by an existing body with experience in providing grants to non-government schools.

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BUDGET ESTIMATES BRIEF

Portfolio/s: Education and Youth Affairs

FUTURE OF EDUCATION

Talking points:

- The *Future of Education* is a comprehensive, long-term strategy that outlines a well-rounded approach to school education and a focus on wellbeing, excellence and equity.
- The first phase has now concluded with the second phase of implementation to build on the achievements and insights from phase one.
- The *Future of Education* reflects the vision of the ACT community; including the core themes heard from over 5000 individuals, half of which were students, along with significant evidence drawn from research and evidence based practice in high performing education systems.
- *Future of Education* partners with Set Up for Success: An Early Childhood Strategy for the ACT (Refer to [Brief 1.13 Set Up for Success – Early Childhood Program](#) and [Brief 2.3 Set Up for Success – An Early Childhood Strategy for the ACT](#)).

2021-22 Budget Outcomes

- In the 2021-22 budget, the ACT Government announced a significant boost for education, delivering strongly on the next phase of the ten-year *Future of Education* strategy. It also recognises the many additional challenges facing our school communities during the COVID-19 pandemic.
- Committing an **additional \$51 million** to school equity programs over the next four years.
- This package will support a range of new and renewed policy initiatives to improve access, equity and inclusion for all students. Initiatives include:
 - A new **\$11.5 million** Future of Education Equity Fund to replace the high school bursary scheme, reaching an estimated five times as many students. (Refer to [Brief 1.5 Future of Education Equity Fund](#))
 - **\$1.5 million** for a two year trial to provide 1,500 vulnerable students with access to free breakfast and lunch three days a week. (Refer to [Brief 1.5 Future of Education Equity Fund](#))
 - An additional **25 youth and social workers** over the next four years at a **cost of \$7.4 million**. These funds will help provide early intervention and support for students and their families. (Refer to [Brief 1.8 More Social and Youth Workers](#))
 - More than **\$21 million** dollars over the next four years to ensure all Year 7 to 12 students have access to a Chromebook, including an **additional \$2.8 million** over four years to provide internet access to any secondary school student who needs it and fund a new e-safety program. (Refer to [Brief 1.1 Digital Access and Equity](#))

Cleared as complete and accurate: 01/10/2021
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- **\$450,000 over the next two years** to work with young people with disability, their families, and the broader community to review how we deliver inclusive education. (Refer to [Brief 1.2 Disability Education Review](#))
- **\$445,000** to provide ongoing free and confidential legal advice to public college students – particularly important as we see cases of domestic and family violence increase during the pandemic. (Refer to [Brief 1.12 Schools Legal Liaison](#))

Key Information:

ACT Public School Education Model

(Refer to [Brief 8.2 Inquiry Based Learning](#))

- ACT public schools use a modern and evidence-based education model known as student-centred learning. The primary purpose of a student-centred approach is to encourage students to be active and engaged in learning. It's a model that responds to the individual needs of each child and young person.
- The focus is on making sure each individual student gets the help they need to learn and succeed.
- Independent studies of schools with student-centred learning have found students demonstrate greater confidence, more on-task learning behaviours, improved group dynamics and a greater ability to respond to learning challenges.
- Student-centred learning does not mean that teachers don't actively teach core content and skills. They tailor the teaching of skills and content to the individual student's needs, abilities, motivations, interests and aspirations.
- Pedagogy in ACT public schools is responsive to child/student need. Strategies employed include explicit teaching, via whole class, small group and one on one teaching.
- All ACT public schools deliver on the Australian Curriculum with a strong focus on literacy and numeracy skills. ACT public schools use the Ten Essential Skills approach to explicitly teach early literacy.
- Implementation of these literacy practices support oral language development, phonological awareness, letter-sound letter knowledge, and reading fluency. The practices support the acquisition of knowledge and skills to comprehend and compose texts, including spelling and construction strategies, grammar and punctuation, literacy motivation and engagement. All of this is delivered in ways that are responsive to the needs of the child/student.

Cleared as complete and accurate: 01/10/2021
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BUDGET ESTIMATES BRIEF

Portfolio/s: Early Childhood Development

SET UP FOR SUCCESS: AN EARLY CHILDHOOD STRATEGY FOR THE ACT

Note: Refer to [Brief 1.13 – Set up for Success Budget Initiative](#).

Talking points:

- *Set up for Success: An Early Childhood Strategy for the ACT* is the ACT Government's plan for early childhood education and care in the ACT for the **next decade**.
- The Government commenced implementing the first phase of the Set up for Success: An Early Childhood Strategy for the ACT in early 2020. This has included providing free education to **500 priority three year olds** for two days per week, 48 weeks per year and **100 places** for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children in Koori Preschools.
- To continue this very important work the 2021-22 ACT Budget committed **\$12.5 million over four years** to continue the ACT's nation-leading, ten year plan for early childhood education.
- The funds will support providers and services that cater for three year old children experiencing vulnerability or disadvantage.
- The funding will also increase the number of scholarships for an early childhood teacher degress to 12.

Key Information

3 year-old initiative

- The ACT Government has committed to providing one free day per week of quality early childhood education and care (ECEC) for all 3 year-olds in the ACT by the end of this term of government.
- **From 2020**, the ACT Government is providing up to **500 places** for 15 hours per week, 48 weeks per year of free, quality ECEC to priority 3 year-old children – those experiencing vulnerabilities or disadvantage – in selected education and care services.
- **Up to 100 places** are available for 3 year-old Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children in **Koori Preschool** to enhance cultural safety.
- Children are primarily identified through Community Services Directorate programs, as well as other directorates and community services.
- Places for priority children are offered through **18 providers** representing **58 ECEC** services as at October 2021.
- The initiative operates a rolling intake process so that children can commence early learning as soon as they turn three. Children are also supported to enrol in and transition to four year-old preschool through the annual school enrolment cycle.

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- Two Early Childhood Community Coordinators have been engaged to further strengthen partnerships with providers, services, and warm referrers across the ACT, and to support enrolments into four year-old preschool.
- As at **5 October 2021, 282 children** have been referred into the 3 year-old initiative. Since the initiative commenced, **211 children** have accepted a place in a partnering early childhood education and care service.
 - **134** children are currently accessing early childhood education and care through the initiative.
 - **45** children have been referred and placement processes are underway. This includes children who were referred into the initiative during lockdown and/or were due to start their placement during lockdown.
 - Since the initiative commenced, **26** children referred did not accept an offer of a placement in the initiative. Instead they engaged in an Early Entry to Preschool placement, a Koori Preschool placement, continued in their Children Service's Program Placement, chose to continue with their Additional Childcare Subsidy placement or moved away from the ACT prior to commencing their placement.
- **77** children who accessed the initiative in 2020 were supported to transition to four year-old preschool in 2021.
- The initiative is currently being impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic. Due to the ACT's Covid-19 outbreaks and lockdown some children have been unable to access their placements because of ECEC service closures. Children's placements have paused, and the Directorate is working with families and warm referrers to ensure supports for children and families are in place.

Fostering positive transitions

- Children transitioning from the three year-old initiative to four year-old preschool are being supported through a Transition and Continuity Framework and Statement. The aim is to support educators from ECEC services and schools to share children and families' stories and other key information, facilitating positive transitions.
- Established Communities of Practice, which are purposeful relationships between ECEC services and schools, help children transition smoothly between these settings, improve sharing of expertise between educators, and increase opportunities for coaching and mentoring.

OSHC for preschool-aged children in the preschool environment

- As a result of the successful 2020 trial, the ACT Government is exploring expanding the model of OSHC for preschool-aged children, in the preschool environment.
- Any such consideration will include active engagement with preschool educators. The evaluation of the trial found transitions for children were reduced, educators experienced increased collaboration, and families felt more supported with more convenient hours offered.

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Building workforce capability – supporting children affected by trauma

- Under *Set up for Success*, the ACT Government is providing training for ECEC services to support children affected by trauma. Australian Childhood Foundation has been engaged to deliver a suite of supports which so far include:
 - Eleven (11) online training modules on trauma informed theory and practice
 - Twelve (12) free webinars on specific topics related to trauma
 - Five (5) relational exchange blog articles on trauma responsive practice and strategies
 - One (1) champions network and up to six professional support networks for educators to collaborate on practice and develop collective expertise grounded in research.

Professionalisation of the workforce

- The ACT Government supports and advocates for increased professionalisation of the ECEC workforce.
- The Government has supported the growth of qualified ECEC staff with the the Early Childhood Degree scholarship program.
- In **June 2021 there were 20 scholarship** holders studying towards a degree in early childhood education. Since the introduction of early childhood scholarships in **2014, 31 scholarship holders have successfully completed** their early childhood degrees.

Background Information

- *Set up for Success* has four foundations:
 - **A fair start for every child:** about increasing access, equity and affordability
 - **Valuing educators, values children:** about enhancing the workforce and their qualifications
 - **Every child has a story:** about fostering seamless transitions between settings and to school
 - **Working together for children:** about maximising the benefits to children through more connected services and systems.
- These align with the foundations and principles of the ACT Government's *Future of Education Strategy*. (Refer to Estimates **Brief 2.2 Future of Education**)

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BUDGET ESTIMATES BRIEF

Portfolio/s: Education and Youth Affairs

Overall System Performance

Talking points:

- ACT schools have regularly been either the top, or amongst the top, academic performers nationally, based on NAPLAN and other testing results such as PISA and TIMSS.
- Independent reports and the media have on a number of occasions suggested that, despite overall strong results, the ACT was underperforming relative to other jurisdictions by not making the most of its demographic advantages.
- In 2020, Education Ministers agreed to an ACT/ACARA project intended to explore the operation of socio-educational advantage index in the ACT, particularly in relation to other jurisdictions. The project report, which still needs to be delivered to education ministers, will provide much greater clarity in relation to the between jurisdiction comparisons.
- Despite our successes, there are a significant number of ACT children for whom poor early life circumstances are most likely to result in lower academic achievement compared to students of similar ability but from a higher socio-economic background.
- The Government is committed to an approach to learning grounded in key principles of equity, fairness and universal access.
- At the strategic level, the 'Future of Education Strategy' has students at the center, and focuses on improved equity, on early childhood education, on teachers and on interactions with parents and the community.
-

National Assessment Program Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN)

- The ACT continues to deliver a very stable performance in NAPLAN, with all results in 2021 being statistically similar to those in 2019.
- There are slight variations between NAPLAN years that are mirrored across all jurisdictions. At the national level, these variations are due to slight differences between tests each year and to the equating processes used to place the current test results on the historic NAPLAN scales. These variations can be greater in smaller jurisdictions due to the greater volatility created by smaller populations.
- The Strategic objectives included in the Education Directorate 2019-20 Annual Report are designed to measure progress over strategic timeframes, with a focus on the long-term trends.

Cleared as complete and accurate: 06/10/2021
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- Strategic Indicator one and two outcomes for 2021 will be available following the release of the NAPLAN 2021 National Report (used for comparison) scheduled for December 2021.
- Allowing for measurement uncertainties, the Literacy and Numeracy Equity targets for NAPLAN 2019 and the Literacy and Numeracy gain targets for NAPLAN 2017-19 were met.
- Relative performance in NAPLAN has improved in some other Australian jurisdictions and the ACT is no longer as far in front as in previous years. However, ACT students continue to perform well, particularly in reading.

Comparative results for NAPLAN

- For some time, the ACT has had concerns about the extent to which the operation of the ICSEA used in the similar schools model has created a bias in interjurisdictional comparisons of NAPLAN performance for the ACT.
- In 2020, the national council of education Ministers agreed to a proposal by the ACT for a joint ACT/ACARA project to explore the operation of the SEA index in the ACT to determine if there were any anomalies that may affect comparisons with ACT schools.
- The COVID-19 pandemic delayed progress with the project, however it is now nearing completion. The project report, which still needs to be delivered to education ministers, will provide much greater clarity in relation to between jurisdiction comparisons. More information will be available once the project report has progressed to Education Ministers.

International sample assessments

- Results for ACT year 4 and year 8 students from the 2019 Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study (TIMSS), were higher than or equal with other Australian jurisdictions across mathematics and in science. Average performance of ACT students in TIMSS has not changed significantly since 1995.
- In Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) 2018, the ACT was the highest performing Australian jurisdiction, achieving significantly higher than the OECD average, and all other Australian jurisdictions in each domain.
- While these results are favourable for the ACT in terms of national comparisons, consistent with Australian results over time, the 2018 performance of ACT students was significantly lower than when each subject was first assessed in PISA in the early 2000s.
- It is not appropriate to compare the performance of all ACT participating students to highest socio-economic groups used in TIMSS or PISA as it assumes all ACT students are members of the highest socio-economic groups.

Cleared as complete and accurate: 06/10/2021
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- While the ACT has a higher proportion of socio-economically advantaged persons, the ABS Experimental Index of Household Advantage and Disadvantage estimated 10 per cent of the ACT population were in the most disadvantaged quartile.

School Identification

- A strong sense of identity (belonging) with a school is important. There is a positive correlation between a stronger identification between a student and their school, and the outcomes that the student achieves. Similarly, positive staff identification and parent/carer identification with the school has a beneficial impact on wellbeing and school culture.
- The 2019 school identification outcomes for the student and staff measures were within confidence interval of the targets. These targets were achieved.
- The results of the 2020 school identification measure (reported in the 2020/2021 mini-Budget Papers) showed significant increases compared with 2019 and exceeded targets in all three measures. These increases may represent a COVID related recognition by students of the important role that school plays in their lives.
- Sixty-six per cent of students had strong identification with their school in 2020 (up from 60% in 2019); for staff - 92 per cent in 2020 (up from 89% in 2019) and for parents and carers – 82 per cent (up from 73% in 2019).
- For the parents and carers school identification measure, in 2019 an extra item was added to the measure, meaning that the 2018 and 2019 figures are not directly comparable. The apparent decline in the strategic indicator was the result of a change in the measurement for this group.

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BUDGET ESTIMATES BRIEF

Portfolio/s: Education and Youth Affairs

NAPLAN RESULTS AND PARTICIPATION AND PERFORMANCE OF THE ACT EDUCATION SYSTEM

Talking points:

- ACT students performed well in NAPLAN 2021 with all results being statistically similar to 2019.
- The 2020 NAPLAN tests were cancelled due to COVID-19.
- Indications are, both nationally and here in the ACT, that on average children's learning over 2020 did not suffer due to the impact of COVID-19. This is a credit to the resilience of children and young people, the dedication of their teachers and to the support children received from their families and carers.
- Once more detailed information is available at the end of the year on subgroups of students, we will have a stronger indication of any impact on groups at that more granular level.
- We're committed to continuing to improve the quality of the education our students receive and providing pathways and opportunities for our students.
- ACT public schools deliver on the Australian Curriculum with a strong focus on literacy and numeracy skills. Learning and teaching models in all ACT public schools focus on student centred learning using multi-age classes and open spaces, both indoors and outdoors.
- ACT public schools use the Ten Essential Skills approach to teaching literacy. Implementation of these practices supports oral language development, phonological awareness, letter-sound letter knowledge, and reading fluency. The practices support the acquisition of knowledge and skills to comprehend and compose texts, including spelling and construction strategies grammar and punctuation, literacy motivation and engagement.
- The ACT Government's Early Years Literacy project has been informed by experts and is supporting teachers to enhance their practice in helping students to learn to read and write.
- ACT public schools have commenced a professional learning program for schools on developing teachers' skills to teach numeracy. This has been developed and delivered in collaboration with experts both in the ACT and nationally.

Key Information

NAPLAN Results

- The NAPLAN 2021 Summary Report, released 25 August 2021, showed that ACT school students maintained their overall high performance. ACT results in 2021 were statistically similar to the 2019 results. A final, more detailed, analytical report by ACARA is scheduled for release in December 2021.

Cleared as complete and accurate: 06/10/2021
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- In 2021, across the ACT, all eligible schools participated in NAPLAN online across four domains - Reading, Writing, Conventions of Language and Numeracy.
- Over time, most of the variation in ACT performance have tended to mirror changes in national results, both positive and negative.
- The table below shows the number of domains across year levels in which the ACT had the highest or equal highest performance across jurisdictions. In previous years, following quality assurance process, this performance has tended to improve between the summary results and the final report.

	2016	2017	2018	2019	2021
Summary results	14	19	16	15	13
Final Report	18	19	19	18	TBA

- In line with what may be an emerging national trend, the ACT writing achievement in Years 3, 5 and 7 has trended upwards upward between 2018 and 2021. The results for year 5 and year 9 writing are still significantly lower than those achieved in the base year (2011).
- In the case of Year 5, the ACT results very much mirror the national trend – with the highest results in 2011, lowest in 2018 and increases since then. In the case of Year 9, while the historical data follow the national shape, the ACT is now sitting at the national mean which is very different to year 9 reading in particular. Once we have the more detailed data underpinning this high level summary data, we will be interrogating it to identify the best actions.
- In 2021, ACT NAPLAN participation rates (based on reading) were consistent with national rates.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander performance

Due to NAPLAN 2020 being cancelled due to COVID-19 the most recent data on the performance of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders students is from 2019.

Top two performance bands:

- In 2019 seven percent of ACT Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students were represented in the top two NAPLAN bands for reading across years 3, 5, 7 and 9, compared with twenty-nine percent of ACT non-Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander students. For numeracy, six percent of ACT Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students were represented in the top two NAPLAN bands for reading across years 3, 5, 7 and 9, compared with thirty-five percent of ACT non-Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander students.

Bottom two performance bands:

- In 2019 thirty-six percent of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students were represented in the bottom two NAPLAN bands for reading across years 3, 5, 7 and 9, compared with thirteen percent of non-Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander students. For numeracy, thirty-five percent of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students were represented in the bottom two NAPLAN bands for reading across years 3, 5, 7 and 9, compared with thirteen percent of non-Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander students.

Cleared as complete and accurate: 06/10/2021
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BUDGET ESTIMATES BRIEF

Proportion of students in the top and bottom two bands for NAPLAN reading and numeracy – 2019

Domain	Top 2 bands		Bottom 2 bands	
	Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander (%)	non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander (%)	Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander (%)	non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander (%)
Reading	7	29	36	13
Numeracy	6	35	35	13

Background Information

- NAPLAN Online commenced implementation in 2018. The 2021 NAPLAN Online test window ran from 11 May to 21 May 2021. Approximately 20,700 students in 119 ACT schools participated online in 2021.
- The 2020 NAPLAN testing program was cancelled due to the COVID-19 situation.

BUDGET ESTIMATES BRIEF

Portfolio/s: Education and Youth Affairs

Early Childhood Development

Complaints Management

Talking points:

- Between **1 July 2020 and April 2021**, the Directorate has received a total of **666 complaints**.
- Categories of the types of complaints is broken down below, with the **highest proportion** received **about student behaviour management, (203)**.

Category	1 July 2020-30 April 2021
Enrolment	37
Facilities	93
Inclusion and Engagement	122
Policy	57
Recruitment	46
School Communication	77
Staff Behaviour	203
Student Behaviour Management	30
Teaching and Learning	666
Total	666

*COVID-19 lockdown complaints data see Estimates Hearing **Brief 3.7 COVID complaints data**

- The Education Directorate is committed to ongoing improvement of the complaints management framework that is informed by feedback from stakeholders.
- The Education Directorate is moving to a best practice model to make it universal across all schools.
- The model will ensure the system is fit-for-purpose, innovative, transparent, accessible and consistent to provide ACT students and families with the support they need and to drive better outcomes for everyone.
- The model supports fostering a positive culture where complaints are valued as a key mechanism to support school and system improvement.

Cleared as complete and accurate: XX/XX/2020

Cleared for public release by: Choose an item.

Contact Officer name: Mel Howard

Lead Directorate:

Choose directorate:

Ext:

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TRIM Ref:

BUDGET ESTIMATES BRIEF

Key Information

- The Directorate has prioritised a project to strengthen its complaints management framework.
- This has commenced with a focus on reviewing and refining processes for managing complaints received in Education Support Office (ESO).
- The Education Support Office will work closely with schools on a revised complaints management policy and supportive resources that will provide schools with greater guidance to effectively manage frontline complaints.
- This had been planned for term 4 2021, but will be held over until term 1 2022, due to the current health emergency response.
- The Education Directorate have been working closely with key stakeholders, including the Parents and Citizens Council, to gain feedback and advice around consideration of practices and processes in supporting strengthening of the model.

Background Information

- The Complaints Management Project is a priority in the Directorate's 2021 work plan. The project aim is to establish a robust, well documented, best practice complaints management framework.
- Recommendations from previous external reviews have reinforced the need for effective frontline, complaints management processes through clear and robust policy, procedures and school implementation support.

BUDGET ESTIMATES BRIEF

Portfolio/s: Education and Youth Affairs

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 1: TO PROMOTE GREATER EQUITY IN LEARNING OUTCOMES IN AND ACROSS ACT PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Talking points:

- The strategic indicator is based on the difference in NAPLAN scores in reading and numeracy between educationally less advantaged groups of students (those where highest level of parental education is less than a university degree) and the most educationally advantaged group of students (those with parents with a university qualification or above). The difference in outcomes over time for these two groups represents the equity gap for students in ACT public schools.
- Reducing the gap is the goal, so lower numbers in the indicator show improvement. The measure is a long-term indicator of changes that are anticipated. The measure will be subject to fluctuations on a year-to-year basis. For example, the gap might close in any single year due either to the more advantaged group achieving a slightly lower score, or because the less advantaged group achieves a higher score. Equally, the less advantaged group might achieve an increase in their score, but the more advantaged group may achieve a larger increase, thus widening the gap in that year.
- A goal of the ACT Government is to reduce the equity gap in educational outcomes over time. In 2019, the equity gap got smaller. The detailed data for 2021 NAPLAN required for this strategic indicator become available late this year and will be reported on accordingly.
- The ACT Government is not only focused on providing equality of opportunity to all our students but also focusses on considering the individual circumstances of every student in order to facilitate more equitable educational outcomes.
- A socio-educational needs-based loading is provided to schools as a component of the Student Resource Allocation (SRA) which, has been developed to reflect the ACT Government's commitment to implement a student needs-based school funding model for ACT public schools.

Key Information

Strategic Indicator 1(a) Reduction in the equity gap between the most advantaged and less advantaged students in **reading**.

	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021 Target
Equity Gap	48	45	57	52	N/A	51

Strategic Indicator 1(b) Reduction in the equity gap between the most advantaged and less advantaged students in **numeracy**

	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021 Target
Equity Gap	45	37	45	44	N/A	42

Cleared as complete and accurate: 06/10/2021
 Cleared for public release by: Director-General Ext: 59158
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 Lead Directorate: Education
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BUDGET ESTIMATES BRIEF

Background Information

- The ACT public education system is underpinned by the right of all children to access high quality education. Individual personal circumstances create socio-educational differences among students, and these explain more than a quarter of variation in student education outcomes.
- Not all children are able to access the same educational advantages when starting their education. Some children receive more at-home and early childhood education, than others, while some first access their education at the start of preschool or kindergarten. The difference in accessing opportunities may be the result of socio-economic factors, physical or mental health issues, or a disability, and cultural backgrounds or familial circumstances.
- 2018 was the baseline year for this new measure. This aligns with the ACT's move to more precise assessment through NAPLAN online. Historical data from 2016 have been retrospectively calculated for reference and have limited comparative value.
- The Student Family Education and Occupation Index (SFI) aggregated at school level, uses parental education and occupation levels of both parents of a student to determine school-level need and allocates proportionate funds to schools in need based on SFI score.
- Parental educational level has been used for determining the equity gap for reporting at jurisdictional level because parental education is more stable over time.

BUDGET ESTIMATES BRIEF

Portfolio/s: Education and Youth Affairs

Strategic Objective 2

NAPLAN Gain: *To facilitate high quality teaching in ACT public schools and strengthen educational outcomes*

Talking points:

- The Future of Education strategy sets, as an objective for the Directorate, to ensure student success through the delivery of high-quality learning that engages students and supports the development of learning for life.
- Progress in student learning gain is an important measure of evaluating educational outcomes. Drawing on the concept of a year's learning for a year's teaching, these strategic indicators measure the growth in learning of our students.
- Strategic objectives are designed to measure progress over strategic timeframes, where slight year-on-year variations are not as significant as the long-term trends.
- Each NAPLAN cycle, student scores are equated to a common scale. The scaling processes used in the NAPLAN tests create small, non-significant, measurement uncertainty (variation) in national means and in jurisdiction means over time. These variations do not represent an actual change in performance but rather are inherent effects due to measurement uncertainty.
- Between 2016 & 2017, the ACT public school year 3 reading mean increased from 440 to 446 points, while the year 5 public school reading mean decreased from 522 to 520 points.
- This had the effect of reducing the ACT public school gain from 82 points between 2016-18 to 74 points in 2017-19. Similar changes occurred nationally, with the years 3-5 reading gain decreasing from 84 points in 2016-18 to 75 points in 2017-19.
- Similar variations in NAPLAN gain occurred in the ACT and nationally for years 3-5 in numeracy and for years 7-9 in both reading and numeracy.
- The detailed data required to report on this measure for the period 2019-21 become available at the end of the year and will be subsequently be reported at the appropriate time.

Key Information

Strategic Indicator 2(a): Increase in the ACT public schools NAPLAN gain for years 3-5 in reading.

	2014-16	2015-17	2016-18	2017-19	2018-20	2019-21 Target
Year 3	439	441	440	446	N/A	442
Year 5	515	520	522	520	N/A	526
Gain	76	79	82	74	N/A	84

Cleared as complete and accurate: 06/10/2021
 Cleared for public release by: Director-General Ext: 59158
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 Lead Directorate: Education
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BUDGET ESTIMATES BRIEF

Strategic Indicator 2(b): Increase in the ACT public schools NAPLAN gain for years 3-5 in numeracy

	2014-16	2015-17	2016-18	2017-19	2018-20	2019-21 Target
Year 3	415	411	412	421	N/A	416
Year 5	498	497	497	499	N/A	506
Gain	83	86	85	79	N/A	90

Strategic Indicator 2(c): Increase in the ACT public schools NAPLAN gain for years 7-9 in reading

	2014-16	2015-17	2016-18	2017-19	2018-20	2019-21 Target
Year 7	563	566	558	563	N/A	560
Year 9	597	596	599	592	N/A	600
Gain	34	30	41	29	N/A	40

Strategic Indicator 2(d): Increase in the ACT public schools NAPLAN gain for years 7-9 in numeracy

	2014-16	2015-17	2016-18	2017-19	2018-20	2019-21 Target
Year 7	552	551	556	561	N/A	556
Year 9	593	594	600	594	N/A	603
Gain	41	43	44	33	N/A	47

Background Information

- Due to COVID-19 disruptions, the NAPLAN 2020 testing event did not occur. As a result, no data are available to report for the 2018-20 gain cycle.
- Students generally experience a higher gain in their early years of schooling while developing a foundation and understanding of new concepts in numeracy and literacy. This is reflected in the national NAPLAN results where students experience twice the gain between years 3 and 5 compared with the gain of students between years 7 and 9 students. The gain measure accounts for these different starting points and differences in the rate of expected growth.

BUDGET ESTIMATES BRIEF

Portfolio/s: Education and Youth Affairs

Strategic Objective 3 – To centre teaching and learning around students as individuals

Talking points:

- A strong sense of identity (belonging) with a school is important. There is a positive correlation between a strong student identification with their school, and the outcomes that the student achieves. Similarly, positive staff identification and parent/carer identification with the school has a beneficial impact on wellbeing and school culture.
- School Identification (sense of belonging) for students was 67% in 2020 which exceeded the target set of 61%. Staff School Identification met the target of 92% in 2020.
- School Identification in 2020 for parents and carers was 82%, well in excess of the target of 74% of parents strongly identifying with their childrens' school.
- We know that the first period of remote learning impacted on connectedness for students in particular but also families substantially in a very positive way as schools became an even more important part of the lives of school communities as they navigated stay at home orders.

Key Information

- The School Satisfaction and Climate Survey was conducted in Term 3 of 2020, when students had returned to school following lockdown. The Directorate believes that two factors contributed to the increases in School Identification:
 - Under the extraordinary circumstances of Term 2, 2020, the efforts of Directorate staff to ensure that student learning was not interrupted was seen and appreciated. This contributed to a greater sense of belonging.
 - In line with Social Identity theory, on which the survey components are based, the extended absence from school heightened the salience of the school community; in other words, students, parents and carers were more motivated to appreciate the value of face-to-face schooling.

Background Information

- The School Identification scale was developed as part of the Australian School Climate and Identification Measurement Tool by the ANU Research School of Psychology.
- The following table outlines proportions of students, staff, parents and carers with strong, neutral and weak identification in the years 2019 and 2020.

	2019			2020		
	% Strong	% Neutral	% Weak	% Strong	% Neutral	% Weak
Student	60%	25%	11%	67%	25%	8%
Staff	89%	6%	1%	92%	6%	2%
Parent	73%	20%	3%	82%	15%	3%

Cleared as complete and accurate: 06/10/2021
 Cleared for public release by: Director-General Ext: 59158
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BUDGET ESTIMATES BRIEF

Portfolio: Education and Youth Affairs

EDU COVID-19 RESPONSE TO DATE

Talking points:

- Prior to the ACT entering lockdown, the Education Directorate undertook scenario planning to prepare to respond to a potential outbreak of COVID-19 in the ACT. The planning covered:
 - response to moving into a snap lockdown;
 - moving into and deploying remote learning; and,
 - managing an exposure site at a school.
- The ACT lockdown commenced at **5:00 pm on Thursday 12 August 2021**.

Key dates for the Education Directorate response include:

Date	Milestone
Pre-lockdown	The Directorate was undertaking planning for their COVID response, which included a strategy for a snap lockdown (Scenario 1), a case at one or multiple schools (Scenario 2) and delivering remote learning (Scenario 3).
12 August 2021	The Directorate moved to operationalise the Lockdown Response Team to oversee operations during lockdown. The Deputy Director-General was appointed Lockdown Response Lead. Five pupil free days were declared to prepare for remote learning.
13 August 2021	The Directorate activated the Lockdown Response Team to respond to Scenario 1 in our COVID planning for a Snap Lockdown.
20 August 2021	The Directorate moved to respond to Scenario 3 in our COVID planning – All sites impacted or remote learning.

- Since the commencement of lockdown, the Directorate has managed a series of **exposure sites** at ACT Schools including **six public schools, two outside school hours care providers, 11 Early Childhood Education and Care providers** and **five non-Government schools**.
- If a school or early childhood setting is confirmed as an exposure site by ACT Health, each site is managed from commencement until final testing is completed by the Directorate. This includes arranging stakeholder meetings, providing information, arranging testing and cleaning of sites.

BUDGET ESTIMATES BRIEF

- The Directorate has also had testing facilities available at the Gold Creek Senior Campus and Erindale College during the lockdown. Both have now ceased operations.
- Year 12 students returned to on-campus learning from 5 October 2021, in part to allow for preparation for the AST which sat on the 12 - 13 October 2021. Year 11 students also returned to on-campus learning from 18 October 2021. All other students will return to school according to the ACT's COVID-19 Pathway Forward. (Refer to Estimates **Brief 3.3 Pathway out of Lockdown**)

Key Information

- The highest attendance at schools during the lockdown has been at our specialist schools, which is expected during this period due to student needs.
- Attendance at ACT public school through lockdown in Term 3 was around **1200 students per day**, or around **two (2) per cent** of total students.
- As at Tuesday 12 October 2021, approximately **2521** students are registered to attend their school onsite, with approximately **326 of those being students** with support programs. This number changes on a daily basis.
- The attendance at schools for Monday of Week 1 Term 4 was **2067 students (4.06%)**, not including college students; with **733 teaching staff** on-site. A small number of teaching staff continue to work on-site to support student learning face-to-face as well as online.¹
- The Directorate has been working directly with Transport Canberra to deliver bespoke transport services for students who require them.
- The Directorate has ongoing consultation with key stakeholders including:
 - CPSU
 - AEU
 - UWU
 - ACTPA
 - ACT P&C Council
 - AIS and CEO

-
- ¹ This data is from the daily staff attendance form complete daily at each school site. Student attendance data is from the School Administration System and is reliant on accurate roll marking.

Cleared as complete and accurate: 18/10/2021
Cleared for public release by: Deputy Director-General Ext: 59171
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Lead Directorate: Education
TRIM Ref:

BUDGET ESTIMATES BRIEF

Background Information

- The Education Directorate has an embedded Directorate Liasion Officer (DLO) in the Health Emergency Control Centre (HECC) to ensure that the the Directorate can respond quickly to any incidents that occur in our schools.
- The list of ACT Education sites managed as exposure sites includes:

ACT Government schools	Outside School Hours Care (OSHC)	Early Childhood Education and Care	Non-government schools
Gold Creek Senior and Junior Campus	Chapman Primary (After school care)	Goodstart Early Learning Turner	St Clare of Assisi
Harrison School	Florey Primary School (School holiday care)	Ginninderra Early Childhood Centre	Holy Spirit Catholic Primary School (Gold Creek)
Lake Ginninderra College		Bright Bees Early Learning Centre	St Thomas Aquinas Primary
Malkara Specialist School		Busy Bees in the Park	St Edmunds College
Jervis Bay School		Busy Bees Crace	St Mary MacKillop College
Narrabundah Early Childhood School		Anglicare Calwell	
		Nipperville Early Learning Centre	
		Taylor Childcare and Early Learning Centre	
		Sage Early Learning Centre	
		Artemis Fyshwick	
		Gold Creek World of Learning	

BUDGET ESTIMATES BRIEF

Portfolio/s: Education and Youth Affairs

TEACHER-LED REMOTE LEARNING

Talking points:

During lockdown

- The ACT lockdown commenced at 5pm on Thursday 12 August.
- ACT public school students began remote learning on Friday 20 August, following 5 pupil-free days to allow schools to transition. The vast majority undertook remote learning from home.
- All **ACT public schools** remained open for vulnerable children, children of parents who cannot work from home, and children of parents who are required to work from home but cannot reasonably provide care at the same time. Those students have attend their usual public school and accessed the same remote learning program as their classmates, delivered by their usual classroom teacher/s.
- All **specialist schools** have remained open for their usual students.
- **Out of school hours care** and **early childhood education and care services** remained open during the lockdown for vulnerable children, children of parents who cannot work from home, and children of parents who are required to work from home but cannot reasonably provide care at the same time.
- Teachers are continuing with their usual learning program and adapting this to help students have the best possible experience learning online, ensuring that remote learning is as normal as possible for students.
- The Education Directorate continues to provide information for schools, students and families through our dedicated webpage, which is regularly updated.
- Home learning resources by year level are available on the Education Directorate's website for students and families who wished to undertake self-directed learning during the lockdown.

Engagement Data

(Note: the most **current engagement data** will be provided for the hearing)

- As at Tuesday 12 October 2021, approximately 2521 students are registered to attend their school onsite, with approximately **326 of those being students** with support programs. This number changes on a daily basis.
- The attendance at schools for Monday of Week 1 Term 4 was **2067 students (4.06%)**, not including college students; with **733 teaching staff** on-site. A small number of teaching staff continue to work on-site to support student learning face-to-face as well as online.¹

• ¹ This data is from the daily staff attendance form complete daily at each school site. Student attendance data is from the School Administration System and is reliant on accurate roll marking.

BUDGET ESTIMATES BRIEF

- For week 9 Term 3 there were **4 775 303** student interactions with the Education Directorate's online learning platforms, occurring between **9am and 3pm**.
- There is no expectation on students to be logging-on to complete work outside of ordinary school hours.
- Our **Year 6 cohort** had the highest daily interactions for primary years; our **Year 7 cohort** had the highest daily interactions for high school years; and our **Year 11 cohort** had the highest daily interactions for senior secondary.

Return to campus

- It will be important for students to return to campus with their peers. Teachers can't teach remote and onsite learning to the same class at the same time and children and young people learn best in the classroom.
- Schools will continue to support students with medical vulnerabilities to learn from home as required.
- For those who choose not to return on campus, students in Year 3 and above will be able to continue accessing their usual work via Google Classroom. Students in Preschool to Year 2 will receive additional support through Education Directorate lessons in English, Mathematics, and one other learning area for each day of the week.

Key Information

Supporting Schools

- During lockdown, the Education Directorate has supported teachers to provide online learning through a range of activities including by provision of Professional Learning Webinars and support.
- **1967 educators** participated in Teacher Professional Learning webinars during lockdown.
- The online resources for our Educators in the **Teacher Resource Centre have had over 19, 800 hits** since the start of the lockdown, the materials include guidance and best practice examples for teaching practices, learning materials, wellbeing supports, adjusting for differentiation and assessment and reporting guidance.
- Wellbeing resources have been made available for schools to provide to their school communities including family activities, wellbeing booklets, gratitude journals, videos and factsheets.
- Since the lockdown commenced on 12 August 2021, ACT public schools have been provided additional devices and internet access to support remote learning.

Telehealth

- Our school psychologists have continued to provide support for students and their families. During the current lockdown, this support has taken the form of an Education Directorate's Telehealth Service (free online counselling sessions).
- As at 28 September, there were **137 cases** students or families contacting the telehealth line, **89 of these consultations were closed** and **48 were still active**.

BUDGET ESTIMATES BRIEF

- School psychologists are also able to help link families with other services, including community organisations, that are still operating during lockdown. Other external supports available include ReachOut, Headspace, Lifeline. Information and links for these supports is available on the Directorate’s website

Students with a Disability

- Students with disability and/or additional learning needs receive individualised supports during remote learning. Teachers and Learning Support Assistants know their students and work with families and students to ensure they have support to engage in remote learning.
- Every school has a Disability Education Coordinator (DECO) to support teachers to respond to inclusive practice. They have a range of different resources and families can contact them by email or phoning the school.
- Teachers develop learning based on the individual learning plan of each student. Many of these individual goals that are specially designed for a school context and may need to be placed on hold or rewritten to have a more practical application during the remote learning period..
- Families are encouraged check in with your child’s teacher for some advice and support – as they may have advice and strategies to share.
- Learning Support Assistants are still working with our schools, and each school may be utilising them differently – supporting students directly with their tasks or producing additional resources for the classroom teacher.

Background Information

- All ACT public schools commenced teacher-led remote learning on 20 August 2021.
- Remote learning applies to all students who are in lockdown at home from preschool through to college.

Chromebooks for High School and College students

- **22,000 Chromebooks** have been distributed to ACT public school secondary students, of which over 3,300 were distributed in February 2021 to new year 7 secondary students and new students who have joined years 8, 9,10, 11 or 12.
- The secondary student device refresh began on 19 April 2021 and was completed by the end of June 2021, refreshing **8,295** secondary student devices which were provided as part of the first rollout in 2018.
- Feedback from students and schools regarding the rollout, support and new devices has been positive.

Chromebooks for primary school students

- **13,500 Chromebooks** were distributed to ACT public primary school students. The ACT Government provides primary schools with shared Chromebooks at **one device per three students ratio**.

BUDGET ESTIMATES BRIEF

- In August 2021, 2,332 Chromebooks were distributed to refresh primary school devices to maintain the ratio.

COVID-19 lockdown responses

- During ACT's COVID-19 lockdown that commenced on 12 August 2021, ACT public schools were able to shift quickly to support remote learning during Term 3, 2021.
 - Secondary students were well positioned for this as they already had access to a Chromebook device through the Technology Enabled Learning (TEL) Program. Over 300 secondary students continued to utilise free internet support since the 2020 lockdown response to enable their learning.
 - Primary schools were also well positioned due to the recent refresh of 2,332 in August of Chromebook devices with 13,500 devices already available to primary students.
 - During home learning and the remote learning period in August 2021, the ACT Government has **loaned a further 2,110 devices to schools for year 4 to year 6 students to support their learning over this period**. These devices will be returned to the school, following the return to on campus learning.
 - ACT Education also provided an additional **989 internet support** to students and teachers as required.
- Teachers are continuing with their learning program and adapting these to help students have the best possible experience learning online.
- Primary and high school teachers check in with their students every day, to guide learning and to monitor wellbeing.
- Wellbeing supports provided to schools including a school psychologist lead telehealth service.
- The Directorate continues planning to safely return students to return to face-to-face in term 4 as the health directions permit.
- On Monday 27 September the ACT Government released a plan outlining the timeframes for students to return to on-campus learning. Particular cohorts of students will return according to the following schedule:
 - Year 12 students can return from Tuesday 5 October, with a focus on practical classes, essential exams and assessments (week 1, term 4).
 - Year 11 students can return from Tuesday 5 October for essential exams and assessment *only* when they can not be deferred until week 3 (week 1, term 4).
 - Year 11 and 12 on-campus classes resume from Monday 18 October (week 3, term 4)
 - Preschool, Kindergarten, Years 1, 2, 6, 9 and 10 can return to on campus learning on Monday 25 October (week 4, term 4)
 - Years 3, 4, 5, 7 and 8 can return to on-campus learning on Monday 1 November (week 5, term 4).

Cleared as complete and accurate: 05/10/2021

Cleared for public release by: Director-General

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BUDGET ESTIMATES BRIEF

Portfolio/s: Education and Youth Affairs

Early Childhood Development

PATHWAY OUT OF LOCKDOWN

Talking points:

- The health and safety of children, young people, and staff is the first priority in developing the pathway out of lockdown for schools and ECEC services, followed by wellbeing and continuity of learning.
- On 27 September 2021 the Government released the details of how all school students will return to camps learning in term 4, this included early childhood education and care and out of hours care services.
- The ACT Government has approached the pathway out of lockdown with careful planning, drawing on national and local health advice, in response to the current and emerging needs of staff, students and families.

5 October 2021 (Week 1)	Year 12 students can return with a focus on practical classes, and essential exams and assessments. Year 11 students can return from 5 October for essential exams and assessments only when they can not be deferred to week 3.
18 October 2021 (Week 3)	Year 11 and 12 classes can commence return to onsite learning.
25 October 2021 (Week 4)	Preschool, kindergarten, years 1, 2, 6, 9, and 10 can return to on campus learning. These year groups will also be able to attend their usual out of school hours care programs. Early childhood education and care services (ECECs) will also return to full operation from 25 October 2021.
1 November 2021 (Week 5)	Years 3, 4, 5, 7, and 8 can return to on campus learning. • All students will be able to attend their usual out of school hours care programs.

- Schools and ECECs will be required to adhere to the ACT Chief Health Officer's *Health Guidelines for ACT Schools and Early Childhood Education and Care Services* (guidelines), which are informed by the Australian Health Protection Principal Committee's (AHPPC) advice on minimising the potential risk of COVID-19 transmission in schools¹.
- The AHPPC have advised that physical distancing, hand and respiratory hygiene, regular cleaning and disinfection of the environment, and staying home if unwell, continue to be effective measures for responding to new variants of COVID-19.

BUDGET ESTIMATES BRIEF

- The guidelines also require schools to implement a range of measures to minimise mixing between student and staff cohorts, ensure all staff and students in years 7-12 wear masks on school sites, and monitor staff vaccination rates.
- The *Term 4 Plan for ACT Public Schools* outlines how public schools will implement the health and safety requirements outlined in the Chief Health Officer's guidelines. Detailed implementation plans are also being developed for each public school to identify how these requirements will be implemented at the local level.

New funding for a safe return to school

- The ACT Government is investing an additional **\$5.7 million** in schools and early childhood education and care services to support the safe return of students and staff to on campus learning in term 4. The measures include:
 - **\$2.9 million** to improve ventilation in ACT public schools. This includes building works, CO2 monitoring, increased maintenance for heating, ventilation, and air conditioning (HVAC) systems, and an anticipated increase in electricity bills.
 - **\$1.5 million** for additional relief teaching hours to support public schools to implement these COVID-safe measures, including covering staff absences and enabling staggered breaks.
 - **\$688,000** to buy additional masks and hand sanitiser for public schools, early childhood education and care services and for low fee paying non-government schools.
 - **\$500,000** for additional shade structures in ACT public schools. This will support schools to maximise use of outdoor learning spaces.
 - Two additional senior psychologists to provide online counselling and support for ACT public school students.

Key Information

Return to on campus learning consultation

- The phased return to school was informed by consultations with over 6,000 students, parents, carers and staff. The survey was undertaken between 12 September 2021 to 24 September 2021.
- These consultations highlighted the importance of prioritising students in transition years, as well as very young children for early return.
- Consultation included:
 - survey responses from 1,352 students, 3,382 parents and carers, and 1,494 staff
 - ACT Council of Parents and Citizens Associations-Representative input session with parents from 45 ACT public schools

BUDGET ESTIMATES BRIEF

- Minister's Student Congress forum with student representatives from primary school through to year 12, supported by the ACT Children and Young Peoples Commissioner
- Workshop with the Principals Advisory Group representing 24 individual ACT public schools and all public schooling sectors, primary, high, college and specialist schools
- Ongoing engagement with the ACT Principals Association, Association of Independent Schools, Catholic Education Goulburn and Canberra, Australian Education Union (ACT Branch), Community and Public Sector Union, United Workers Union, ACT Council of Parents and Citizens Associations, and the Early Childhood Education and Care Sector.
- Confidence in schools being safe (survey responses):
 - 65 percent of students, 60 percent of parents/carers, and 35 percent of staff felt confident that schools would be safe places to be.
 - 15 percent of students, 20 percent of parents/carers, and 35 percent of staff were not confident that schools would be safe places to be.
 - This data was collected prior to the release of safety measures and informed the strategies that will be in place to ensure staff, parents/carers and students feel confident that schools are safe.
 - In particular, staff, parents/carers and students stressed the importance of vaccination, ventilation, masks, physical distancing, and hygiene measures to help them feel safe. All of these measures are being implemented in ACT schools.

BUDGET ESTIMATES BRIEF

Key consultation insights:

- **Health and safety measures are critical.** These should be implemented well. Vaccination rates are overwhelmingly important to help people feel safe.
- **Communication is key.** Students, parents, carers and staff need to know when and how schools will return and what measures are in place to make schools safe.
- **Celebrations are really important.** Everyone has worked hard and that should be acknowledged. Celebrate milestones and achievements in the school community.
- **Working together will make the difference.** Students, parents, carers and staff are all a part of creating a safe and positive return to school. It's important to keep everyone involved.
- **Wellbeing over workloads.** Recognise the challenging times people have faced. Focus on social connections and enable students to consolidate what they have learnt to help them feel more confident about 2022.
- **Managing a phased return.** Younger children and students in transition years should return as early as possible. Phasing can be made easier if managed well.

Background Information

- The ACT entered a snap lockdown on 12 August 2021. The lockdown has since been extended to 15 October 2021. Following the end of the lockdown, a gradual easing of restrictions will occur over multiple months.
- From 13 August 2021 schools and early childhood education and care (ECEC) services (including out of school hours care services) were open only for children of parents and carers who cannot reasonably provide care from home, including vulnerable children. Most students have been learning remotely from home.
- The return to on campus learning has been decided by the ACT Chief Health Officer as part of the broader easing of restrictions across the ACT. ACT schools and ECECs will implement the return in accordance with health directives and will be guided by the Australian Health Protection Principals Committee (AHPPC) advice for minimising COVID-19 transmission in schools.

BUDGET ESTIMATES BRIEF

Portfolio/s: Education and Youth Affairs

STAFF WELLBEING

Talking points:

- The ACT Government is committed to supporting employees in a challenging, changing environment particularly since the most recent COVID-19 outbreak and lockdown in the ACT.
- To support this effort, the Education Directorate and its leadership, are making sure the wellbeing of the workforce is being looked after.
- In response, the Directorate, is promoting existing universal and foundational staff wellbeing supports, continuing with ongoing reactive ones, and identifying new and proactive wellbeing initiatives through a diversity of channels and methods.
- Some examples of these supports include:
 - **Information sessions** for all schools identified as exposure sites with wellbeing supports and contacts provided;
 - **Wellbeing education and check in sessions** for leaders, managers and identified staff groups to share information, strategies, and answer questions;
 - Availability of dedicated and trained wellbeing officers via the People and Performance Branch, to **provide support and guidance to staff**. Contact can be made via a hotline and inbox for direct support, and referrals can be made to request for support on behalf of a staff member;
 - A **direct hotline and inbox for all staff to access** for answers to enquiries relating to how their work is affected by COVID and the recent lockdown. Enquiries include but are not limited to: casual employee eligibility for payment, flexible working arrangements, restrictions in the ACT to date, leave options, essential worker advice and the vaccination roll out for eligible staff. A response is provided within 24 hours and is managed by members of the People and Performance Branch.
 - Regular communications and **all staff alerts** from the Director General and other leaders to staff to remind them of the supports, resources and contacts available.

BUDGET ESTIMATES BRIEF

Key Information

Since the commencement of lockdown on 12 August 2021:

- The People and Performance HR Business Partner hotline has received **128** COVID / lockdown related enquiries. Of these, **125 enquiries are resolved and 3 are ongoing**.
- The People and Performance Injury Management Team has received **11 enquiries relating to COVID and its effect on workers' compensation**, all enquiries have been answered and resolved. **11 workers' compensation claims** have been lodged in this period, **no claims relate to COVID**.
- The People and Performance Early Intervention and Wellbeing Team has received 157 referrals by way of incident notification (Riskman) and direct enquiries. Out of this pool, **13** referrals were related to COVID. 144 wellbeing check in's were conducted and have now resolved, the remaining 13 did not require a check in.

Background Information

- The Education Directorate and its People and Performance Branch are committed to supporting employees in a challenging, changing environment. Staff wellbeing initiatives are driven by the *Strategic Plan 2018-2021*, with particular regard to 'Empowering teachers and other professionals to strengthen learning for all'.
- This plan is premised on the first phase of implementation of the *Future of Education Strategy*, specifically priority one; safety and confidence and three; best start in a career of learning, thriving in a career of learning and supporting leaders in a career of learning.
- The Directorate is committed to providing ongoing reactive and proactive wellbeing support to all Directorate employees and will continue to deliver this service offering through available means and methods.

BUDGET ESTIMATES BRIEF

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 to COVID 19 have had a substantial impact on the early childhood education and care (ECEC) sector, including outside school hours care (OSHC).
- From **25 October 2021**, ECEC services in the ACT, will be able to return to full operation and provide for children and families who are returning to work. There will be a **graduated return to OSHC with preschool, kindergarten and years 1, 2, 6, 9 and 10 returning on 25 October 2021 and years 3, 4, 5, 7 and 8 on 1 November 2021**.
- This decision is based on Health advice. ECEC Services are currently preparing to return to usual operations, including 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.
- Between **12 August and 30 September 2021**, a total of **11 ECEC services, 4 OSHC services and 2 Family Day Care (FDC) educators have been closed** by CECA, the ACT Regulatory Authority. These closures were made on the advice from ACT Health that they posed a risk of COVID-19 transmission on the basis of children and adults mixing with an identified infectious person.
- A **further 17 ECEC services remain closed at provider discretion** since the lockdown announcement. For many of these services, providers consolidated attending children to one site.
- On 1 September 2021, the Minister for Early Childhood Development met with a number of ECEC stakeholders to hear their concerns, including educators safety and wellbeing, issues about viability of services, and the impact current restrictions are having on children experiencing vulnerability and disadvantage.
- The ACT Government has welcomed the introduction of the Australian Government's Early Childhood Education and Care Viability Support Package, however is aware there are some remaining questions regarding funding. This includes clarity on support as services return to full capacity.
- On 3 September 2021, the ACT Government announced prioritising the ECEC sector in the vaccine rollout. This recognises the significant contribution educators make to children, their families and the wider community, and gives them assurance that their health and safety is of great importance.

Key Information

Supporting the ECEC Sector

- In response to the COVID 19 pandemic, CECA established work streams responsible for monitoring and supporting Education and Care services approved under the Education and Care Services National Law 2021 (National Law), as well as services licensed under the Children and Young Peoples Act 2008 (CYPS Act).
- Four streams of work were established to monitor education and care services, provide support 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.
- The ACT Government announced amendments to Health directions that will remove restricted access to ECEC services from 25 October 2021. Services will be able to return to full operation from this time, with OSHC gradually returning between 25 October 2021 and 1 November 2021. The decision aligns with projected community vaccination rates and the pace of easing restrictions in other parts of the ACT.
- CECA is currently supporting 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 is prioritising the ECEC workforce in the vaccination rollout. This commitment recognises the critical service early childhood educators provide children and families in the ACT. The ACT Government acknowledges the risks and concerns educators face when working with children and families in the current circumstances.

BUDGET ESTIMATES BRIEF

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 1 August and 30 September 2021 is below:

Communication Channel	Reach	Target Audience
Targeted emails, alerts, updates, and notifications	18 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	27 calls to services directed to close on ACT Health advice or voluntarily closed due to health concerns	Education and care services leaders
Support calls	All non-government services will receive a wellbeing call to provide target support. Approximately 110 calls to services, and 45 calls to providers have been made so far.	Education and care services leaders
Education and care COVID-19 webpage	Page views 2,141	Education and care providers, services leaders, educators, families, and wider Canberra community.
Facebook posts	84 posts distributed. Overall reach 1990 since 1 September 2021. Overall engagement 3,618 since 1 September 2021	Existing audience of 1,170 individual education and care providers, service leaders and educators.

Sector viability and support payments

- Australian Government ECEC Viability Support Package was announced on 23 August 2021, for services in lockdown in Commonwealth-declared COVID-19 Hotspots.
 - For Centre Based Day Care, Family Day Care and In Home Care services this will mean a fortnightly payment of 25% of their pre-lockdown revenue calculated up to the hourly cap.
 - For Outside School Hours Care (OSHC) and vacation care services this will mean a 40% fortnightly payment of their pre-locked down revenue calculated up to the hourly cap.
 - Business continuity payments are contingent on services:
 - having reasonable expectations attendance will drop below 50%
 - not accessing other Commonwealth Government-funded business supports
 - waiving gap fees for all families whose children are not attending
 - maintaining staffing levels, and
 - agreeing to a fee freeze for the duration of business continuity payments.
- The ECEC Viability Support Package will continue to be in place while the ACT is considered a 'COVID-19 Hotspot' by the Commonwealth Government.
- The ACT Government has been receiving feedback from ECEC services through sector wide surveys. The responses show that viability remains a concern, despite the Australian Government's Viability Support Package. The ACT Government is continuing to monitor this issue and is working collaboratively with the Australian Government to ensure the needs of the ACT sector are met.
- 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.
- Eligible providers (ACT Property Group tenants) have the option to have access rent relief through the extension of the Rental Relief Initiative. This initiative provides a waiver of rents for 1 September 2021 to 30 September 2021 (inclusive).

BUDGET ESTIMATES BRIEF

Portfolio/s: Education and Youth Affairs

STAFF VACCINATION IN SCHOOLS AND VACCINATION RATES OF STUDENTS

Talking points:

Staff vaccination

- ACT teachers, educators and staff that have direct contact with children in their daily work in schools and early education centres were prioritised for COVID-19 Pfizer vaccinations at ACT Government COVID-19 mass vaccination clinics.
- Staff were prioritised for vaccination along with other priority groups including health care workers and other frontline staff.
- Staff were able to make appointments via a dedicated priority phone line.
- School based staff and school cleaners were asked to complete an anonymous survey between 26 September 2021 and 8 October 2021 to provide an indication of the level of vaccination coverage in ACT Public Schools.
- On track for fully vaccinated combines those who are fully vaccinated, have received their first dose, and have booked in for their first dose.

School Based Staff

- **5,633 respondents (79 per cent response rate) with 96.8 per cent** of those respondents on track to be fully vaccinated

Early childhood (P-2)	on track 96.8% fully vaccinated
Upper primary (3-6)	on track 97% fully vaccinated
High school (7-10)	on track 97% fully vaccinated
College (11-12)	on track 96.5% fully vaccinated
Flexible education	on track 94.9% fully vaccinated
Specialist schools	on track 97.3% fully vaccinated

School Cleaners

- **360 respondents (80 per cent response rate) with 97.7 per cent** on track to be fully vaccinated

Day Cleaners	On track 97.7% fully vaccinated
Night Cleaners	On track 97.6% fully vaccinated
Other Cleaners	On track 91.7% fully vaccinated

Mandatory vaccination in certain schools

- On 13 October 2021, the ACT Chief Health Officer (CHO) announced the intention to mandate vaccination for all workers at schools that cater for children under 12 years of age (who are currently ineligible for vaccination) and higher risk groups, including;
 - specialist schools
 - flexible learning programs, and
 - early childhood education and care services (including out of school hours care).

BUDGET ESTIMATES BRIEF

- The public health direction will also include staff in preschool to year 10 schools where they share a campus with those younger years. High school and colleges that don't share a campus with primary school students are not covered by the mandate.
- This mandate will require all workers on those sites to provide evidence of a first dose of vaccine by 1 November 2021 and a second dose by 29 November 2021.
- The Education Directorate is consulting with stakeholders and staff on how best to implement the health directions. A procedure and administrative system is being developed during the weeks of 18 to 29 October, to be implemented ahead of the first dose timeframe of 1 November. The procedure will include the approach for alternative duties, reasonable adjustments and redeployment of government employees who chose not to get vaccinated without a CHO approved exemption.
- The Education Directorate anticipates the public health direction will be made on 19 October 2021.

Year 12 Students

- All year 12 students were prioritised for the Pfizer COVID-19 vaccination to ensure that every precaution was taken, and ASTs and other assessments could proceed as safely as possible.
- Year 12 students were able to make bookings via a dedicated phone line for priority access to the ACT Government mass vaccination clinic.
- A total of 2,720 year 12 students made appointments via ACT Health for Pfizer COVID-19 vaccination.
- Many year 12 students accessed vaccination via primary health care providers or appointments prior to the priority access being provided.

Specialist Settings Program

- An in-reach vaccination program was provided for students in specialist settings including:
 - Black Mountain/Cranleigh School
 - Woden and Malkara School
 - Galilee School
 - Flexible Education Cohorts and CC Cares
- First doses were administered from 13 - 17 September 2021.
- Second doses were administered from 5 - 8 October 2021.
- A total of 322 Pfizer COVID-19 vaccinations were administered via this program.

12 years old and above Students

- On 13 September 2021 Pfizer COVID-19 vaccination bookings for 12+ students opened up at general practitioners and pharmacies.
- On 20 September 2021 Pfizer COVID-19 vaccination bookings for 12+ students opened up at the ACT Government clinic – AIS.

BUDGET ESTIMATES BRIEF

- On 20 September 2021 Moderna COVID-19 Bookings for 12+ students opened up at selected community pharmacies.

Key Information

- The vaccination program for staff and students was provided through a close collaboration between ACT Health and ACT Education.
- The prioritisation of staff and year 12 students was successful in ensuring access to vaccination appointments to enable a return to on campus learning.
- The Specialist settings in-reach program was very well received by parents and students in these vulnerable cohorts.
- Year 12 students living in NSW and outside of the ACT identified postcodes were provided opportunities to access vaccinations via arrangements between ACT Health and NSW Health.
- Second dose appointments for the prioritised group of Year 12 students were made available in the week commencing 27 September 2021 to ensure students were vaccinated prior to the AST.

Background Information

- ACT Vaccination rates for people 12+ have been leading the nation. As of 7 October 2021 over 95% had received at least one dose.
- Staff eligible for a priority booking were contacted directly by their school, early childhood centre or out of school hours care service with booking information.

BUDGET ESTIMATES BRIEF

Portfolio/s: Education and Youth Affairs

Early Childhood Development

COVID Complaints Data

Talking points:

- At the commencement of the ACT lockdown, calls primarily aligned to the educational context at the time. For example, questions around testing requirements and testing sites, when a school was identified as an exposure site and questions around remote learning when the lockdown was first extended.
- A COVID Hotline was introduced with increased staffed hours so community members could readily access the Education Directorate with their queries or concerns.

Relates to Estimate Hearing Brief 2.6 Complaints Management

Key Information

- Between 12 August and 1 October 2021 the Education Directorate has **received 279 total calls** in relation to COVID-19 matters. All calls were able to be resolved quickly and where necessary, prompt referral to the appropriate business unit was able to support timely resolution.
- Of those calls, **109** (39per cent) were related to covid testing, specifically around pop up testing stations, the suggested or allocated timing to go for testing and whether the whole family could be tested at the same time . **33** calls (12per cent) have been about ICT equipment, laptops, and chromebooks often related to troubleshooting around passwords and students struggling to log in. A further **31** calls (11 per cent) were around remote learning, primarily around learning expectations, for example, is it expected the teacher be on all day as you would expect a typical 9.00am-3.00pm classroom day, and what does my child do for the remainder of the day when they finish their work early?
- The Directorate's Feedback and Complaints Team deals with a variety of complaints from the school community which can be made by calls to the Feedback and Complaints line or through an online contact form.
- At the onset of lockdown, and in anticipation of an increase in volume of enquiries and calls the Education Directorate modified the Feedback and Complaints line to extended the call taking operating hours from 8am to 5pm (from 9am to 4pm)to provide increased call taking coverage.
- The tracking of feedback, complaints and concerns in relation to the lockdown and impact on school and students has been valuable in informing ongoing updates to the Frequently Asked Questions information maintained on our website for members of the public.
- Accurate and detailed messaging supported and scripted by key business units enabled the team to provide responses through a one source of truth approach in a consistent, transparent and efficient manner and as new situations evolved.

Cleared as complete and accurate: 05/10/2021

Cleared for public release by: Choose an item.

Contact Officer name: Mel Howard

Lead Directorate: Education

TRIM Ref:

Ext:

Ext: 52808



BUDGET ESTIMATES BRIEF

Background Information

- The Directorate's Feedback and Complaints phone line has continued to be the key point of contact throughout the COVID lockdown for members of the school community to ask questions and raise issues and concerns.

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BUDGET ESTIMATES BRIEF

Portfolio/s: Education and Youth Affairs

HEALTH ADVICE AND SAFETY MEASURES IN SCHOOLS

Talking points:

- Schools remain safe places because we have developed COVID safe plans and procedures for each school setting.
- Health systems are ready to quickly identify and respond to cases.
- **High levels of vaccination** combined with **public health measures** are the best protections against COVID-19.
- Our phased return is based on advice from the AHPPC and ACT Chief Health Officer.
- The staggered return to school by year groups, ensures public health measures can be implemented in a safe and considered way, while the ACT progresses to reaching vaccination milestones.
- Schools will need to follow **health directions** including:
 - Use of CBR Check in app
 - Staying home when sick
 - Good hygiene (eg. hand washing)
 - Masks wearing
 - For all staff, visitors and students in years 7-12 when indoors and outside in close contact with others, except when eating.
 - Primary students in years 3-6 are encouraged to wear a mask. This is at the discretion of their parents or carers.
 - Younger children should not wear masks (choke hazard).
 - Physical distancing –includes:
 - cohorts not mixing
 - increasing in-class distancing where possible
 - limiting gatherings and visitors on site.
 - Environmental cleaning of high touch surfaces.
 - Ventilation – including increasing fresh air flow and outdoor learning.
- The ACT Government is investing an additional **\$5.7 million** in schools and early childhood education and care services to support the safe return of students and staff to on campus learning in term 4.
 - **\$2.9 million to improve ventilation** in ACT public schools. This includes building works, CO2 monitoring, increased maintenance for heating,

Cleared as complete and accurate: 08/10/2021
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BUDGET ESTIMATES BRIEF

ventilation, and air conditioning (HVAC) systems, and an anticipated increase in electricity bills.

- **\$1.5 million for additional relief teaching hours** to support public schools to implement these COVID-safe measures, including covering staff absences and enabling staggered breaks.
- **\$688,000 to buy additional masks and hand sanitiser** for public schools, early childhood education and care services and for low fee paying non-government schools.
- **\$500,000 for additional shade structures** in ACT public schools. This will support schools to maximise use of outdoor learning spaces.
- **Two additional senior psychologists** to provide online counselling and support for ACT public school students.

Key Information

- Work Health and Safety is at the core of the planning process. Resources have been developed to ensure consistency between schools while allowing them to adapt the ACT Chief Health Officer's *Health Guidelines for ACT Schools and Early Childhood Education and Care Services* (health guidelines) to their local context.
- The *Term 4 Plan for ACT Public Schools* provides a consistent framework for translating the health guidelines across public school sites. This plan includes the timeframes for the phased return, health and safety requirements, community use of school facilities and management of onsite visitors, excursions and extracurricular activities, and assessment and reporting arrangements.
- This plan, along with comprehensive FAQs are publicly available on the Education Directorate website.
- All three unions (AEU, CPSU, UWU) have been consulted in the development of the COVID planning for schools.
- Students, staff and parents were also consulted on the return to on campus learning with ongoing communications underway to support consistent messaging and community confidence in schools as safe places to be.
- The Education Directorate has developed a 'sectors of schooling' support model for schools to share approaches and strategies with colleagues. The support model includes scheduled meetings to allow sharing and problem solving led by Directors of School Improvement.
- Careful planning has informed our response should a school become identified as an exposure location by ACT Health. The Directorate will work with schools through a systematic process from response to initial notification, management of site to the return back to onsite learning.

Background Information

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- The response to COVID-19 by ACT schools and early childhood education and care services has been informed by advice from the ACT Chief Health Officer. The advice has led to a sensible, measured approach to inform and educate school communities and service providers.
- This includes non-government schools affiliated with Catholic Education and the Association of Independent Schools.
- The Strategy ensures:
 - continuity of education to children and young people
 - Support for staff and student’s health, safety and wellbeing
 - Minimised impacts of the pandemic on the ACT education and early childhood education and care sectors.

BUDGET ESTIMATES BRIEF

Portfolio/s: Education and Youth Affairs

VENTILATION IN SCHOOLS

Key Information

- An important part of ACT Public Schools return to on campus learning in Term 4, 2021 is to ensure that there is proper ventilation in line with Health advice for managing COVID-19.
- It's important to note that ventilation is part of the broader suite of controls to reduce the risk of COVID-19 transmission in school settings including vaccination, physical distancing, good hygiene, cleaning and mask use, and should not be considered in isolation of other mitigation strategies
- 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.
- **Education Directorate 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 will be assessed under the IAQ framework** with immediate actions implemented to optimise fresh air flow. There are 3500 learning areas in public schools in the ACT (including approx. 3000 classrooms).
- **Every school will have an Indoor Air Quality Plan completed** by the time students go back to school for the return to on-campus learning – this includes a list of actions already undertaken by the Directorate (including increasing fresh air ventilation via HVAC systems) and actions for schools to undertake each day (including opening windows to promote natural ventilation and turning on exhaust fans). These school actions will be carried out by non-teaching staff like our Building Service Officers.
- **Site specific IAQ plans were provided to all ACT Public Colleges** on 1st of October 2021.
- From this work, the Education Directorate is confident that fresh air flow can be increased in ALL public schools 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** are anticipated to result from the increase in fresh air as a greater volume of air needs to be heated or cooled.
- **The Directorate is investigating technologies** to improve air quality in classrooms including modern ventilation systems for toilets and bathrooms and air purification systems.

Cleared as complete and accurate: 15/09/2021
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Lead Directorate: Education
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BUDGET ESTIMATES BRIEF

- **The Directorate is monitoring air quality** in learning spaces to further refine the strategy to provide the best ventilation for ACT public schools including pre-schools.
- **\$2 Million of additional funding has been allocated** to undertake short term actions across the public school portfolio to maximise fresh air in learning spaces.

Background Information

- 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.
- The Education Directorate has been progressively upgrading building controls in 65 schools in order to have better control of the air intake sources for the Heating, Ventilation and Cooling (HVAC) systems.
- Many of our schools have building controls with CO₂ sensors which provides a proxy for ventilation in a room. CO₂ monitoring will commence once students and staff have fully returned on-site in Term 4.
- In 2018, the Education Directorate commenced a program of installing CO₂ sensors in schools. To date, more than 200 CO₂ sensors with remote monitoring and management systems have been installed across 34 public schools. An additional 80 CO₂ sensors are currently on order and will be installed at approximately 31 ACT Public Schools with suitable building control systems over the coming weeks. This will mean 73 percent (65 of 89) schools will soon have CO₂ sensors to the monitor and manage indoor air quality.
- Not all classrooms are connected to large HVAC systems with CO₂ sensors, however these rooms typically have external natural ventilation and split system air conditioning units so that fresh air can be introduced and air flow maintained.
- Longer term, the Directorate will look to introduce additional mechanical ventilation in spaces that require it. This may include installation of new building control/management systems with CO₂ sensors that can remotely control HVAC systems and windows as well as installing supplemental ventilation such as modern exhaust fans in bathrooms and toilets.

BUDGET ESTIMATES BRIEF

Portfolio/s: Education and Youth Affairs

SCHOOLS FUNDING

Talking points:

- The 2021-22 ACT Government Budget provides total funding of **\$1.384 billion** for Education. This represents an **increase of \$104.3 million** or **eight (8) per cent** on the **2020-21 Interim Outcome**.

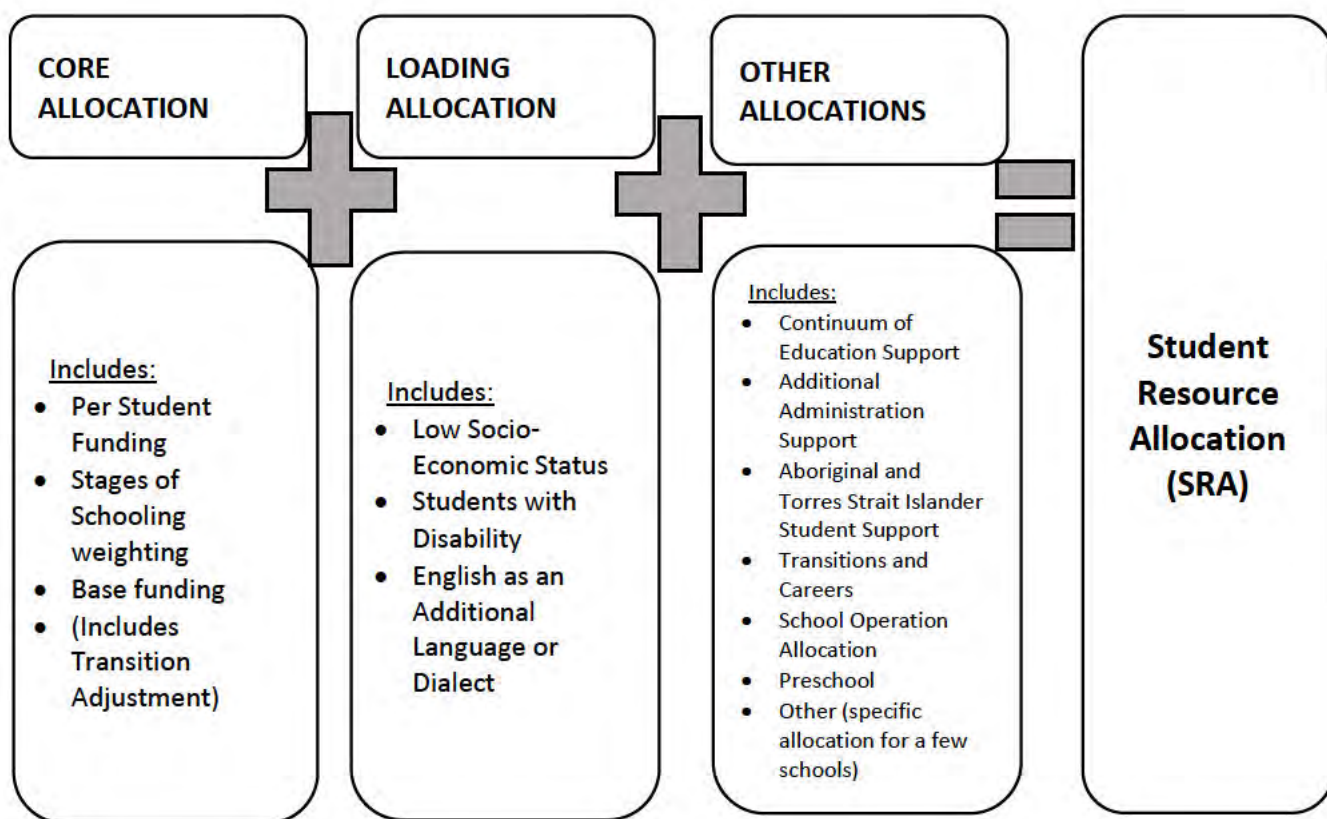
Key Information:

- The 2021-22 ACT Government Budget provides a **five (5) per cent increase** in funding from the 2020-21 Interim Outcome for ACT public schools with total funding of **\$872.426 million**.
- The 2021-22 ACT Government Budget provides a **three (3) per cent increase** in funding from the 2020-21 Interim Outcome for **ACT non-government schools** with total funding of **\$332.9 million**. This includes funding provided for non-government schools through both the territorial and controlled appropriations.
- The 2021-22 ACT Government Budget provides a **significant boost** in funding for **capital works of \$52.0 million** or **41 per cent over the 2020-21 Interim Outcome**.

SRA in ACT public schools

- The SRA is the ACT Government's needs-based funding model used to provide staffing resources to ACT Public Schools. The Directorate commenced the implementation of the SRA in 2016.
- The SRA utilises similar loadings to the Commonwealth SRS, however, the loadings use different data sets specific to the ACT.
- The School Operational Allocation (SOA) is a component of the SRA and provides for operational costs such as energy and water.
- It is important to note that the **SRA is the funding model used to fund ACT Public Schools NOT the Commonwealth SRS**. The Commonwealth SRS only calculates Commonwealth funding contributions to States and Territories. This funding is incorporated into the SRA model.
- The SRA funding model is summarised in the diagram below, and outlines the funding components under each element:

BUDGET ESTIMATES BRIEF



- In order to ensure that funding continues to flow to all ACT schools, 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 both government and non-government schools to their share of the SRS by 2023. This provides long term certainty for schools surrounding Commonwealth and Territory funding arrangements.
- The ACT Government is reducing its recurrent funding for ACT public schools to meet its share (80 per cent) of the SRS whilst the Commonwealth Government is increasing its recurrent funding to meet its share (20 per cent) of the SRS.
- The ACT Government is reducing its recurrent funding for ACT non-government schools to meet its share (20 per cent) of the SRS as is the Commonwealth Government (80 per cent).

BUDGET ESTIMATES BRIEF

Portfolio: Education and Youth Affairs

STUDENT RESOURCE ALLOCATION (SRA)

Note: Refer to Estimates [Brief 1.03 Equitable Enrolment Adjustment](#)

Talking points:

- The Education Directorate has made significant progress towards the full implementation of a student needs-based school funding model.
 - The funding program for Students with Disability is currently under review for future implementation.
- The SRA directs resources to those public schools where it is most needed, based on a fairer allocation of funding for student need.
- Canberra public schools are among the best resourced in the country, with the ACT ranked second, behind the Northern Territory, for dollars spent per student.
- The SRA allocates funding to Canberra public schools based on student need.

Key Information

- In 2021, schools were allocated \$528.9 million through their Actual SRA statements. This funding excludes the direct school's programs¹, corporate and employee oncosts that are managed through the Education Support Office.

SRA Programs	2021 (\$'m)
Core Allocation	354.0
Low Socio-Economic Status	12.0
English As an Additional Language or Dialect	9.6
Students with a Disability	62.9
Cultural Integrity	0.7
Continuum of Educational Support	5.9
School Operational Allocation	31.6
Preschools	26.7
Other ¹	3.2
Casual Allocation	22.3
Total	528.9

1. Includes Student Support and School Equity, Transition and Careers and Other Staffing Allocation.

¹ There are direct in-school programs managed by ESO. These are psychologists, allied health officers, itinerant staff including vision and hearing support staff etc.

Cleared as complete and accurate: 01/10/2021

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BUDGET ESTIMATES BRIEF

- The SRA funding model is structured around three broad categories:
 - Core Funding which includes per student funding, base funding, and adjustments for stages of schooling;
 - Loadings to address needs of key groups; Students with Disability, Students with English as an Additional Language or Dialect and Students with low Socio-Economic Status.
 - Other allocations include Schools Operational Allocation, Continuum of Educational Support, Transition and Career Support, Cultural Integrity etc.

Background Information

- The SRA is one component of the broader reform agenda set in the Australian Government Review of Funding for Schooling Final Report December 2011.
- Recommendation 8 refers to the development and implementation of a new funding model for schools based on, amongst others, the principles of funding in response to need, driving broader school reform, transparency and clarity, value for money and accountability.
- The ACT Government signed a National Education Reform Agreement (NERA) with the Australian Government in response to the Gonski Review on 30 May 2013.

BUDGET ESTIMATES BRIEF

Portfolio/s: Education and Youth Affairs

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 percent and 20 percent** of the schooling resource standard (SRS) respectively.
- **The Commonwealth** is transitioning funding to **ACT public schools up to 20 percent** of the SRS by **2023**.
- **Commonwealth funding to non-government** schools currently funded **below** 80 percent of the SRS will transition **up to 80 percent** by **2023**.
- **Commonwealth funding to non-government** schools currently funded **above** 80 percent of the SRS will transition **down to 80 percent** by **2029**.

Key Information

Public Schools

- Commonwealth funding to ACT public schools is currently below the minimum required amount of 20 percent of the SRS. The **Commonwealth Government** will transition funding to ACT public schools up to 20 percent of the Schooling Resource Standard (SRS) by 2023. In 2021 funding is estimated to be **18.7 percent** of the SRS.
- **ACT Government** funding to public schools is currently above the minimum required level of 80 percent of the SRS. For **2019**, the most recent available data, ACT funding to public schools was **87.48 percent** of the SRS.

Non-Government schools

- The Commonwealth is transitioning non-government schools that are funded below 80 percent of the SRS up to 80 percent by 2023. For non-government schools funded above 80 percent of the SRS, the Commonwealth will transition these schools down to 80 percent of the SRS by 2029.
- The ACT Government is transitioning all non-government schools to 20 percent 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.

Cleared as complete and accurate: 05/10/2021
 Cleared for public release by: Director-General Ext: 59158
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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.

St Bede's School Closure

- The introduction of the Direct Measure of Income is cited in the Canberra Times article about St Bede's as the reason for an increase in the base fees of all Catholic Systemic Schools. This is factually incorrect. Following the move to the Direct Measure of Income from 2020, total government funding for **all 29 ACT Catholic Schools increased**. Based on previous modelling it is estimated that the move to the Direct Measure of Income will provide an increase of more than 30 percent in total government funding to Catholic Schools once they are transitioned to the Schooling Resource Standard.
- Specifically, following the move to the Direct Measure of Income to assess capacity to contribute, St Bede's government funding increased from 20 percent of the Schooling Resource Standard to 51.92 percent of the SRS. **An increase of 260 percent.**

Cleared as complete and accurate: 05/10/2021
Cleared for public release by: Director-General Ext: 59158
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Portfolio/s: Education and Youth Affairs

VOLUNTARY CONTRIBUTIONS

Talking points:

- ACT Public schools receive voluntary financial contributions from parents every year. While these contributions are greatly appreciated by schools, they are a very small proportion of the amount of a schools available resources, in the context of the overall investment by the ACT Government on public education.
- These contributions are used to help schools improve education experiences. Financial and non-financial contributions to ACT Public Schools by parents and the wider community strengthen the outcomes for our students.
- The school, in conjunction with the school board, can determine how these contributions will be best utilised.
- The timing of voluntary financial contributions sought varies from school to school. Some schools may request once at the start of the year or twice, once each semester. The timing is determined by school boards.
- The Directorate is consistently communicating the process of collection of financial contributions through training provided to schools on financial management along with updates via emails and Schools Bulletins.

Key Information

- On average, the voluntary financial contributions requested across the system may range between \$90-\$200 per family per year. The voluntary financial contributions requested from families generally do not vary significantly from year to year but does vary between sectors.
- A summary of voluntary and subject contributions received by schools from families from 2017-2020 is provided in the table below.

Voluntary Financial Contributions	2017 (\$'m)	2018 (\$'m)	2019 (\$'m)	2020 (\$'m)
Other Contributions	1.7	1.7	1.7	1.6
Subject Contributions	1.4	1.6	1.8	1.6
Total	3.1	3.3	3.5	3.2

- There has been a marginal increase in voluntary financial contributions in 2018 and 2019, however, experienced a decrease in contributions in 2020 due to COVID-19.

BUDGET ESTIMATES BRIEF

Background Information

- Section 27(1) of the *Education Act 2004* provides for the school board of a government school to request the parents of a child enrolled at the school, or anyone else, to make a voluntary financial contribution to the school.
- The following principles apply in relation to financial contributions:
 - (a) each contribution is to be voluntary;
 - (b) a student at the school is not to be refused benefits or services because the student's parents do not make a contribution;
 - (c) a student is not to be approached or harassed for contributions; and
 - (d) any record of contributions is confidential.
- The individual School Board will determine the level of voluntary contribution request.

BUDGET ESTIMATES BRIEF

Portfolio/s: Education and Youth Affairs

COMMUNITY USE OF FACILITIES

Talking points:

- The Community Use of School Facilities Policy and Procedure (the Policy) supports the positive obligation on school Principals to ensure ACT public school facilities are made available for community use when the facilities are not in use by the school.
- The ACT Education Directorate recognises schools as important resources for the community and maintains appropriate policies that enable community use of public school facilities.
- The Directorate has approved *Community Use Rates* to be applied when hiring out school facilities.
- The most recent data indicates that are currently around 550 arrangements for community use (hirers) currently in ACT public school facilities with approximately 220 community groups.
- These hirers range from regular (e.g. weekly) to occasional (e.g. seasonal), and use the facilities outside of school hours during evenings and weekends. Some examples of the types of hirers are playgroups, music and arts, sport, religious groups, language schools and out of hours school care.
- The Policy indicates that Hirers are to hold current Public Liability insurance of at least \$10,000,000 limit of indemnity. The requirement to provide proof of public liability insurance may be waived by principals for low risk activities (e.g language class).
- The Education Support Office provides a channel for schools to receive support in engaging with agreements with hirers and adhering to the requirements of the Policy.
- The Directorate has seen an increased demand for access to school facilities which cannot be met by school facilities alone.

Key Information

- There are benefits for schools as well as community organisations from the use of facilities in public schools by community organisations and other organisations. The Policy supports the Future of Education foundation of building strong communities for learning.
- A core principle of the Policy is that the provision of school facilities for community use should not adversely affect the operation and management of the school's core business.
- There are a range of facilities available for community use which includes meeting rooms, sporting facilities and outdoor areas.

Cleared as complete and accurate: 07/10/2021
Cleared for public release by: Director-General Ext:59158
Contact Officer name: Peter Podnar Ext:53145
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TRIM Ref: SUB21/6557

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- Additional special facilities in ACT public schools include hydrotherapy pools, performing arts theatres and synthetic sporting facilities ranging from playing fields, cricket pitches, basketball courts and tennis courts.
- Arrangements are made for access with the community for schools that have security fencing for outside school hours access. The community use aspect for after school access will outweigh security concerns unless there is a real and apparent security issue.
- The Policy indicates that all arrangements for Hire must be documented in an Agreement. The Directorate provides Facility Hire Agreement and Licence Agreement templates for Schools to use for this purpose.
- The Directorate provides a schedule of Community Use rates which is reviewed at least annually. Individual school principals have discretion to waive and/or reduce hire rates.

BUDGET ESTIMATES BRIEF

Portfolio/s: Education and Youth Affairs

Population Growth in the ACT

Talking points:

- Canberra has experienced strong population growth in the decade to 2020 resulting in a significantly higher demand for schooling.
- The ACT's resident population **increased 19 per cent from 362,000 in 2010 to 431,000 in 2020**, at an average **annual growth rate of 1.8 per cent**. By contrast Australia's population increased 17 per cent during 2010-20, at an average annual rate of 1.6 per cent.
- During the same period ACT **public school enrolments increased 31 per cent and grew at a faster average annual growth rate of 2.8 per cent**.

Expected changes to population projections

- The ongoing global COVID-19 pandemic has impacted Australia's population growth forecasts.
- The ACT Government Official Population Projection will likely be revised downwards by CMTEDD at the end of 2021.
 - The current pre-pandemic population forecast for the ACT in 2030 is 512,000. A more recent projection from the Federal Government's Centre for Population is 467,000 in 2031.

Impact of the COVID-19 global pandemic and migration

- The pandemic has not currently impacted on the ongoing trend of increasing enrolments.
- The Commonwealth Budget for 2021-22 indicates that overseas migration is forecast to return beyond 2023, noting there is still some uncertainty at this stage on the future impact of the pandemic.

Cleared as complete and accurate: 30/09/2021

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Portfolio/s: Education and Youth Affairs

PUBLIC SCHOOL ENROLMENT GROWTH

Talking points:

- Canberra has experienced strong population growth in the decade to 2020 resulting in a significantly higher demand for public schooling.
- The ACT's resident population **increased 19% from 362,000 in 2010 to 431,000 in 2020** at an average annual rate of **1.8%**.
- By contrast Australia's population increased **17% during 2010-20** at an average annual rate of **1.6%**.
- In **2003, there were 40,757** students in ACT public schools across preschool to Year 12. The ACT did not have this many students enrolled in its schools for **another ten years**.
- ACT public school enrolments (Kindergarten to year 12) **increased by 11,000 students, or 31%, from 2010 to 2020**. This represents an average annual **growth rate of 2.8%**, which is much higher than the ACT resident population equivalent.
- While the main 'driver' of enrolments were births, growth has also been driven by an increasing preference for public education with enrolments growing faster than independent and catholic system schools.
- The public school share increased from **57% in 2010 (34,800 students of a 60,800 total)** to **62.1% in 2021 (45,700 students of 74,300 total)**.

Future Growth

- Public school enrolments are forecast to continue growing over the next decade. Growth will be likely be at a slightly lower rate than in recent years.
- The public school system is expected to see Kindergarten to year 12 enrolments **increase by around 8,000 students or a 17% increase between 2021 and 2031** based on the current population projections.
- One of the reasons we are confident about the number of additional school children expected over the coming decade is because they have already been born.
- Forecast enrolment growth is not evenly distributed and is concentrated in areas of greatest development (Gungahlin, Molonglo, West and Central Belconnen).
 - Molonglo and Gungahlin account for the largest share of this forecast growth with around 5,000 additional students.
 - The Belconnen region are expected to have around 1,400 additional students.

Five year enrolment projections for ACT regions:

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- Public schools in **Belconnen** will have more than 600 additional students in the next five years. Almost half of this increase will take place at the college level as a result of a strong growth in high school enrolments within Belconnen in recent years.
- Schools in **Gungahlin** will experience the largest increase in enrolments, with more than 2,000 additional students in the next five years. Unlike Belconnen, half of enrolment growth in Gungahlin will take place at the high school level, resulting from greenfield developments in the late 2010s and early 2020s.
- Schools in **Molonglo** are expected to experience the fastest enrolment growth, with the annual growth rate of 18% during 2022-26. Primary schools enrolments will be double in the next five years, with more than 1,000 students by 2026.
- Enrolments in **Weston Creek and Woden Valley** together will increase by 550 students in the next five years, for a growth rate of 1.3% per annum. More than half of this increase will take place at the primary school level.
- Enrolments in the **Inner North** and **Inner South** are expected to continue to grow. This is subject to change according to the anticipated new Official ACT Population projection.
- There will be a slight increase in enrolments at the high school and college levels in **Tuggeranong** schools. Together, high schools and colleges in Tuggeranong will have an increase of 200 students. Primary enrolments in the region are expected to be stable.

Cleared as complete and accurate: 30/09/2021

Cleared for public release by:

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Portfolio/s: Education and Youth Affairs

Forecast Enrolment Demand

Talking points:

- Public school enrolments are forecast to continue growing in the coming years.
- Forecasting indicates growth is expected to be between around **1.8 per cent to 2.9 per cent, per year**.
- ACT public schools are expected to have around **8,000 additional K-12 students by 2031**.
- There will be an increase in public school enrolments across all ACT regions, including Tuggeranong.
- Most enrolment growth will take place in greenfield areas in Gungahlin, Molonglo and Belconnen.
- The **public school enrolment market share** is projected to continue increasing from 61 per cent in 2021 **to over 64 per cent in 2031**.
- Births are still the main source of enrolment growth in the future.
- The Directorate forecasts ten years in advance however five year projections are considered more robust.
- The current demand forecast has partly taken into account the impact of COVID-19 by adjusting assumptions on migration. The forecast will be updated when more data and information become available.

Expected changes to population projections and forecast enrolments

- The ongoing global COVID-19 Pandemic has impacted Australia's population growth forecasts.
- Public school enrolment forecasts will be updated when the ACT official ACT Population Projection population projection is revised in 2021.
- Short to medium term public school enrolment forecasts are not expected to fundamentally alter as the greater portion of the anticipated demand will be children born prior to 2021 or already within the school system.
- Longer term forecasts may be adjusted to be lower.

Cleared as complete and accurate: 30/09/2021

Cleared for public release by:

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Impact of the COVID-19 global pandemic and migration

- The pandemic has not currently impacted on the ongoing trend of increasing enrolments.
- This has been confirmed through modelling conducted with ANU in 2020-21 to consider whether public schools would experience a positive enrolment impact due to potential economic impacts of the pandemic, for example higher unemployment associated with the recessionary impact of a global pandemic or household financial decisions regarding fee paying schooling.
- The majority of ACT households and the ACT economy appear to have endured the pandemic well and there has been no change to enrolment trends observed in 2020 and 2021 compared to pre-pandemic expectations.
- Economic impacts may influence an increase in public school affiliation if school fees becomes a financial consideration for affected families.
- Migrant households also only account for a small portion of overall enrolments (net enrolments of 307 in 2019) which has meant that border closures have not had any notable impact.
- Border closures have reduced international student enrolments in public schools by 145 compared to 2020, but this is likely temporary.
- There will be a longer term impact on the forecast school demand beyond 2027-28 if migration remains at the current pandemic driven levels.
- Ongoing monitoring will assess and predict any impact of the pandemic on forecast enrolment demand.

Cleared as complete and accurate: 30/09/2021

Cleared for public release by:

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Portfolio/s: Education and Youth Affairs

Enrolment Policy Demand Management

Talking points:

- Enrolment policy provides an important lever to manage enrolment demand before infrastructure investment is considered.
- Recent enhancements to enrolment policy demand management includes **non-infrastructure solutions** such as limiting out of area enrolment in capacity constrained schools (through Category A and B status), NSW Pathway Schools and changes to Priority Enrolment Areas.
- Enrolment policy ensures every ACT child is guaranteed enrolment at their local public school, in accordance with the *Education Act 2004*.

Priority Enrolment Areas (PEAs)

- Each school has a Priority Enrolment Area (PEA) composed of suburbs, in-part or whole, and students resident within them have guaranteed enrolment. Each school PEA is defined on the ACT Education Directorate website.
- PEAs are reviewed annually, with changes made to accommodate new schools or variations in enrolment demand.
- Where possible, changes are notified prior to upcoming annual enrolment cycles to provide a level of certainty for families about enrolment options and to support transitions between school levels.
- PEA development and review considers logical geographic boundaries as well as travel patterns for families gravitating towards city centres.

Enrolment criteria at K-12 schools

Category A and B schools

- Enrolment policy settings have been refined in recent years as an important mechanism for demand management. Schools are categorised as either Category A or Category B according to their capacity to enrol out of area students.
- Category A schools are generally not able to accept out of area applications, while Category B schools have some ability to accept out of area enrolments. Different out of area criteria apply to each category of school. Categories are reviewed each year ahead of the opening of the enrolments period.
- Since the introduction of school categorisations in the 2019 school year, there has been an increase in schools designated Category A each year to 2022. For the 2021 school year one third of ACT public schools are classified as Category A for enrolment purposes (45% of primary schools and 32% of high schools. Only one college – Gungahlin College – is classified as Category A).

Cleared as complete and accurate: 30/09/2021

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Category A Schools

These schools will only consider applications from out of area students against the following criteria, in the order of priority indicated:

1. If there are legal considerations, where a Court Order identifies that a student needs to attend a specific school.
2. If there are exceptional circumstances, based on student wellbeing, that mean that a child cannot attend their local school and must attend the school they have applied for.
3. Subject to capacity, the school will enrol a child if they have an ACT-resident sibling attending that school. This includes step/half and cultural siblings (recognition of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander kinship relationships).

Category B Schools

In addition to 1-3 above, Category B schools will also consider applications from out of area students against the criteria below, in the order of priority indicated and subject to capacity.

1. Student is an ACT resident seeking to access a curriculum choice(s) not available at their PEA school (High School and College only. High School curriculum choice for languages only)
2. Student is an ACT resident from a designated high-demand PEA. In 2022, this applies to all Gungahlin-region resident students (please note that Gungahlin resident students are all guaranteed a place in their local school if that is their school of choice.)
3. Student is an ACT resident seeking to continue on to Year 7 or Year 11 with the majority cohort from their current ACT public school.
4. Student is an ACT resident who had a sibling who formerly attended the school.
5. Student lives in NSW and has a sibling concurrently attending the school. For 2022 enrolments, the sibling must still be attending the school in 2022.

Enrolment Criteria for Preschools

Regardless of where they attend preschool, all students are guaranteed a kindergarten place at their PEA school. Students attending preschool outside their Priority Enrolment Area need to submit a new enrolment application for kindergarten in the following year.

Applications are prioritised in the following order of priority:

1. Exceptional circumstances based on student wellbeing.
2. ACT-resident siblings of students concurrently enrolled in the primary school.
3. Children living within the Priority Enrolment Area (PEA) of the primary school, up to the limits of available places.
4. Where there are not enough places for all children living in the PEA of the primary school, applications will be ranked by 'proximity', that is the distance a child lives from the preschool. The distance is measured 'as the crow flies'.

Cleared as complete and accurate: 30/09/2021

Cleared for public release by:

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5. The Directorate will find a place for all other children at a preschool, considering where the child lives and the number of remaining places.

High Demand Preschools

In 2022 a number of preschools experiencing high demand for places from local families have been designated as 'high demand' preschools. Applicants to these preschools who do not meet the prioritisation criteria will be allocated to:

1. the preschool of the primary school in their Priority Enrolment Area where capacity exists, or
2. the closest preschool to their home with capacity.

Early Childhood Schools

Enrolment applications for Preschool to Year 2 at Early Childhood Schools are assessed against the following criteria, in the order of priority indicated:

1. exceptional circumstances, based on student wellbeing
2. child lives in the ACT and has a sibling attending the school
3. child lives in the ACT and attends the long daycare program at the school
4. child lives in the suburb where the school is located
5. child lives elsewhere in the ACT

Other schools eq specialist schools, language schools

There are a small number of schools with special curricula that are open to all Canberra students. Instead of a Priority Enrolment Area, these schools assess enrolment applications against specific criteria and capacity.

Specialist language settings:

- Mawson Primary School (Kindergarten-year 6 - Mandarin): This school will accept out of area enrolments for the bilingual program up to a cap, but for all other purposes, will be a Category A school.
- Telopea Park School (Kindergarten-Year 6-French). This school operates a bilingual French program with funding provided by the Australian and French governments. It can accept enrolments from applicants who live in the ACT and meet the program criteria to a high standard, up to a capacity.
- Telopea Park School (Year 7-10 – French). This school can accept out of area enrolments from ACT residents for the bilingual program who meet the program criteria (up to available capacity).
- Telopea Park School (Year 7-10 non-bilingual) is a Category A school.
- Yarralumla Primary School (Kindergarten-year 6 - Italian): This school will accept out of area enrolments for the bilingual program up to a cap, but for all other purposes, will be a Category A school.

Cleared as complete and accurate: 30/09/2021

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Students with disability who apply to a specialist school are assessed for eligibility on application.

NSW Enrolment Pathway Policy

- In 2019 the 'NSW Enrolment Pathway' policy was introduced to provide greater enrolment certainty for students from the ACT and cross-border NSW localities. The ACT has historically supported public school enrolment opportunities for cross-border NSW residents, however sustained population growth within the Capital Region required better targeting of schools with available capacity.
- NSW families residing in identified NSW cross-border communities that wish to enrol within an ACT public school now have a clear and guaranteed K-12 'pathway' of schooling through selected Belconnen and Tuggeranong schools with available capacity.

PEA Assurance Measures Pilot

- A pilot is underway at Lyneham High School and Telopea Park Senior School to respond to 2022 enrolments from applicants who may not genuinely reside within the PEA.
- Enrolments from applicants who do not genuinely reside within the PEA creates undue capacity pressure and the Directorate is working with applicants to take additional steps to confirm their PEA residence.

Cleared as complete and accurate: 30/09/2021

Cleared for public release by:

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Portfolio/s: Education and Youth Affairs

PLANNING RESPONSES TO MEET GROWTH

(Note: Specific 21/22 budget information is in Brief 5.7 – New and Expanded Schools)

Talking points:

- The ACT Government is continuing to plan for anticipated growth in public school enrolments in the coming decade and beyond, to anticipate enrolment growth and deliver new or expanded public school facilities when and where they are needed.
- Responses to demand consider short term/long term growth and need. They include enhancements to enrolment policy as well as planning for and investing in new and expanded school infrastructure.
- Enrolment demand forecasting, analysis, feasibility and planning work is underway on an ongoing basis to plan for and deliver timely new and expanded school capacity that responds to enrolment growth in growing regions. This work is not always visible to the community when it is in the planning and development stages.
- Planning to respond to growth includes taking into account long term multi decade demographic lifecycle of a catchment area. Many parts of Canberra are experiencing this demographic lifecycle however this is unique to each region and area, and a range of factors influence this.

Regional Planning Approach

- A regional approach to planning allows consideration of the unique needs, growth, capacity and assets of each region and each school.
- It supports design and testing of demand responses that appropriately cater to the growth and circumstances of existing school infrastructure and demographic factors.
- The size, growth rate and composition of a suburb's resident population changes over time and each region requires different responses.
- The resident populations of new 'greenfield' suburbs typically have a higher proportion of children that can place pressure upon local schools during their peak. Established suburbs typically have older and more stable demographics.

Demographic lifecycle

- Schools associated with new suburbs typically experience a rapid rise and peak in enrolments followed by a gradual decrease then 'fall-away' towards a lower level of enrolments.
- The demographic lifecycle is impacting areas such as Tuggeranong which is now seeing growth emerging as new families move into the area who enter and move through the school system.

Cleared as complete and accurate: 30/09/2021

Cleared for public release by:

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- Gungahlin has a relatively young demographic profile with a high number of families which means public school enrolments will continue to grow over the coming decade.
 - This demographic pattern is now also being experienced in the Molonglo region.

Capacity Planning

- Where schools are forecast to reach a utilisation rate of around 85% and where this is expected to continue for prolonged periods, planning for longer term solutions is necessary.
- This is considered best practice as it provides the flexibility to offer a full curriculum as well as make reasonable adjustments to meet student needs as they arise.
- Some schools are able to operate comfortably at higher levels of utilisation, for example high schools and colleges due to the range of specialist facilities available in addition to general learning areas, although this is unique for each school.
- Utilisation planning also takes into account the Government's Class Size Policy, which recognises the contribution class sizes make to learning outcomes. This is a significant variable in determining the effective usable capacity of a school and consequently the need for investment.

Planning Responses

- In the first instance, **non-infrastructure demand management through enrolment policy** as a cost effective demand response. This includes changes to limit out of area enrolments in capacity constrained schools (Category B to Category A schools), NSW Pathway Schools and changes to Priority Enrolment Areas.
- **Modular learning centres** (transportable classrooms) provide an important source of flexibility for schools experiencing temporary growth.
- They also provide time to plan for and deliver permanent investment in capacity where it is needed for the long term.
- Whilst modular Learning Centres are often used on a temporary basis, this can change according to the needs of a school.
- Many schools choose to retain transportables as additional learning spaces when growth forecast as temporary is sustained for a longer period.
- Modular Learning Centres are a normal part of planning for growth as well as an important source of flexibility for established schools experiencing transient growth. They are part of the schools planning response for every State and Territory in Australia.
- **Permanent expansions** for existing schools are considered where significant and sustained enrolment growth is forecast into the future.

Cleared as complete and accurate: 30/09/2021

Cleared for public release by:

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- In new suburbs as well as established suburbs experiencing permanent school-age residential population growth, **new schools** are considered where projections demonstrate ongoing, sustained population growth which will in turn sustain the viability of the school over the long term.
- School planning response considerations include the need to provide adequate open spaces and playing fields, transport connectivity and consideration of commuter travel paths including access via safe and efficient roads, active travel linkages through cycle and pedestrian paths, and other facilities for the broader community to access.

Stakeholder Engagement

- Community engagement is an important element of the planning process, through regular engagement with stakeholders including Principals, School Boards, Parents & Citizens Committees as well as the Catholic Education Office Archdiocese of Canberra and Goulburn and the Association of Independent Schools ACT.
- The Directorate is mindful of the challenges associated with expanding enrolment capacity within established suburbs, including availability of vacant/buildable land combined with the importance of a community's sense of 'place' and expectations regarding existing land use.

Cleared as complete and accurate: 30/09/2021

Cleared for public release by:

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BUDGET ESTIMATES BRIEF

Portfolio/s: Education and Youth Affairs

2021 AND 2022 ENROLMENTS AND APPEALS

Talking points:

- The 21 February 2021 Census recorded **81,872 students** enrolled in ACT public schools.
- 2022 Enrolments opened at **6am on 27 April 2021**.
 - As at 11 July 2021, ACT public school enrolment applications for all major intake years (preschool, kindergarten, year 7 and year 11), have increased from the previous year except for preschool.
- **Preschool applications were at 175 (4%) fewer** than at the same time last year.
- Assessment of 2022 applications is ongoing with offers continuing to be made for all 2022 applications as they are received by schools.
- Due to the impacts of the Covid-19 Pandemic and in line with current ACT Health advice families can supply enrolment documentation digitally.
- Families can seek a Review of an enrolment decision directly through the school where they are not satisfied with an enrolment decision.
- Where they are not satisfied with a Review outcome, families can also ask for an Enrolment Appeal through the Education Directorate's Education Support Office.

Key Information

2022 Preschool enrolment allocations

- **3945** 2022 Preschool enrolment applications received between 27 April 2021 and 20 September 2021 have been centrally allocated to schools by ESO according to the preschool allocation criteria.
- From 2022 some preschools have been designated as 'high demand', these schools will not be able to accept enrolments from applicants for whom it will not also be their PEA school.
- Preschool applications received after 4 June 2021 are being processed by schools.

Enrolment Reviews of 2021 applications (as at 30 September 2021)

- Total Reviews = **242**
- Affirmed (do not offer a place) = **178**
- Overturned (Offer a place if capacity) = **46**
- NSW (see below) = **18**
- *Criteria (top 3)*
- The applicant has claimed exceptional circumstances, based on student wellbeing, that mean that the child cannot attend their local school and must attend the school they have applied for (all schools) = **135**
- The applicant is seeking to access a curriculum choice(s) not available at their PEA school. = **44**
- The applicant is seeking to continue on to Year 7 or Year 11 with the majority cohort from their current ACT public school (Cat B schools only) = **33**

Cleared as complete and accurate: 06/10/2021
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BUDGET ESTIMATES BRIEF

- Due to a change of enrolment application assessment systems, it is not yet possible to extract data on 2022 enrolment Reviews .

Enrolment Appeals

- As of Tuesday **5 October 2021** the Directorate has received **115 enrolment appeals** for the 2021 school year. This includes 19 NSW enrolment appeals. **One (1)** appeal is **ongoing** with **20 overturned, 82 upheld and 11 withdrawn**.
- As of Tuesday 5 October 2021 the Directorate has received **22 Inclusive Education Program Placement enrolment appeals** for the 2022 school year.
 - [REDACTED] withdrew,
 - **Fourteen (14)** are completed and [REDACTED] are ongoing pending further information from schools.
- As of Tuesday 5 October 2021 the Directorate has received **32 enrolment appeals** for the 2022 school year. All appeals are ongoing.

BUDGET ESTIMATES BRIEF

Portfolio: Education and Youth Affairs

NEW AND EXPANDED SCHOOLS

Talking points:

- New investment is provided through the 2021-22 ACT Budget to continue investing in new and expanding schools to meet public school enrolment growth in the ACT.
- This includes **\$12.5 million** for feasibility studies, master planning and forward design works for new and expanded schools in the Inner South, the Inner North, Molonglo and Central Belconnen regions and for specialist school services in the north of Canberra.
- This continues the Government's commitment to meeting public school enrolment growth in schools across Canberra and builds on 2019-20 Budget funding to plan for Canberra's future school needs
- New and expanded infrastructure will deliver fit for purpose, contemporary learning spaces in growth areas of the ACT and provide a timely response to growth in enrolments and public school affiliation choices from families.

Key Information

Future Planning for New and Expanded Schools

(Refer to Estimates **Brief 1.15 Future Planning**)

- **Nine (9) million** over the next two years for feasibility studies, masterplanning and forward design works for new and expanded schools including:
 - feasibility and planning for new primary school and high school capacity in the **Inner North** and the **Inner South**;
 - Early planning for future capacity in **Molonglo** for primary schools and the college system to meet the needs of families in the region;
 - Feasibility and design funding for the new Early Childhood to Year 6 school in **Whitlam, Molonglo**;
 - **Create More Space for College Students in Canberra's North** through planning for an expansion of northside college capacity;
 - Planning for additional primary school capacity in central **Belconnen**;
 - Service design planning, feasibility study and planning for **new specialist school** services in the north of Canberra, responding to changing needs and enrolment growth of students with disability.
- Feasibility and planning studies include site selection and analysis of demand response options; site investigations including environmental assessments to consider environmental impacts or heritage values; initial masterplanning to inform design opportunities and future Business Cases for consideration by Government.

Cleared as complete and accurate: 15/10/2021

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BUDGET ESTIMATES BRIEF

\$118 million for the expansion of Margaret Hendry Primary School and new Taylor High School (refer to **Estimates Brief 1.14**)

- Margaret Hendry Primary School will be expanded by 600 places for the 2023 school year in response to strong population and enrolment growth in north Gungahlin.
- A new 800 place high school will be constructed in Taylor for the 2024 school year.

Modernisation and expansion of Garran Primary School (Refer to Estimates **Brief 1.16**)

- New investment will prepare to modernise and expand the Garran Primary School and increase the school's capacity to up to 800 places to respond to public school enrolment growth in the Woden region.
- Community engagement with the Garran Primary School community will take place in the coming months to inform masterplanning.

Modernisation of Narrabundah College (Refer to Estimates **Brief 01.18**)

- **\$600,000 in 2021-22** will support planning and design for the modernisation of Narrabundah College to meet the needs of future students, teachers and the community.
- This investment builds on the replacement of existing contaminated buildings with high quality specialist transportable buildings and feasibility studies into the next stages of renewal.

One (1) million towards the new Strathnairn Primary School (Refer to Estimates **Brief 01.20**)

- The 2021-22 ACT Budget has committed \$1m funding in 2021-22 to progress the design of the new 600 place primary school at Strathnairn, Ginninderry.
- Construction funding to meet the 2024 timeframe will be subject to a future budget process.

\$99 million over four years for School Maintenance and Infrastructure Upgrades (Refer to Estimates **Brief 01.19**)

- This investment will focus on renewing ACT public schools to support a modern, inclusive and high-quality education system.
- Works will include improving the amenity, functionality and inclusivity of schools, replacing end-of-life heating systems and roofs, improving the thermal comfort of schools, installing solar and battery energy storage systems, and providing bike storage facilities.
- This initiative builds on the Government's \$85 million investment in public school infrastructure upgrades over the four years to 2020-21.

Cleared as complete and accurate: 15/10/2021

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BUDGET ESTIMATES BRIEF

\$15 million over four years to remove Hazardous Materials from schools

(Refer to Estimates [Brief 01.21](#))

- The Government will accelerate the removal of hazardous materials including lead paint and asbestos containing materials from ACT public schools.

\$19.8 million to increase school capacity with modular learning centres

(Refer to Estimates [Brief 01.17](#))

- Close to \$20m (\$19.8m) over four years will support the Government to respond to public school enrolment growth through delivering modular learning centres that provide additional learning spaces for students, teachers and school communities.

Background Information

- As Canberra grows to a population of 500,000 and more, the *ACT Government Infrastructure Plan 2019 – Planning for the Future*, identified a pipeline of infrastructure investments of \$2.1 billion, including a commitment for new and upgraded schools.
- To meet the projected growth in public schools, the ACT Government is undertaking planning and feasibility work to deliver new and expanded school infrastructure as the ACT population grows throughout this decade.
- The Government will deliver a new school each year from 2020 – 2024
 - Evelyn Scott School in 2021;
 - a new primary school in Throsby in 2022;
 - a new high school in Kenny in 2023;
 - a new high school in Taylor in 2024.
- A number of schools will be modernised to become more fit for purpose and remove hazardous materials, and permanent expansions are also underway and planned.

Cleared as complete and accurate: 15/10/2021

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BUDGET ESTIMATES BRIEF

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Portfolio: Education and Youth Affairs

MAJOR EDUCATION PROJECTS

Note: Refer to Budget Estimates [Briefs 1.14 through to 1.20](#) for 2021-22 new and expanded schools.

Talking Points:

- The Major Projects capital works stream of the ACT Education Directorate's infrastructure program includes the **delivery of new school builds and major upgrades or modifications to existing schools.**
- The Education Directorate has delivered significant projects across the public school network with over **\$97 million expended in the 2020-21 financial year.**
- Projects were delivered to modernise facilities, provide new schools and better meet the learning needs of communities.
- **For 2020-21 the projects included:**
 - **Four new schools**
 - **Three school site upgrades**
 - **Four permanent site expansions are underway which will provide additional capacity of up to 1450 students when completed**
 - **Transportable classrooms were delivered to accommodate up to 650 additional places.**
- Planning also commenced for future schools including major modernisation upgrades for three schools, major expansions for two schools and a feasibility study and master planning for one new school.
- Engagement strategies are developed for specific school infrastructure projects. This can include a range of face-to-face and online activities, including workshops, meetings, pop-up kiosks, one-on-one conversations and online scrapbooks.
- The COVID lockdown is continuing to impact the 2020-21 program of works with all projects experiencing delays from the lockdown and ongoing loss of productivity due to reduce workforces numbers and material and supplier delays. Program delay assessment and contingency planning is occurring across all projects.

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BUDGET ESTIMATES BRIEF

New School Builds

- **Evelyn Scott School** – Preschool to Year 6 including double gymnasium and associated landscaping opening for the 2021 school year. Construction is progressing for the Years 7-10 building which will become operational in 2023.
- Construction of the **new Preschool to Year 6 school in Throsby** is progressing for completion at the start of the 2022 school year.
- **East Gungahlin High School (in Kenny)** will cater for 800 students from years 7 to 10 with room for temporary expansion to accommodate up to 1000 students in the future. (Refer to Brief 6.2 for detailed information)
- **North Gungahlin High School (Taylor)** master planning design is progressing with head contractor tendering underway.

School Expansion and Modernisation

- The current school expansion and modernisation program of works addresses growing demand in key areas of the ACT to support the sustainable provision of education services in the forward years.
- These large scale works ensure that school facilities continue to meet enrolment demands in new and existing school localities as well as enabling students access to a rich and contemporary curriculum.
- **Margaret Hendry School Expansion** - Master planning design works are progressing, with head contractor tendering underway. Early expansion works have commenced to the Administration building to accommodate student growth at the beginning of the 2022 school year. Main works are targeting completion for the start of 2023.
- **Amaroo School Senior Campus Expansion** – 200-place expansion works include construction of a new learning community with expanded general and specialist learning areas and refurbishment works to the existing science and technology block, The Onyx Theatre and marble terrace buildings. The new build is currently scheduled for delivery at the beginning of the 2022 school year and refurbishment works programmed for completion by mid-2022.
- **Gold Creek Senior School expansion** – 200-place expansion works include demolition of existing internal ground floor spaces, refurbishment of existing spaces and an extension to the first floor to

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create seven new general learning spaces. The project was procured under the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Procurement Policy (ATSIPP). Detail design was completed in April 2021 and construction has commenced with the demolition works completed. The expansion is scheduled for delivery by early 2022.

- **Franklin Early Childhood School expansion** - Construction work commenced in Quarter 4 2020 for the 450-place expansion. Refurbishment of the administration and library has been completed and handed over to the school for their use. Construction of a new learning community 1 building with capacity of up to 150 students is programmed to be completed in October 2021. Construction of learning communities 2 and 3 (a two storey building) with capacity of up to 300 students is underway and programmed for completion in early 2022.

School Upgrades

- **Margaret Hendry School** - internal learning upgrades to support small group programs as well as external learning and landscaping upgrades.
- **Amaroo School** – internal refurbishment and upgrades to accommodate increase in students for term 1, 2021 were completed and handed over to the school.
- **Campbell Primary School Modernisation** - the modernisation works include construction of three new learning communities for 450 places, canteen, STEM Area, small group program facilities and landscaping. The new construction works are on program for completion by December 2021. This will allow the demolition of the old Junior Wing building during the school holiday period with completion due in mid-January 2022 and the school ready for operations on day 1, term 1, 2022.

Planning

- **Narrabundah College modernisation** - initial feasibility and concept master planning is underway which includes feedback received from previous community engagement and due diligence/site investigations;
- **New Primary School in Strathnairn** - initial feasibility and concept master planning is underway.
- **Planning for Woden Schools** - initial feasibility and concept master planning for identified schools in the Woden network is underway.

BUDGET ESTIMATES BRIEF

- **Planning for 2022 transportables** is underway with reviews occurring across all school networks.

QUESTION TIME BRIEF

Portfolio: Education and Youth Affairs

EAST GUNGAHLIN (KENNY) HIGH SCHOOL

Talking points:

- The **new 800 place high school** in East Gungahlin is planned to open for **Term 1 2023** to respond to public school enrolment demand from the Gungahlin region.
- The design responds to the strong connections with surrounding Nature Reserve and adjacent heritage track. The buildings benefit from a east west axis site giving all internal spaces access to natural light.
- The building footprints creates a large internal courtyard sheltered from Well Station Drive and the building mass raises to two storeys with the natural fall of the site from north to south. The design responded well to the site constraints of large Asset Protections Zones (APZ) on all four boundaries with positioning of the road, parking and hard courts in these Zones.
- Community use spaces and parking with direct access are grouped for out of hours use and are positioned on the Kenny suburb side of the site.
- The High School facility will cater for 800 students from years 7 to 10 with room for temporary expansion to accommodate up to 1000 students in the future.
- The new High School will provide high quality learning environments, incorporating both indoor and outdoor learning areas, as well as integrated spaces to support students with specialised needs.
- Community facilities for hire and use outside of school hours include:
 - A double gymnasium with basketball, netball, futsal and volleyball markings;
 - Three external hard courts suitable for basketball and netball, one of which is covered for shade;
 - A naturally turfed playing field which can be used for soccer, rugby union and rugby league games; and
 - The performing arts hall will also be available for community use.
- The new High School will incorporate a range of environmental features including:
 - A 264kW solar panels to reduce demand on the electricity grid and school energy costs;
 - Inground water storage to reduce the use of potable water for landscape and sports field irrigation. Inground water tanks will collect water from the building roofs;
 - Solar passive orientation of the buildings;
 - Automated LED lighting with motion sensor control to save power;
 - Electric boosted solar hot water to provide low cost, zero emission hot water;

Cleared as complete and accurate: 30/09/2021
Cleared for public release by: Executive Group Manager Ext:
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Lead Directorate: Education
TRIM Ref: FILE2021/436

QUESTION TIME BRIEF

- Double glazing to reduce the need for mechanical heating and cooling;
 - Air conditioning system which can transfer heat from one part of the building to another to improve energy efficiency, as well as a cooling system that draws cool night air into the school buildings during summer to reduce the need for mechanical cooling during the day; and
 - The building envelopes will include a membrane behind the internal wall and ceiling lining to provide greater air permeability to prevent air leakage and provide greater thermal comfort for occupants.
 - The only gas used for the entire building will be for the gas bunson burners in the science labs which are a necessary to deliver the High School science curriculum. An inground gas line to the site is planned rather than above ground tanks that would have to be protected due to the fire requirements of the site and surrounding reserves.
- The school's design includes strong connections with the surrounding grass lands, trees and heritage track. Collaboration with Ngunnawal Elder (Aunty Violet Sheridan) was undertaken through the design and master planning to embed a connection to the land and its history into the built form. Further integration of indigenous artwork and a bush tucker kitchen garden is planned as part of the project.

Key Information

- ACT public schools are designed using the Education Directorate's Infrastructure Specification (EDIS). This is a suite of documents for design consultants and construction contractors to guide the design and development of ACT Government public school infrastructure projects.
- The Education Directorate in partnership with Major Projects Canberra, engaged CK Architects in May 2020 to develop master plans ready for Development Application (DA), as well as to inform the Head Contractor procurement.
- In August 2020, Government announced the construction funding for the school which was to be open for the 2023 school year.
- In March 2021, Icon SI were engaged as the Head Contractor who has developed the master plan further during the first Phase of their engagement.
- EDU lodged the school Development Application (DA) on 28 May 2021.
- On 16 September 2021, the DA for school, estate establishment and supporting road infrastructure were called in by the Planning Minister.
- The Notice of Decision (NoD) for the DA includes conditions that need to be resolved prior to Building Approval (BA) and construction commencement.
- A summary of main conditions in the NoD:
 - An additional accessible car parking space was addressed and resubmitted for approval

QUESTION TIME BRIEF

- Further demonstration of Water Sensitive Urban Design compliance was addressed and resubmitted for approval
- Utility (Icon Water and Evo Energy) Statement of Assessment
- Written support from the Conservator of Flora and Fauna. The Conservator has requested clarification of how the design will protect the ecological values of the site and adjoining heritage track and nature reserve. A response has been provided to the Conservator with a Statement of Endorsement pending.
- Pre-clearance surveys for the translocation of Striped Legless Lizards will be completed in mid October 2021.
- Environment Protection Authority Statement of Endorsement was received on 30 September 2021.
- Heritage Statement of Endorsement.
- Transport Canberra and City Services confirmation of stormwater planning, waste collection, landscape design, asset, verge and infrastructure protection and Temporary Traffic Management.
- Coordination between Directorates, Utilities and Consultants and Contractors is underway to mitigate delays in responding to the conditions.
- Once the above conditions have been satisfied, stamped DA drawings have been received and a Building Application approved construction will commence on site.
- Works will be managed with a COVID-19 safe management plan and in accordance with current Health advice. The current COVID-19 pandemic impacts on ACT construction sites may impact the acceleration of works onsite once they commence.
- Ongoing contingency planning is occurring and detailed program assessment will occur with contractors once works proceed.

Background Information

- The number of ACT public school students continues to grow by around three per cent each year as population grows and more families choose public education. Gungahlin also continues to be one of the fastest growing regions in Australia.
- To support this growing demand the ACT Government has invested \$85.9 million to deliver a new year 7 to 10 high school in the suburb of Kenny in East Gungahlin.
- Multiple cross Directorate working and governance groups were established in 2020 to support the development of a new high school in Kenny, comprising representatives at officer, executive and senior executive levels from Environment, Planning and Sustainable Development (ESPDD), Transport and City Services (TCCS), Suburban Land Authority (SLA), Major Projects Canberra and Education directorates

Cleared as complete and accurate: 30/09/2021
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TRIM Ref: FILE2021/436

QUESTION TIME BRIEF

- The established cross-agency working and governance groups continue to collaborate to progress the school development in Kenny. Governance has been intensive in recognition of the importance of delivery of this school by 2023.
 - Cross Agency Coordination Group – Meeting weekly since May 2020.
 - Executive Strategic Coordination Group – Meeting monthly since July 2020.
 - Senior Executive Governance Group - Meeting monthly since July 2020.

BUDGET ESTIMATES BRIEF

Portfolio: Education and Youth Affairs

MANAGEMENT OF HAZARDOUS MATERIALS IN SCHOOLS

Talking Points:

- The ACT Education Directorate manages a large and growing asset portfolio, that from 2021 now includes **89 schools** across the city.
- The ACT Government, guided by expert advice and international best practice, is delivering hazardous materials management in the most transparent way and to the highest standards.
- The ACT Government has committed **\$114 million dollars over the next four years** to upgrade school buildings to keep them comfortable and safe. This includes the 2021-22 budget allocating of **\$15 million to accelerate the removal of hazardous materials** (Note: Refer to Estimates Hearing Brief [1.21 Removing Hazardous Materials](#))
- This complements the work that is continually undertaken by the Education Directorate to maintain and improve schools, which includes hazardous materials management as required (e.g., replacing windows in an older school to improve energy efficiency and student comfort may also result in windows with lead paint being removed).
- The Education Directorate has identified 76 schools that contain some amount of asbestos and/or lead paint.

	Schools with lead paint	Schools with asbestos	Schools with both lead and asbestos	Schools with either lead or asbestos
Yes	75	71	69	76
No	14	18	20	13
Total	89	89	89	89

- A suite of information has been published on the ACT Education website to provide the community with detailed information about the management of hazardous materials.
- In May 2021 the Education Directorate ran a series of drop in sessions to provide the community with background on hazardous materials management in public schools. The sessions also provided opportunity to speak to senior Directorate staff and national lead expert, Professor Mark Taylor.
- The first series of dedicated web pages, where the community can see more information on hazardous materials at their school including any upcoming works has recently been published. The following schools have a dedicated web page on hazardous materials:
 - Melba Copland Secondary School
 - North Ainslie Primary School
 - Richardson Primary School
 - Yarralumla Primary School

Cleared as complete and accurate: 06/10/2021

Cleared for public release by: Executive Group Manager

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- The Education Directorate will continue to develop and deliver these dedicated web pages for hazardous materials for all schools that require them.

Latest action on Hazardous Materials

During the recent school holiday period, 12 schools received maintenance to manage the presence of hazardous materials. The list of schools and a description of the work activity is included at the end of this brief.

Expert Panel

- The Education Directorate has set up an internal Taskforce to coordinate the management and removal of hazardous materials, ensuring priority and focus is maintained on this important work.
- The Taskforce is supported by an Expert Panel, established by the Education Directorate to provide expert advice and guidance on the response to incidents involving hazardous materials and the ongoing management of hazardous materials.
- The skills and experience of the members of the Expert Panel ensures the response is informed by international best practice. Members have been identified from across Government and the academic community:
 - Mr Robert Alford from the Office of the Work Health and Safety Commissioner,
 - Mr Jason Kniepp Director from the ACT Health Directorate,
 - Professor Mark Taylor from Macquarie University; and,
 - Professor Martyn Kirk from the Australian National University.

Hazardous Materials Registers

- All schools that have identified hazardous materials have a *Hazardous Materials Register*. The Register informs the school community, visitors and tradespeople of the location of hazardous materials, including asbestos and lead paint in the school. The register is located in the front office of the school.
- The *Hazardous Materials Register* is a living document – if there is a discovery of hazardous material(s) not previously identified (like in the ductwork of air vents) or the hazardous material is removed or managed, the Register is updated to accurately reflect any changes in the school environment.
- Any hazardous materials removal works are completed in accordance with WorkSafe ACT requirements by licensed removalists who are monitored by an independent licensed assessor. Asbestos is removed when there are no students in the school (e.g. at night, on weekends and during school holidays).

Lead Paint

Cleared as complete and accurate: 06/10/2021
Cleared for public release by: Executive Group Manager Ext:
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- There are 75 schools, including Jervis Bay School, with confirmed presence of lead paint, which is paint that has been confirmed to have a lead content of greater than 0.1 per cent by mass (per 2017 Australian Standard).
- More than two-thirds of ACT public schools were built before 1992 – and just like houses built at this time, these schools were painted using lead paint.
- Across our public schools, lead paint is most typically found on painted timber surfaces including window frames, eaves and handrails, but has also been found in storage and equipment rooms.
- New instances of lead paint or dust have been discovered while undertaking works, e.g. in duct work. These areas are cleaned and then certified as safe to occupy before students or staff can reoccupy the impacted areas.
- A directive has been issued to all schools to consult with ICW before engaging in any building works to provide a further level of control that lead paint or dust is not disturbed without proper management practices in place.

ACM – Asbestos Contained Materials

- There are 71 public schools, including Jervis Bay School, with a confirmed presence of ACM.
- Asbestos surveys in ACT public schools are reviewed annually, and where required, the Hazardous Materials Register is updated.
- The majority of asbestos found in ACT public schools is non-friable asbestos, also known as bonded asbestos. Asbestos remains safe if it is not disturbed or has not deteriorated.
- A directive has been issued to all schools to consult with ICW before engaging in any building works to provide a further level of control that ACM is not disturbed without proper management practices in place.

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December 2020 and January 2021	
Site	Type of work scheduled
Ainslie Primary	Lead-based paint remediation
Aranda Primary & Pre-school	Lead-based paint remediation
Calwell High	Lead-based paint remediation
Chapman Pre-school	Environmental Cleaning and Lead-based paint remediation
Cranleigh School	Lead-based paint remediation
Curtin Primary	Lead Paint Survey Report Remediations
Dickson College	Lead-based paint remediation and minor works
Dickson College	Removal of asbestos debris and insulation in the roof space
Dickson College	Lead-based paint remediation
Evatt Primary	Lead-based paint remediation
Farrer Pre-school	Lead-based paint remediation
Forrest Pre-school	Lead-based paint remediation
Fraser Primary & Pre-school	Lead-based paint remediation
Hawker College	Removal of Vermiculite Ceiling
Hughes Primary	Lead-based paint remediation
Kaleen High	Lead-based paint remediation
Macquarie Primary	Lead-based paint abatement and remediation
Mawson Primary	Lead-based paint remediation
Miles Franklin Pre-school	Lead-based paint remediation
Red Hill Primary	Lead-based paint abatement and remediation
Reid Pre-school	Lead-based paint remediation
Southern Cross ECS	Lead-based paint remediation
Telopea Park School	Environmental Cleaning and Lead-based paint remediation
Telopea Park School	Lead-based paint remediation
Torrens Primary	Lead-based paint remediation
Wanniassa Hills Pre-school	Lead-based paint remediation
April 2021 school holidays	
School Site	Type of work scheduled
Ainslie Preschool (Bakers Garden)	Lead Based Paint Remediation
Ainslie Preschool (Reid)	Lead Based Paint Remediation
Ainslie Primary School	Lead Based Paint Remediation
Ainslie School	Lead Dust Remediation
Belconnen High School	Lead Based Paint Remediation
Calwell High School	Lead Based Paint Remediation
Charnwood Dunlop Preschool	Lead Based Paint Remediation
Curtin Primary School	Lead Based Paint Remediation
Fadden Primary School	Lead Dust Remediation
Kaleen High School	Lead Based Paint Remediation
Majura Primary School	Lead Based Paint Remediation
Malkara School	Lead Based Paint Remediation
Maribyrnong Preschool	Lead Based Paint Remediation

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Mawson Primary School	Lead Dust Remediation
Monash Primary School	Lead Based Paint Remediation
Narrabundah College	ACM removal
North Ainslie Primary School	Lead Based Paint/Dust Remediation and Lead Based Paint Removal
Red Hill Preschool	Lead Based Paint Remediation
Red Hill Primary	Lead Based Paint Remediation and ACM removal
Richardson Primary	Lead Dust Remediation
Telopea Park School	Lead Dust Remediation
Wanniassa Senior	Lead Dust Remediation
Yarralumla Primary	Lead Based Paint Remediation
June/July 2021 school holiday period	
School Site	Type of work scheduled
Calwell High School	Lead Paint Remediation
Charnwood-Dunlop Primary School	Lead Paint Remediation
Charnwood-Dunlop Preschool	Lead Paint Remediation
Curtin Primary School	Lead Paint Remediation
Hawker College	Building works following ACM removal
Hawker College	Vermiculite Repairs (potential ACM in ceilings)
Kaleen High School	Lead Paint Remediation
Macquarie Primary School	Lead Paint Remediation
Melba Copland College	Lead Dust Remediation
Monash Primary School	Lead Paint Remediation
North Ainslie Primary School	Lead Paint Remediation
North Ainslie Primary School	Building works following Lead Remediation
Red Hill Preschool	Lead Paint Remediation
Red Hill Primary School	Lead Paint Remediation
Red Hill Primary School	Lead Dust Remediation
Richardson Primary School	Lead Dust Remediation
Southern Cross Early Childhood School	Lead Paint Remediation
Telopea Park School	Lead Dust Remediation
Wanniassa High School	Asbestos Removal
Yarralumla Primary School	Lead Paint Remediation
September/October 2021 school holiday period	
School Site	Type of work scheduled
Duffy Primary School	Box gutter replacement requiring ACM removal and lead paint management
Turner School	Lead paint management
Macquarie Primary School	Lead paint management
Melba Copland College	Lead paint management
Mawson Primary School	Lead paint management
Yarralumla Primary School	Lead paint management
Griffith Preschool	Lead paint management
UC Kaleen High School	Lead paint management
Lyneham High School	Removal of ACM window putty
Curtin Primary School	Lead paint management
Monash Primary School	Lead paint management

Cleared as complete and accurate: 06/10/2021
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Malkara School

Removal of ACM floor tiles and lead paint management

Cleared as complete and accurate: 06/10/2021
Cleared for public release by: Executive Group Manager Ext:
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Portfolio/s: Education and Youth Affairs

SCHOOL FENCES

Talking Points

- The safety of students, staff and the community is of paramount importance to the ACT Government.
- A total of **83 ACT public school sites** (out of 93) have a partial or full perimeter security fence. The decision to install a partial or full perimeter security fences on school sites is based on the safety and security needs of each individual school. The ACT Government does not have a mandatory requirement that existing schools must be fenced.
- The Education Directorate has an ongoing program of security fencing works that are usually initiated by each schools' executive. Before the fencing works are considered for approval to proceed by the Directorate, the school principal, Board Chair and P&C President must sign a joint letter confirming the need for a fence and must undertake a formal consultation process with their school and local community that results in over-whelming support for the fence.

Key Information

- Aranda Primary School fence - the parents of a kindergarten student at the school wrote to the Minister following an incident on 3 May 2021 where their 5 year old daughter left the school during the day and walked home to their house. The school has a low-level partial fence which does not prevent access or egress, and the student's parents have requested that a school security fence be constructed. The school applied to have a security fence installed in 2015, however a significant majority of the school community opposed the proposal at the time and construction did not progress. The desire of the school community to reconsider a fence has been discussed with the school principal and he is prepared to approach the community again.
- The Principal has advised that the School Board supports the construction of the fence, however the P&C are reluctant to support a fence as they believe the majority of the community are not in support.
- The P&C has suggested that should there be sufficient school community support, the previous designs be updated to improve the level of after-hours community access prior to consulting with the broader Aranda community.
- Works in progress or completed within the **last 12 months:**
 - An extended fence was constructed at Caroline Chisholm Primary to include new playground equipment;
 - A fence to the courtyard and junior play equipment was constructed at Majura Primary School prior to the start of term 1, 2021;

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- An existing fence at Kingsford Smith School was upgraded in 2020 to the current school standard design due to ongoing vandalism;
- A new perimeter fence and path is currently under construction at UC Kaleen High;
- Community consultation for a new fence at Caroline Chisholm senior campus has been completed and construction has been put on hold due to availability of materials and labour due to Covid restrictions
- Design documentation for new fences at Hawker College, Ainslie Primary School, Charles Weston School oval, and Majura Primary School have been completed. Community consultation in these schools will commence during term 1 2021;
- Following previous unsuccessful attempts, Garran Primary School and Miles Franklin Primary School may re-commence community consultation about fully fencing the school grounds as a result of ongoing security incidents.

Background Information

- There are 89 ACT public schools (including Evelyn Scott School), however **93 school sites** are reported in this brief as four schools have two campuses. These are Caroline Chisholm, Gold Creek, Melba Copland and Wanniasa Schools.
- Given the significant capital investment in new schools, the planning and design for a new school includes the installation of a perimeter security fence. The location of the fence ensures that community access to facilities outside school hours is provided, wherever possible.
- In existing schools seeking a new security fence, the designs for security fences also aim to ensure that community access to school facilities is maintained outside school hours, for example weekends and school term breaks.
- Some schools leave gates unlocked outside school hours to allow access to school ovals and play equipment. At other schools, arrangements can be made with the school administration to gain access to the grounds and facilities. Schools assess the risks in determining access arrangements.
- A trial of an automated gate unlocking system was suspended in 2020 due to COVID-19 limitations. The equipment has been installed at Forrest Primary School and the trial will re-commence when restrictions allow.

Cleared as complete and accurate: 06/10/2021
Cleared for public release by: Executive Group Manager
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TRIM Ref:

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Portfolio: Education and Youth Affairs

TRANSPORTABLE CLASSROOMS

Talking points:

- There are currently **148 transportable units in place at 38 schools**.
- The installation of transportable classrooms provided an **additional 650 places across 12 schools** in the 2020-21 financial year, in the fastest growing regions of Gungahlin, Belconnen, the Inner North and Inner South.
- The provision of transportable classrooms enables the Education Directorate to **respond quickly and flexibly to changes in enrolment demand**.
- Transportable classrooms provide flexibility to respond to natural peaks in enrolments and medium-term transient enrolment growth. Short-term increases in enrolments that are not expected to be sustained can be addressed by installing transportable classrooms at a significantly lower cost compared to that of an additional building.
- Transportable classrooms are designed to be open, spacious, comfortable and inviting learning environments.
- They are modern, fully insulated, and designed to meet current energy targets with the same comforts and technical/IT infrastructure as a permanent learning space.
- They are planned and placed in areas that blend into the overall design and landscaping of the school. Transportable classrooms installed at schools today are built to the same standards (National Construction Code) as permanent structures.
- The 2020-21 program has completed with the installation of transportables at the following school sites;
 - Black Mountain School - 100 Places
 - Forrest Primary School - 50 Places
 - Fraser Primary School – 50 Places
 - Garran Primary School – 100 Places
 - Majura Primary School – 50 Places
 - Mawson Primary School – 50 Places
 - Mt Rogers Primary School – 50 Places
 - North Ainslie Primary School – 50 Places
 - Red Hill Primary School – 50 Places
 - Taylor Primary School – 50 Places
 - Telopea Park School – 50 Places

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Key Information

- As suburbs progress through their life-cycle, students numbers tend to rise and fall. Active monitoring and management of unexpected local and short-term demand pressures is a key school planning function.
- Transportable classrooms are a normal part of planning for growth and they provide flexibility both for schools that are experiencing temporary growth in enrolments as well as to provide time to plan for, and deliver permanent investment in capacity where it is needed for the long-term.
- This option is used in situations where a permanent built expansion of capacity may not be the best long-term or cost-effective solution expected demand pressures.
- Provision of transportable classrooms provides time for the Directorate to plan and deliver a more permanent response if sustained enrolment growth is anticipated.
- Modern transportable classrooms are designed to be open, spacious, comfortable and inviting learning environments. They are fully insulated, and designed to meet current energy targets with technical/IT infrastructure as a permanent learning space.
- Transportable classrooms are also used as interim accommodation while modernisation of schools is underway, such as at Campbell Primary School and Narrabundah College.

Cleared as complete and accurate: 06/10/2021

Cleared for public release by: Choose an item.

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BUDGET ESTIMATES BRIEF

Portfolio: Education and Youth Affairs

SUSTAINABILITY IN SCHOOLS

Talking Points

- The ACT Government is committed to providing healthy, comfortable and sustainable teaching and learning spaces to maximise learning outcomes for all children.
- **Sustainable design is integrated** into new schools, major projects, capital upgrades and outdoor facilities. This approach is supported by strategic programs to address asset management requirements while maximising thermal comfort and energy efficiency objectives.
- Examples include:
 - The ACT Government's second **zero emission operations school, Evelyn Scott School** (Preschool to Year 6) opened in 2021. The school integrates sustainable design principles including full electric operation, solar passive orientation, high insulation levels, double glazing, automated LED lighting, a 100kW solar array and a 210 kilolitre inground water storage tank for landscape and sports field irrigation.
 - **annual funding for sustainability initiatives** targeting improved energy efficiency with a priority on schools with high gas use intensity (gas use per gross floor area);
 - **sustainability standards inclusion into capital upgrades and school modernisation** including building envelope, lighting, and heating, ventilation and cooling upgrades; and
 - **tree planting and outdoor learning spaces improvements** to connect students to nature and mitigate urban heat island impacts.
- The ACT Government has provided significant funding for these programs including:
 - **\$17.96 million in the 2018-19 budget** for a roof replacement program to replace aged and/or uninsulated roof systems with new roof systems that incorporate high levels of insulation;
 - **\$15.9 million in the 2019-20 budget** to deliver energy-efficient updates for ACT public schools through the upgrade end of life heating systems with low to zero emissions technology and improve the resilience of buildings to extreme temperatures;

Cleared as complete and accurate: 07/10/2021

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- **\$2.743 million in 2021-22 Fast Track Phase 3 funding** to deliver thermal comfort improvements including, double glazing upgrades, improved heating, ventilation and cooling, and building envelope upgrades;
- **Total greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions** for ACT public schools in 2020-21 was 5,838.63 tonnes of CO₂-e, a decrease of 3 per cent (181 tonnes) from 2019-20.

Background

- Energy efficiency, thermal comfort and emission reduction initiatives that were implemented in 2020-21 included the following:
 - **major energy efficiency and thermal improvements** to the North Curtin Preschool;
 - **thermal improvements** to the building envelope at Isabella Plains Early Childhood School, Lanyon High School, Lyneham Primary School, South Curtin Preschool, Weetangera Primary School and Yarralumla Primary School; design of building thermal upgrades for Miles Franklin Primary School and Gilmore Primary School;
 - **solar expansions** at Caroline Chisholm School Senior Campus, Monash Primary School and Mount Stromlo High School; solar battery energy storage at Margaret Hendry School and Caroline Chisholm School Senior Campus.
 - **LED lighting upgrades** commenced at six schools: Caroline Chisholm Senior School, Franklin School, Lanyon High School, Miles Franklin Primary School, Monash Primary School and Woden School;
 - **roof upgrades** including a minimum of R4 insulation at Alfred Deakin High School hall, canteen, science and technology blocks, and Telopea Park School;
 - **draught proofing of external doors** at Erindale College, Gilmore Primary School and Ngunnawal and procurement of works at a further three schools in 2021-22;
 - **low emission Heating, Ventilation and Cooling System** renewal at Taylor Primary School;
 - **zero emission Heating, Ventilation and Cooling System** renewal at Calwell Primary School Hall and Preschool, one wing of Maribrynong Primary School and O'Connor Cooperative School.
- Recycling and resource recovery initiatives implemented in 2020-21:
 - **in-vessel composting unit** at the horticultural centre at Hawker College, to process biodegradable alternatives to single use plastic and other onsite organic food and plant material.

Cleared as complete and accurate: 07/10/2021

Cleared for public release by: Choose an item.

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Portfolio: Education and Youth Affairs

AUDITOR-GENERAL REPORT – REPAIRS AND MAINTENANCE

Key Information

- The ACT Audit Office undertook a performance audit in the second half of 2019 to provide an independent opinion to the Legislative Assembly on the efficiency and effectiveness of repair and maintenance activities of ACT public school infrastructure.
- The final audit report was presented on 19 December 2019.
- The final report made a total of **eight (8)** recommendations, which were all supported by the Government in the response presented in April 2020.
- The report highlighted that the Directorate has a sound framework for the management of school infrastructure activities, including repair and maintenance activities.
- The report also noted that the Directorate had not fully implemented its asset management framework and could improve the supporting systems and processes.
- Since the report, the Directorate has:
 - Created the Asset Strategies team to manage the ongoing development and implementation of existing and new asset management strategies, processes and policies as identified in the audit report
 - Engaged a suitable and experienced external consultant to assist in these activities and to enhance the contemporary content
 - Undertaken ongoing stakeholder engagement as required in the development of these systems.
- Reporting on the implementation and progress of these works is regularly provided to the Directorate Audit and Compliance Committee and Executive Group Committee.

Background Information

- An update of progress against the recommendations at September 2021 is in the below table:

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Recommendation No	Recommendation	Government response	Progress to date
1.	The Education Directorate should revise Module 7 of the School Management Manual to clearly identify responsibilities for repairs and maintenance activities between the Infrastructure and Capital Works Branch and schools, and in doing so ensure that there is consistency and clarity in language in both Module 7 and the building condition assessments reports.	Agreed - A review of Module 7 of the School Management Manual will commence this year.	The review of the School Management Manual Module 7 will be undertaken once the updates to the Directorate's Strategic Asset Management Framework and Plan (Module 7 drivers) have been completed. The Framework and Plan are currently under review with the assistance of an external consultant.
2.	The Education Directorate should complete the development of property quality standards and incorporate them into the asset management system. Property quality standards should then be used to assess the performance of assets and identify if the assets are being appropriately used, maintained and are fit for purpose.	Agreed - Property quality standards will be developed and incorporated into the asset management system. This information will be combined with condition information to provide data for analysis of asset use and maintenance approaches.	With the assistance of external consultants, Property Quality Standards within the asset management system are being updated and further aligned with the Directorate's Asset Management Objectives. Targets and Key Performance Indicators against the Property Quality Standards are also being updated.
3.	The Education Directorate should develop operational asset management plans for its school infrastructure assets. The plans should contain information to inform long term strategic asset planning for the Education Directorate and should address matters such as responsibility for the asset, arrangements for monitoring asset performance, operational training and estimated operating costs.	Agreed in principle - The Education Directorate supports the development of operational asset management plans in all schools. This work will follow the development of the annual maintenance plans, subject to budgetary constraints.	With the assistance of external consultants, these plans are currently being developed.
4.	The Education Directorate should prepare and execute comprehensive annual maintenance plans for school	Agreed - The development of annual maintenance plans has	These plans are currently being updated and refined for issue from the Directorate's asset

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	<p>infrastructure assets, which outline the specific tasks which are to be undertaken during the year as well as the estimated resources and cost of maintenance activities. The annual maintenance plans should align with, and support, operational asset management plans to be developed as part of Recommendation 3.</p>	<p>commenced with the appointment of School Network Support Officers. As part of their role, the Network Officers work with schools to identify the annual maintenance actions and forecast costs.</p>	<p>management system. Alignment with the updated Strategic Asset Management Framework and Plan will also occur when available.</p>
5.	<p>The Education Directorate should:</p> <p>a) recommence its rolling program of building condition assessments; and</p> <p>b) populate its asset management information system, SPM Assets, with the results of the building condition assessments in order to facilitate and inform asset maintenance planning.</p>	<p>Agreed - a) Recruitment of a new team of Infrastructure and Capital Works, School Network Support Officers has been undertaken. All four of these officers have commenced with the Directorate. Building condition assessments are being conducted by the School Network Support officers.</p> <p>b) In conducting the building condition assessments, data is entered into the asset management information system directly and is immediately available for reporting and asset maintenance planning.</p>	<p>The rolling program of condition assessments and data upload into the Directorate's asset management system has been placed on hold, and will recommence once lockdown restrictions ease.</p>
6.	<p>The Education Directorate should develop baseline data for the cost of activities undertaken under the Service Level Agreement. Expectations should be developed for the benefits that the Service Level Agreement aims to provide and the expectations should be periodically reviewed to inform</p>	<p>Agreed - Baseline data for the ACT Property Group Service Level Agreement has been developed. This data will be used to review performance throughout 2020. A review of the</p>	<p>The review and significant update to the Service Level Agreement with ACT Property Group is underway. Part of these updates will include regular performance reviews of the agreement.</p>

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 Cleared for public release by: Executive Group Manager Ext:
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	the performance of the Service Level Agreement.	expectations of the Service Level Agreement will be undertaken during 2020.	
7.	The Education Directorate should state the purpose and scope of the Specific Works Program and prepare guidelines and funding criteria. Record keeping should be improved with all funding decisions comprehensively recorded.	Agreed - The usefulness of the Specific Works Program will be reviewed in the first half of the year to determine whether this program should continue in operation.	This Program has been superceded by a Government Election commitment to spend \$99M over 4 years on school upgrades. A new prioritisation and decision making framework for future works is included in the review and update of the Directorate's Strategic Asset Management Framework and Plan.
8.	The Education Directorate should review: a) the methods used to record repair and maintenance activities, and the expenditure on repairs and maintenance, with a view to achieving consistent and consolidated reporting; and b) the operation of the School Operational Allocation, to determine why schools exceeded their maintenance component allocations in 2017 and 2018.	Agreed - a) The methods used to record repair and maintenance activities will be reviewed during the year with recommendations for any changes to be provided to Government by the end of 2020. b) A detailed review of School Operational Allocation expenditure will be undertaken during the first half of 2020.	Review and consideration regarding consolidation of the various Directorate financial reporting systems for school maintenance is yet to commence, but is expected to be completed within the 2022 calendar year. A review of the School Operational Allocation funding is expected to commence in the last calendar quarter of in 2021. A review of the expenditure on maintenance by schools in 2017/2018 is no longer considered necessary.

BUDGET ESTIMATES BRIEF

Portfolio: Education and Youth Affairs

FLEXIBLE EDUCATION

Note: Refer to Estimates **Brief 1.10 Muliyan Off Campus Flexible Learning Program**

Talking points:

- At the core of the Future of Education Strategy is an acknowledgement of diversity among students and a determination to strive towards equity by responding to the individual needs of each student.
- The Education Directorate has established the Flexible Education team to provide personalised education programs to students who, at a particular point in time, cannot access education at their enrolled school.
- The Flexible Education team has a strong focus on transitions, ensuring students are supported to move between settings, return to their local school or move into further education, training, or employment opportunities.
- The Flexible Education model promotes inclusivity and individualised learning by connecting students to a multidisciplinary team..
- Students co-construct personalised learning plans, which include both academic and wellbeing goals utilising trauma-informed practices.
- Flexible Education includes:
 - The Hospital School,
 - The educational program at The Cottage,
 - Muliyan,
 - Murrumbidgee School (previously known as Murrumbidgee Education and Training Centre) located at Bimberi Juvenile Justice Centre,
 - Distance Education oversight through Finigan School of Distance Education (FSDE),
 - Vocational Learning Options (VLOs), and
 - Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Student Engagement Program (yet to be named).

Key Information

Muliyan

- Muliyan has been operational since **Term 4, 2018** and is working through a continual cycle of improvement to adapt to the changing cohort and service needs of individual students.
- An Intake Panel, comprising government and non-government membership, considers referrals. The panel reviews each referral on a case-by-case basis with consideration given to the current class composition, gender balance and level of Continuum of Education Support intervention implemented at the students enrolled school.

Cleared as complete and accurate: 05/10/2021

Cleared for public release by:

Director-General

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BUDGET ESTIMATES BRIEF

- To respond to increased demand for student placements, the ACT Government approved an increase in student placements from 10 to 20 students in 2019 and from 20 to 30 students mid 2020. These increases included resources for additional classroom teachers and allied health professionals to provide essential supports for students. By the end of Term 3 2021, 22 students were enrolled and seven students were being orientated into the program; a total of 29 students.
- Whilst enrolled at Muliyan, students have demonstrated significant improvements in their attendance and engagement in learning. **Eleven year 10 students graduated from the program at the end of 2020** with transitions being successfully supported to either College or work placements.
- In alignment with the Future of Education Strategy, a formal evaluation of the Muliyan program occurred during 2020 by Griffith University. The final report was delivered in early Term 1, 2021.
 - It is noted the success of Muliyan is about the success of young people who require significantly different approaches to pedagogy, curriculum and wellbeing.
 - The research team found evidence of highly effective, student-centred curricular, and pedagogical approaches at Muliyan, presenting comprehensive evidence of student disengagement before attending Muliyan in contrast to detailed evidence of re-engagement after enrolment at Muliyan.
 - The research has found that student outcomes from the Muliyan program strongly indicate that it is achieving its goals and fulfilling its deeper purpose.
- The Directorate will continue to consider recommendations within the Report and provide future advice on pursuing these actions.

Worksafe Issues

- On 8 July 2021, the ACT Education Directorate was issued an Improvement Notice (Notice) in relation to the Muliyan Off-Campus Flexible Learning Program.
- The and the Directorate is working together with the Muliyan Off-Campus Flexible Learning Program to address and resolve the concerns raised in the notice.

Murrumbidgee School

- Murrumbidgee School provides a range of educational programs to young people within Bimberi Youth Justice Centre, including recognised certificate courses, tutoring and transitional support back into the community.
- At Murrumbidgee School, staff have worked to build productive relationships with Community Service Directorate staff and robust governance of the school with the appointment of a new board in 2020.

Hospital School

Cleared as complete and accurate: 05/10/2021
Cleared for public release by: Director-General Ext: 59158
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Lead Directorate: Education
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- The Hospital School supports students from Canberra, regional and interstate schools, providing continuity of education for hospitalised students, in a compassionate and engaging learning environment.
- The Hospital School routinely provides innovative use of technologies to promote social inclusion of all students ranging from pre-school to Year 12.
- The Hospital School liaises with mainstream education to ensure streamlined transitions for students and positive educational outcomes.

The educational program at The Cottage

- The Cottage is a program run by Canberra Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS) for secondary school students who are experiencing moderate to severe mental health issues. The teacher at The Cottage works collaboratively with CAMHS staff, parents/carers, and schools to enhance educational and wellbeing needs for young people and to provide smooth transitions back to mainstream education.

Distance Education

- The Distance Education program commenced under Flexible Education (FE) oversight during term 2, 2020. FE has worked to build a partnership with the Finigan School of Distance Education, NSW Education Department and other stakeholders to develop a high-quality service offering for ACT students.
- Regular meetings are conducted with FSDE and processes for enrolment and transition in and out of the program have been strengthened. An MOU is currently being reviewed.

Vocational Learning Options

- The Vocational Learning Options Program currently offers ACT public school students in years 9, 10, 11 and 12 the opportunity to enrol in a cluster of competencies sourced from Certificate III, Certificate IV or Diploma level VET qualification.
- The Vocational Learning Options program consists of 10 to 12 sessions, one day per week over a semester, delivered by an external registered training organisation (RTO); including further opportunity for work experience, work exposure and work exploration inclusion. In addition explicit Career education and learning is incorporated into all VLO programs.
- The VLO program supports students who require additional learning support, where schools consult with parents in formalising an Individual Learning Plan (ILP). This ILP identifies the student's individual needs, pathway, goals and priorities for learning.

The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Student Engagement Program

- The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Student Engagement Program, is in development stages and the Directorate has commenced consultation with the community to fine tune the requirements of the model.
- The program aims to provide re-engagement opportunities for students from Year 1- 10 currently in ACT public education.

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- The program has been in pilot operation since Term 1, 2021 with 31 young people currently engaged in the program with [REDACTED] young people being monitored. There is now a waitlist for this service.
- Two Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Youth Workers are providing students and their families wrap around service responses to support reengagement in education and improved wellbeing outcomes. A School Leader C commenced in Term 2, 2021 who is supporting the educational scaffolding for students in the program.
- The program will develop eligibility criteria in consultation with the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community of the ACT. Discussions are underway with community partners such as the Indigenous Education Unit, Gugan Gulwan and Winnunga Nimmityjah Aboriginal Health Service.

BUDGET ESTIMATES BRIEF

Portfolio: Education and Youth Affairs

RESTRICTIVE PRACTICE IN PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Talking points:

- Restrictive Practice is used to restrict the rights or freedom of movement of a person for the primary purpose of protecting the person or others from harm (*Senior Practitioner Act 2018*).
- In a school setting, it is an action by a staff member towards a student in an emergent situation to prevent imminent harm to the student or others.
- In ACT public schools, **restrictive practice is used as a last resort** when there is imminent risk to safety, for the student or others. It is not permitted to be used for compliance, or to respond to verbal threats, or to prevent property damage.
- The Education Directorate **complies with the *Senior Practitioner Act 2018*** (the Act) and the Safe and Supportive Schools Policy, ensuring the Directorate's actions:
 - are consistent with the student's human rights,
 - safeguard the student and other staff and students from harm,
 - maximise the opportunity for positive outcomes,
 - reduce or eliminate the need for use of restrictive practices, and
 - are transparent and accountable in its use of restrictive practices.
- Schools are supported by the Directorate to meet their obligations under the Act through professional learning, targeted support in developing and implementing plans, and independent assessment and approval of plans through the ACT Education Positive Behaviour Support Panel.
- This Panel is a group of professional officers, independent from the Directorate's direct school operations with specific skills and knowledge that enable them to undertake the panel role to:
 - review, provide feedback and consider approval of PBS Plans for students in ACT Public School that contain restrictive practices;
 - refer approved plans to the Senior Practitioner for registration; and
 - provide advice to schools where PBS Plans to not meet the requirements of the *Senior Practitioner Act 2018*.
- The Directorate's approach to prevention and early intervention for challenging behaviour is underpinned by whole school approaches to positive behaviour support. The Positive Behaviour for Learning (PBL) framework assists schools to build a strong, trauma-informed foundation for all students, with more individualised support tailored for students with more complex behaviours of concern.
- The Directorate works closely with the Australian Education Union, Catholic Education Office, and Association of Independent Schools to consider the legislative, strategic, and operational impacts of restrictive practice.

BUDGET ESTIMATES BRIEF

Key Information

Restrictive Practice Reports

- ACT public schools are recording all incidents of restrictive practice on the School Administration System (SAS). This data is collated and is provided, as agreed, to the Office of the Senior Practitioner (OSP). These reports are jointly monitored and reviewed by the OSP and EDU at fortnightly liaison meetings.
- The Directorate established a Restrictive Practice Team (RPT) to support schools in strengthening their understanding and approaches to complex behaviours and the development of evidence based positive behavioural support plans. The team provides a behaviourally and therapeutically informed approach to working with schools on student safety.
- Reports of Restrictive Practice are assessed by the RPT on a weekly basis to ascertain if the response actually was restrictive. If so, appropriate supports are identified. These include:
 - Environmental assessment.
 - Identification of low level universal supports that minimise / eliminate the behaviour of concern / risk.
 - Direct support for individual staff, school team (including executive) to determine need and, review / develop processes, protocols and responses (particularly safety).
 - Targeted Tier 2 / 3 supports, including professional learning specific to the context of the behaviour, involvement of Allied Health professionals and supports.
 - Review and modification of existing Positive Behaviour Support Plans.
 - Development of Positive Behaviour Support Plan, based on understanding the function of behaviour.
- The RPT monitors reports of Restrictive Practice through the SAS incident management system to support appropriate and timely responses to incidents and provide an increased level of assurance that appropriate responses are in place. The team also provides ongoing data analysis by staff, students, schools, and region to further inform and improve our practice and approach to preventing and reducing Restrictive Practice.
- The Directorate continues to work on developing training and education to support our schools in understanding restrictive practice and investing in evidence based behavioural support within our schools. We continue to focus on developing and sustaining safe and supportive teaching and learning environments for everyone in our ACT Schools.
- The number of plans at the end of Term 3, 2021 that included restrictive practices as a planned response has been **reduced by 90.32%** (155 plans originally identified as including a restrictive practice, reduced to 15).

BUDGET ESTIMATES BRIEF

- In 2020, 155 Positive Behaviour Support Plans were identified to the Office of the Senior Practitioner that included a planned restrictive practice in response to an identified behaviour of concern.
- The support outlined above and the identification has enabled the removal of planned restrictive practices from 140 plans (92%).

Background Information

Senior Practitioner Act

- The *Senior Practitioner Act 2018* came into effect on 1 September 2018. The Act provides a framework for the regulation of restrictive practices, to minimise and wherever possible, eliminate their use. It also establishes the role of the Senior Practitioner in the ACT, including outlining the role's powers and functions.
- Under the Act, the Directorate is defined as a provider, and schools as service outlets, which means they are regulated by the Act with respect to planning, implementation, documenting and reporting of restrictive practice.

BUDGET ESTIMATES BRIEF

Portfolio: Education and Youth Affairs

SCHOOL PSYCHOLOGISTS

Note: Refer to Budget Estimates [Brief 3.3 – Pathway out of Lockdown](#) and [Brief 7.8 Mental Health Programs](#)

Talking points:

- School psychologists are part a multidisciplinary approach to supporting student inclusion, engagement, and wellbeing.
- In 2021, there are **81.6 FTE school psychologists** supporting students in ACT public schools.
- All ACT public schools, students, parents/carers, and teachers have access to a school psychologist.
- School psychologists play a critical role in the mental health approach in the community by identifying and working with personal difficulties at the earliest opportunity.
- School psychologists work with school staff to put in place preventative strategies at the whole school level, work with students' families and refer moderate to severe mental health issues to other specialists as well as responding to crisis where immediate assistance is required.
- Early identification of learning difficulties and timely intervention is key to success and improves future educational outcomes for students.
- Psychologists can identify barriers to learning, including specific learning disorders and provide schools with recommendations and strategies to support students in both mainstream and specialist school settings.
- To achieve the best learning and wellbeing outcomes for students, school psychologists collaborate and consult with the wider community including the Community Services Directorate and ACT Health to support ACT students and their families.

Key Information

- School psychologists can provide direct support or interventions to students, consult with teachers and families, or work alongside other members of the student services team (school youth health nurse, school social worker, youth worker) to help students thrive in their school environment. School psychologists may also work with the school executive team on school-wide practices and procedures, as well as collaborate with community providers to coordinate services for students.
- The Assessment and Early Intervention teams ensure psychologists can attend to learning and wellbeing needs for a greater number of students for their respective school community at both universal and targeted level.
- In Term 3, during the period of remote learning, all psychologists transitioned to engage in telehealth service to address wellbeing needs of students. In addition, a central telehealth service was established to boost service delivery. This service provision will continue all through Term 4. Online sessions on anxiety have been developed for parents by the psychology service that will assist them in preparing their children return to school for face to face learning.

Cleared as complete and accurate: 05/10/2021

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BUDGET ESTIMATES BRIEF

Referral pathways

- School psychologists are part of a larger service offering in the ACT. If a student requires specialist input (such as to address an eating disorder), or the severity of the problem is such that input from a mental health professional is required then a referral is initiated. There is strong collaboration and partnerships with community and government agencies that helps with prompt and timely referrals to agencies including:
 - ACT Mental Health;
 - Headspace ACT; and
 - ACT Child Development Service.
- Students presenting with the greatest risk factors (risk to self or others) are prioritised. All school psychologists have the required training in undertaking risk assessments that help establish safety for the student and others.

Approach to suicide

- All high schools and colleges prepare a Suicide Response Plan as part of a whole school approach to mental health and wellbeing. Headspace ACT, under the Be You – National Education Initiative, trains and supports schools' emergency response teams to undertake this planning. All secondary schools have a post-vention plan.
- Professional learning in Applied Suicide Intervention Skills Training (ASIST) is available to school wellbeing staff and psychologists and is delivered regularly by qualified Senior Psychologists. ASIST teaches participants to recognise when someone may be at risk of suicide and work with them to create a plan that will support their immediate safety.
- ACT Health is delivering LifeSpan, an evidence-based, integrated approach to suicide prevention across the community. Of the nine LifeSpan strategies, the most relevant to education is the strategy of promoting help seeking, mental health and resilience in schools. To support this, the Directorate has collaborated with the Office for Mental Health and Wellbeing (OMHW) to roll out the Youth Aware of Mental Health (YAM) program in ACT schools.
- Youth Aware of Mental Health program is being delivered in schools across the ACT to educate and engage young people in Year 9 in discussions about mental health and to promote peer support. The goal is to roll out the program in all 19 ACT public high schools and Catholic and independent schools.
- In 2020, **2,247 students in 14 schools** across each sector participated in the program. An evaluation of the program is currently underway by Blackdog. Pandemic has impacted delivery of this program to schools in 2021. In Term 4 it is scheduled to be delivered to four ACT high schools (2 ACT public schools, 1 catholic education, 1 independent). This will further benefit 620 students across schools.
- A designated Suicide Prevention Officer is working across ACT Health and ACT Education to coordinate the existing suicide prevention programs and activities within Education and to collect data on the YAM program across ACT high schools (public and private).

Cleared as complete and accurate: 05/10/2021

Cleared for public release by: Director-General

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Be You

- Be You, the National Education Initiative, aims to transform Australia's approach to supporting children's and young people's mental health in early learning services and schools.
- Be You promotes mental health and wellbeing, from the early years to senior secondary, and offers educators and learning communities' evidence-based online professional learning, complemented by a range of tools and resources to turn learning into action. Be You also supports the health and wellbeing of educators and the school and early childhood setting communities.
- Through continuous professional development of educators, the program aims to:
 - Promote optimal mental health and wellness, critical factors to academic success and future productivity.
 - Guide staff on how to influence good mental health and prevent suicide.
 - Build the capacity of staff, parents and guardians and students to intervene early in mental health challenges.
 - Proactively plan against suicide and respond rapidly if it occurs.
- Be You engagement and implementation is gaining momentum and growing across Australia. Most recent data, from March 2021, notes **87% of all ACT schools** had registered with Be You.

Background Information

- This table outlines the number of psychologists supporting ACT public schools in 2015-2021.

Number of psychologists in ACT Education schools							
Funded FTE	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
Senior Director Clinical Practice	0	0	0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0
Director Clinical Practice	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0
Senior Psychologists	8	12.0	12.0	12.0	14.0	14.0	14.0
School Psychologists	40.5	40.5	45.0	49.4	57.0	62.0	62.0
Sub-total	49.5	53.5	58.0	63.0	73.0	78.0	78.0
<i>Additional psychology supports provided by ACT Education</i>							
<i>Senior Psychologist (PBL)</i>	-	-	0.6	0.6	0.6	0.6	0.6
<i>School Psychologist (schools purchases)</i>	-	0.8	0.7	1.8	0.0	0.0	0.0
<i>Child Development Service Psychologists</i>	3.0	3.0	3.0	3.0	3.0	3.0	3.0
Total	52.5	57.3	61.6	68.4	76.6	81.6	81.6

Cleared as complete and accurate: 05/10/2021

Cleared for public release by: Director-General

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BUDGET ESTIMATES BRIEF

Portfolio: Education and Youth Affairs

BULLYING AND VIOLENCE IN ACT PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Talking points:

- 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***.
- 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 procedures and processes.
- Schools will typically work with students, families and staff, to support students who experience or are witnesses to bullying and violence.
- Schools' Student Wellbeing Teams and specialist staff monitor and provide support to groups and individual students involved in incident/s of bullying or violence, on a case by case basis.
- As part of this preventative approach to reducing bullying and violence, there are now over 75% of ACT Public Schools in the process of Positive Behaviour for Learning (PBL) implementation, with all schools ensuring that they are creating positive learning environments appropriate to school context and student need. (Refer to Estimates ***Brief 8.4 Positive Behaviour for Learning***)
- The ***Safe and Supportive Schools Policy*** requires each ACT public school to:
 - have a school-based policy in place to address and prevent bullying, harassment and violence.
 - identify Safe and Supportive School Contact Officers (known as 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 Feedback and Complaints unit provides an additional reporting mechanism for complainants who are not satisfied with a school's response, or who do not wish to contact the school to make a report of bullying or harassment.

Key Information

School Education Advisory Committee (SEAC)

- On 18 March 2019, the Minister established a School Education Advisory Committee, the Safe and Supportive Schools Advisory Committee (SEAC), to provide independent advice to the ACT Government on opportunities to strengthen safe and supportive school culture in every ACT public school.

BUDGET ESTIMATES BRIEF

- SEAC reviewed 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.
- On 19 August 2019, the Chair of SEAC provided the Chief Minister and Minister for Education and Early Childhood Development with a copy of its final report that contained a range of observations that recognised:
 - PBL will take several years to implement, with multilevel implementation support recommended for three to five years.
 - schools have strong foundations in place to manage and minimise bullying and violence and acknowledged the considerable investment, effort and progress that has already been achieved;
 - cultural change and systemic reform takes time, patience and refinement. It identified the risk in diverting from the path or adopting additional courses of action too soon;
 - 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.

Standing Committee on Education, Employment and Youth Affairs (SCEEYA)

- On 4 April 2019, the Minister for Education and Early Childhood Development moved a motion in the Legislative Assembly to refer the issue of management and minimisation of bullying and violence in ACT schools to the Standing Committee on Education, Employment and Youth Affairs (SCEEYA) for inquiry and report. The Directorate was already pursuing a number of initiatives aligned with the Committee's recommendations as part of the ACT Government's *Future of Education Strategy*.
- The Standing Committee's Inquiry into the management and minimisation of bullying and violence in ACT schools, provided recommendations about how to address bullying and violence in schools. The Government response was tabled in the Legislative Assembly on 23 October 2019.
- The Inquiry made 23 Recommendations. Of the 23 recommendations, the ACT Government agreed to 12, agreed in principle to nine and noted two (recommendations 14 and 23).

Background Information

- In March every year ACT schools participate in the National Day of Action against Bullying and Violence (NDA). This focusses on creating positive, safe learning environments and raising awareness of anti-bullying and wellbeing initiatives. The 2021 National Day of Action was held on 19 March 2021, the theme's aim was to elevate student voice.
- The Education Directorate is strengthening work to support the appropriate use of technology products by providing students with guidance and support, to counter online bullying and harassment and promote esafety.

BUDGET ESTIMATES BRIEF

Portfolio/s: Education and Youth Affairs

OCCUPATIONAL VIOLENCE AND COMPLEX CASE MANAGEMENT

Talking points:

- The Future of Education strategy includes a strong focus on student and staff safety.
- Bullying and violence are societal issues extending beyond the school gate and require a broad societal response.
- Over the **past two years, nearly \$8 million** was spent on improving work health and safety for staff and students within ACT Public Schools.
- The Education Directorate entered into an Enforceable Undertaking with Worksafe ACT in September 2018. In December 2020, Worksafe ACT confirmed the Education Directorate has met the terms of the enforceable undertaking.
- The Education Directorate has comprehensively implemented the Occupational Violence Policy and Management Plan including:
 - working with school communities, specifically parents and the ACT Council of P&C Associations to build strong and safe communities for learning, and
 - delivering a national forum to share learnings and resources with other education jurisdictions in Australia facing the same challenges.
- The updated mandatory Work, Health and Safety and Occupational Violence training package was rolled out in Term 3 2019 and all schools have completed occupational violence management training.

Key Information

Occupational violence incidents

- Occupational violence incidents range from verbal abuse and superficial injuries to, rarely, more serious incidents. **Most incidents do not result in lost time injury claims.**
- An increase in the reporting of occupational violence incidents corresponds with the Directorate's **strong emphasis to staff on reporting** through the implementation of the Directorate's Occupational Violence Management Policy and related Management Plan. It does not in itself mean there has been a real increase in occupational violence incidents.
- In **2020**, a total of **7,250 Riskman reports were submitted** with **6,105 reports triaged** by the OV&CCM Team.
- For **2021** (Term 1 -Term 3) **5,845 reports have been submitted** with **4,930 reports triaged**. The Directorate established an Occupational Violence and Complex Case Management (OV&CCM) Team to support schools in strengthening risk assessments and the implementation of risk management controls. This team provides a behaviourally and therapeutically informed approach to working with schools to support staff and student safety.

Cleared as complete and accurate: 05/10/2021
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- The team also monitor reports of occupational violence through Riskman to support appropriate and timely responses to incidents and provide an increased level of assurance that appropriate responses are in place.
- The team provides ongoing data analysis by staff, students, schools, and region to further inform and improve our practice and approach to preventing and reducing occupational violence.
- The Triaging process includes events that by definition are not 'occupational violence', as the staff injury was a result of student actions not explicitly directed at the staff member. For example, staff witnessing student self-harm or student non-compliance. The reports were triaged by the OV&CCM Team so appropriate resources from the Student Engagement Branch could liaise with the school to provide further support.

Next Steps

- The Directorate continues to work on deeply embedding a comprehensive and robust safety management system framework. We continue to focus on developing and sustaining safe and supportive teaching and learning environments for everyone in our ACT Schools.

Background Information

Enforceable Undertaking

- On 28 September 2018, the Directorate entered an undertaking with WorkSafe ACT, on behalf of the Territory. This was made public on 15 October 2018 and contained limited details about three schools where teachers had been injured by students.
- On 2 December 2020, the Deputy Work Health Safety Commissioner wrote to the Directorate's Director-General, Katy Haire, to inform her that WorkSafe ACT is satisfied that the Directorate having met their commitments and has now discharged their Enforceable Undertaking.

BUDGET ESTIMATES BRIEF

Portfolio: Education and Youth Affairs

SUSPENSION POLICY

Talking points:

- ACT Public Schools use a range of prevention and early support approaches when students demonstrate behaviour which may impact on their ability to be positively engaged at school (or impacts other students).
- Social and emotional skills are an important part of promoting student wellbeing and are developed through social and emotional learning programs in our schools.
- Suspension may be used where a Principal decides it is necessary to address a situation where a student threatens the safety and wellbeing of another student, a member of the staff or another member of the school community.
- When suspension is necessary, it is used in accordance with section 36 of the *Education Act 2004*.
- Where a family disagrees with a suspension decision, they have the right to seek a review of that decision. Initially this review is conducted by the Education Directorate.
- The ACT Civil and Administrative Tribunal (ACAT) is an option for an independent body to hear a range of issues, including a decision already reviewed through the Education Directorate's internal review process.
- In 2019, the Directorate revised and published the *Suspension, Exclusion and Transfer of students Policy and Procedures*.
- The Directorate works with school Principals, so they understand their obligations under the *Suspension, Exclusion and Transfer of students Policy and Procedures*.

Background Information

- Suspension is the process of temporarily withdrawing a student from school activities and school grounds, placing them in the care of their parents and/or a person with parental responsibility, when the student displays behaviours described under section 36 of the *Education Act 2004 (the Act)*.
- The Directorate's Suspension, Exclusion and Transfer of Students Policy and Procedures provide guidance to schools on the Directorate's responsibilities to support the application of a suspension, transfer or exclusion in ACT public schools consistent with the Act.
- The Directorate's updated Suspension, Exclusion and Transfer of Students policy was published in December 2019 and has a focus on a prevention and early intervention approach to behaviour support to reduce the incidence of behaviours that potentially lead to suspension. Additional guidance in the form of a fact sheet has been developed and provided to school Principals to assist in their decision making.
- The *Suspension, Exclusion and Transfer of Students procedure* states a key consideration for decision-making must be given to a student's needs and whether appropriate and reasonable adjustments have been made to reduce the need for the

Cleared as complete and accurate: 06/10/2021

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use of behaviours of concern as a means of communicating, particularly where this is a manifestation of disability.

Suspension Data

- The Directorate has published generalised suspension data since 2013 that is publicly available on the Directorate's website. This data is published annually, is for ACT public schools only and is reported by school type. (Refer to **Attachment A – Suspensions Data**)
- An issue for consideration when publishing data is the impact of more granular data, particularly when there are small numbers. This can raise concerns about the privacy for individual students. As such, the Directorate chooses not to publish granular data for specific cohorts of students, such as students with a disability.
- Suspension rates for 2020 are comparable with 2019, noting that 2020 data will have been impacted by COVID-19.
- Following the recommendations from a 2020 ACAT decision, schools were provided with resources outlining the steps needed to be taken in regards to mutually agreed leave, consultation with parents and/or carers about suspension decisions and the steps schools are required to take under the current suspensions policy.

SUSPENSIONS DATA - public schools

Year		Primary Schools	High Schools	Colleges	total	Indigenous
2013	Total Enrolments	20,538	9,892	6,078	36,508	1,191
	Suspension Incidents	632	1,156	53	1,841	276
	<i>Incidents per 100 Students</i>	3	12	1	5	23
	Suspension Days	1038	2409	85	3,532	583
	<i>Days per 100 Students</i>	5	24	1	10	49
	Students Suspended	294	562	50	906	120
	<i>Suspension Rate (%)</i>	1.4	5.7	0.8	2.5	10.1
2014	Total Enrolments	21,429	9,841	6,258	37,528	1,320
	Suspension Incidents	808	915	38	1,761	269
	<i>Incidents per 100 Students</i>	4	9	1	5	20
	Suspension Days	1398	2103	104	3,605	597
	<i>Days per 100 Students</i>	7	21	2	10	45
	Students Suspended	317	487	33	837	112
	<i>Suspension Rate (%)</i>	1.5	4.9	0.5	2.2	8.5
2015	Total Enrolments (K-12)	22,442	9,947	6,446	38,835	1,399
	Suspension Incidents	723	1,079	36	1,838	297
	<i>Incidents per 100 Students</i>	3	11	1	5	21
	Suspension Days	1312	2192	87	3591	624
	<i>Days per 100 Students</i>	6	22	1	9	45
	Students Suspended	318	560	32	910	120
	<i>Suspension Rate (%)</i>	1.4	5.6	0.5	2	8.6
2016	Total Enrolments (K-12)	23,630	10,258	6,487	40,375	1,512
	Suspension Incidents	819	1,111	63	1,993	257
	<i>Incidents per 100 Students</i>	3	11	1	5	17
	Suspension Days	1460	2106	144	3710	503
	<i>Days per 100 Students</i>	6	21	2	9	33
	Students Suspended	343	535	55	933	118
	<i>Suspension Rate (%)</i>	1.5	5.2	0.8	2.3	7.8
2017	Total Enrolments (K-12)	24,739	10,571	6,680	41,990	1,574
	Suspension Incidents	886	1,229	55	2,170	310
	<i>Incidents per 100 Students</i>	4	12	1	5	20
	Suspension Days	1,652	2,464	150	4,266	621
	<i>Days per 100 Students</i>	7	23	2	10	39
	Students Suspended	384	621	48	1,053	133
	<i>Suspension Rate (%)</i>	1.6	5.9	0.7	2.5	8.4
2018	Total Enrolments (K-12)	25,762	11,062	6,524	43,348	1,654
	Suspension Incidents	818	1,291	36	2,145	346
	<i>Incidents per 100 Students</i>	3	12	1	5	21
	Suspension Days	1,500	2,744	133	4,377	739
	<i>Days per 100 Students</i>	6	25	2	10	45
	Students Suspended	419	559	10	988	147
	<i>Suspension Rate (%)</i>	1.6	5.1	0.2	2.3	8.9
2019	Total Enrolments (K-12)	26,486	11,598	6,427	44,511	1,729
	Suspension Incidents	1,426	1,611	48	3,085	484
	<i>Incidents per 100 Students</i>	5	14	1	7	28
	Suspension Days	2,349	3,477	136	5,962	981
	<i>Days per 100 Students</i>	9	30	2	13	57
	Students Suspended	572	817	45	1,434	197
	<i>Suspension Rate (%)</i>	2.2	7.0	0.7	3.2	11.4
2020	Total Enrolments (K-12)	27,212	11,844	6,656	45,712	1,837
	Suspension Incidents	1,210	1,325	52	2,587	445
	<i>Incidents per 100 Students</i>	4	11	1	6	24
	Suspension Days	2,150	2,719	169	5,038	863
	<i>Days per 100 Students</i>	8	23	3	11	47
	Students Suspended	528	768	41	1,337	197
	<i>Suspension Rate (%)</i>	1.9	6.5	0.6	2.9	10.7
2021	Total Enrolments (K-12)	27,574	12,253	6,686	46,513	1,872
	Suspension Incidents					
	<i>Incidents per 100 Students</i>					
	Suspension Days					
	<i>Days per 100 Students</i>					
	Students Suspended					
	<i>Suspension Rate (%)</i>					

Source: Education Directorate, unpublished suspension data; ACT School Census February 2013 - 2020.

Data from 2018 onwards are collected using a different information system to that previously used and are not directly comparable to previous data.

Students with Disability suspended; ACT public schools, 2013-2020

		Schooling level			
Year		Primary Schools	High Schools	Colleges	Total
2013	Total Enrolments	1,235	590	210	2,035
	Suspension Incidents	123	134		
	<i>Incidents per 100 Students</i>	10	23	3	13
	Suspension Days	204	300	11	515
	<i>Days per 100 Students</i>	17	51	5	25
	Students Suspended	52	64		
	<i>Suspension Rate (%)</i>	4.2	10.8	2.9	6.0
2014	Total Enrolments	1340	628	212	2180
	Suspension Incidents	133	108		
	<i>Incidents per 100 Students</i>	10	17	3	11
	Suspension Days	237	256	18	511
	<i>Days per 100 Students</i>	18	41	8	23
	Students Suspended	55	47		
	<i>Suspension Rate (%)</i>	4.1	7.5	2.4	4.9
2015	Total Enrolments	1,202	636	251	2,089
	Suspension Incidents	176	193		
	<i>Incidents per 100 Students</i>	15	30	2	18
	Suspension Days	301	423	19	743
	<i>Days per 100 Students</i>	25	67	8	36
	Students Suspended	73	73		
	<i>Suspension Rate (%)</i>	6.1	11.5	1.2	7.1
2016	Total Enrolments	1,220	657	271	2,148
	Suspension Incidents	216	167	15	398
	<i>Incidents per 100 Students</i>	18	25	6	19
	Suspension Days	410	390	24	824
	<i>Days per 100 Students</i>	34	59	9	38
	Students Suspended	83	68	11	162
	<i>Suspension Rate (%)</i>	6.8	10.4	4.1	7.5
2017	Total Enrolments	1,300	619	318	2,237
	Suspension Incidents	260	232		
	<i>Incidents per 100 Students</i>	20	37	1	22
	Suspension Days	520	523		
	<i>Days per 100 Students</i>	40	84	3	47
	Students Suspended	93	90		
	<i>Suspension Rate (%)</i>	7.2	14.5	0.9	8.3
2018	Total Enrolments	1,308	654	329	2,291
	Suspension Incidents	245	195		
	<i>Incidents per 100 Students</i>	19	30	2	19
	Suspension Days	497	438	40	975
	<i>Days per 100 Students</i>	38	67	12	43
	Students Suspended	107	88		
	<i>Suspension Rate (%)</i>	8.2	13.5	1.8	8.8
2019	Total Enrolments	1,365	730	321	2,416
	Suspension Incidents	377	243		
	<i>Incidents per 100 Students</i>	28	33	2	26
	Suspension Days	625	510	13	1,148
	<i>Days per 100 Students</i>	46	70	4	48
	Students Suspended	136	101		
	<i>Suspension Rate (%)</i>	10.0	13.8	1.6	10.0
2020	Total Enrolments	1,476	754	307	2,537
	Suspension Incidents	365	214	18	597
	<i>Incidents per 100 Students</i>	25	28	6	24
	Suspension Days	686.7	496	44	1,227
	<i>Days per 100 Students</i>	47	66	14	48
	Students Suspended	112	109	10	231
	<i>Suspension Rate (%)</i>	7.6	14.5	3.3	9.1
	Total Enrolments	1,532	814	328	2,674
	Suspension Incidents				

2021	<i>Incidents per 100 Students</i>				
	Suspension Days				
	<i>Days per 100 Students</i>				
	Students Suspended				
	<i>Suspension Rate (%)</i>				

Source: Education Directorate, unpublished suspension data; ACT School Census February 2013 - 2020.
 Data from 2018 onwards are collected using a different information system to that previously used and are not directly comparable to previous data.

BUDGET ESTIMATES BRIEF

Portfolio: Education and Youth Affairs

ESAFETY PROGRAMS

Note: Refer to Estimates [Brief 1.1 Digital Access and Equity](#)

Talking points:

- The 2021-22 ACT Budget for Education includes \$0.858 million over four years to ensure that students stay safe online through the additional creation of eSafety supports and resources for families and schools as part of the “*Digital Access and Equity Program*”.
- Esafety refers to the knowledge, skills and confidence that students require to learn and communicate safely with digital tools at school, at home, at work and in their communities.
- The Directorate takes a proactive approach to eSafety that aims to address the complex societal situations and behaviours that occur online (including bullying, harassment and violence), and build the skills and knowledge of students, staff and families in addressing these issues.
- The Directorate has a range of resources to support schools in delivering an enriching digital program aimed at educating our students, staff and families about online safety.
- A digital resource centre has been developed in 2021 to support students receiving ACT Government provided Chromebooks as part of the Technology Enabled Learning (TEL) Program. This resource provides students with a curated collection of materials and contacts to navigate if issues are faced online.
- The budget funding will be used to extend the resource centre to include new eSafety materials for families and teachers.
- Families play an important role in navigating the use of technology and appropriate online behaviours with their children. The Directorate encourages families to talk about expected behaviours at home and provides families with advice and guidance to achieve this goal.
- ACT Public Schools moved to remote learning in Semester 2, the eSafety Officer has continued to support students, families and teachers virtually to ensure eSafety program continues to be delivered in 2021.
- This eSafety program is complemented by IT technology (eg web filtering and monitoring) by the Directorate and DDTS.

Cleared as complete and accurate: 05/10/2021

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Key Information

- Students are taught the concepts of using information and communication technologies (ICT) ethically, safely, and responsibly as part of the Australian Curriculum.
- The eSafety program aims to build on existing school initiatives and continue to provide information sessions for parents and carers to ensure a broad reach.
- The Directorate's resources and approach relating to good digital citizenship and eSafety align with the *Safe and Supportive Schools* policy. Resources have been collated in collaboration with the Office of the eSafety Commissioner, Australian Federal Police, Google Education, and other eSafety providers.
- The Directorate has initiated a community of practice with the Office of the eSafety Commissioner, the Australian Federal Police (AFP), and ACT Policing to align our collective work to support children, young people and families. Through this monthly meeting, the Directorate validates our current work programs with local and national research and emerging trends. This relationship also provides benefit to the Directorate when we need incident response and community support.
- In developing the eSafety program for 2021, the Directorate has strengthened its relationship with the Office of the eSafety Commissioner to ensure that our program is supported by emerging research and behavioural trends.
- The *Communities Online: Acceptable use of ICT – Parents and Students* Policy and related guidelines define acceptable use of ICT resources provided by the Directorate. Students and carers sign this agreement annually to confirm the student's understanding of their roles and responsibilities. Parents are provided with the Privacy Information for digital tools used for learning and classroom collaboration in ACT public schools.
- Each term, eSafety reminders are prompted on student devices throughout the year. eSafety reminders are designed by students as part of Directorate led eSafety workshops, representing an important example of student voice.
- In 2021, the Directorate's eSafety Officer has worked collaboratively with **38** schools, to develop and deliver tailored:
 - student eSafety workshops
 - staff professional learning workshops, and
 - family eSafety information sessions.
- The Directorate implemented a standardised approach to internet filtering in early 2020, ensuring that the filtering rules are aligned to school year levels across all public schools in the ACT. This is to support the different educational needs of students as they progress through their academic career.
- Constant monitoring of security issues and potential threats is undertaken by DDTS ensure that the IT technology used in schools fully supports our students remaining safe online.

Cleared as complete and accurate: 05/10/2021

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Portfolio: Education and Youth Affairs

Cyber Security Management

Talking points:

- The ACT Education Directorate takes cyber security protection very seriously, having a risk based approach implementing, monitoring and improving security measures in accordance with the ACT Government Protective Security Policy Framework and the Cyber Security Policy.
- The Directorate employed a dedicated Security Officer in January 2021, who works closely with CMTEDD, Digital, Data and Technology Solutions (DDTS) Security Team to complete Security Assessments, execution of recommendations that are made by various reviews and ongoing monitoring.
- The security landscape is constantly evolving, which presents a challenge to the Directorate, however has been managed by understanding our environment; regularly reviewing technology risks with key partners. I implementing controls to treat the risks and manage the eSafety of our users and their information within our environment. This includes Personal Identifiable Information (PII) of our students.
- The COVID-19 pandemic lockdown, remote learning and remote working periods has significantly increased the need to digitalise the curriculum and the variety of digital tools being used in our classrooms, management of cybersecurity risks is progressively more complex.
- Security protection is the responsibility of all directorate staff and students, ACT Education manages a comprehensive eSafety program with staff and students to increase the digital literacy. The directorate has a dedicated eSafety officer who partners with the eSafety Commissioner and the AFP utilising the ThinkUKnow program.
- Security trends are monitored with appropriate actions, some of the latest trends include: disruption of essential services and critical infrastructure, ransomware, supply chains, business email compromise (BEC).
- Security reviews and updates are applied throughout the year, however, during these periods additional monitoring and adjustments has taken place, by the Directorate and suppliers, such as Google.
- Some of these security components that have been upgraded to assist staff to securely work from home and students to learn in a completely online

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environment. Includes extending the Contentkeeper web filtering system to the use of student Chromebooks at home. It also included Multi-Factor Authentication (MFA) for school staff accessing corporate systems such as the School Adminsitratin System.

- An ongoing program of work is undertaken by Digital Data and Technology Services (DDTS) and the Education Directorate to ensure that the Directorate's IT infrastructure remains safe, secure, and reliable. This program includes IT infrastructure that prevents cyber attacks; monitoring of system and log access; filtering of web address to block unauthorised access (a component of Contentkeeper); and conducting independent reviews of security.
- Any located threat is immediately reported to the EBM-DSST (CIO) for recording, mitigation analysis and ongoing monitoring.
- Reporting security risks to the Directorate Audit Committee and has recently commenced reporting quarterly to the Executive Governance Committee (EGC) on Cyber Security risks and mitigations.
- In mid-2020 the Directorate also implemented a collaborative Cyber Security and Risk Forum (CSRF) with DDTS that meets quarterly to consider: newly located security risks and issues, progress on mitigations for previously discovered security issues; software risk assessment; and ongoing proactive cyber security activities such as training and education.

Key Information

- Recent external reviews of the Directorate's IT infrastructure have included:
 - Foresight Pty Ltd reviewing the Office365 environment.
 - Foresight Pty Ltd reviewing the Google learning platform.
 - Foresight Pty Ltd conducting a penetration test on both the Office 365 and Google environments.
- The Directroate also has the following independent assessments currently underway:
 - A Privacy Impact Assessment of the Sentral Parent Portal and a
 - Penetration Test of the Sentral Parent Portal.
- ContentKeeper is a complex set of hardware and software that continuously monitors all network traffic on the schools' network as it unfolds to block unwanted and undesirable information. The 2020 extension to Contentkeeper allowed students using their Chromebook at home on their home network to be covered by equivalent monitoring.

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- Multi-Factor- Authentication (MFA) is an IT infrastructure that requests the user to enter a second authentication code that is sent to their mobile phone when they request a login. This stops someone who knows the password for another user from logging into that other users account as they should not have access to the other users' phone.
- DDTS have a team of staff dedicated to monitoring operational security as well as security trends that may cause a security issue for the Directorate. If something comes to their attention that requires action by the Directorate, it is immediately raised with the EBM-DSST (CIO) and entered into the Risk Register. Changes to the IT infrastructure are managed through the Education Change Advisory Board (CAB) and DDTS CAB processes.
- The Directorate's Cyber Security and Risk Forum (CSRF) monitors the completion of, Security Assessments, Security and Risk Management Plans, Business Application patching, Cloud Service activity (Cloud access security broker – CASB), recommendation actions from internal reviews, supplier reviews, external security reviews or penetration tests.
- The Directorate implemented a Change Advisory Board (CAB) to review and assure critical elements, such as security reviews and actions had been addressed prior system updates or system implementatios. Other elements are also validated including testing, user acceptance testing, technical impact assessments, business impact assessments and communicatons.

Cleared as complete and accurate: 05/10/2021
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Portfolio/s: Education and Youth Affairs

MENTAL HEALTH PROGRAMS

Talking points:

- Student wellbeing is a priority for all ACT Public Schools. Social-emotional wellbeing programs are rolled out, as part of the Australian Curriculum, to students in schools.
- All schools have student wellbeing teams which school psychologists are a key part. Student wellbeing teams in schools engage in service delivery using an early intervention and prevention model that aims to enhance students learning, engagement and wellbeing.
- School psychologists are part of a larger service offering in the ACT. If a student requires specialist input (such as to address an eating disorder), or the severity of the problem is such that input from a mental health professional is required then a referral is initiated. (Refer to **Brief 7.3 School Psychologists**)
- School psychologists are also able to help link families with other services, including community organisations. Information and links for these supports is available on the Directorate's website.
- Additionally, the Education Directorate has strong partnerships with community stakeholders to raise awareness on mental illness and promote help seeking behaviours.
- The Education Directorate has a robust suicide prevention strategy with programs rolled out to teachers, parents and students.

Key Information

- The Psychology Service also comprises of an Early Intervention Team that delivers group programs to young people in secondary schools.
- The focus of these groups has been building emotion regulation skills that promotes resilience. In 2020-21, these group programs included:
 - Chilled Skills - a group program for High School and College students aimed to increase participants' ability to cope with life's challenges.
 - ACT with HeART - a therapeutic group intervention program currently being piloted at CCCares for High School and College students in the mild to moderate range of psychological distress accessing alternative education settings.
 - Overcoming Anxious School Refusal (OASR) - a group parenting program for parents with students in Years 6 - 12 aimed at helping them increase their child's ability to cope with anxiety and decrease anxious school avoidance.

Cleared as complete and accurate: 05/10/2021
Cleared for public release by: Director-General Ext: 59158
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TRIM Ref: REC21/56863

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- Boundaries Without Conflict - a group parenting program for parents of students in Year 7 - 12, who experience complex and challenging behaviours.
- Flexible Minds - a program that helps teenagers in Years 7 - 12 to strengthen their skills in managing their emotions and achieving their goals.
- Additionally, Mental Illness Education ACT (MIEACT) works with schools to bring small audiences into direct positive contact with volunteer educators who share their stories of living with a mental illness.
- As part of the Directorate's suicide prevention strategy, programs available include: These programs include:
 - Applied Suicide Intervention Skills Training (ASIST) – provided to
 - Youth in Distress (assessment and safety planning for youth in distress) – provided to school psychologists
 - Youth Aware Mental Health (YAM) – aimed at Year 9 students
 - Question, Persuade, Refer (QPR) – available to parents to support their children if there are warning signs of suicide ideation.

Background Information

- School psychologists are part of a larger service offering in the ACT. There is strong collaboration and partnerships with community and government agencies that helps with prompt and timely referrals to agencies including:
 - ACT Mental Health;
 - Headspace ACT; and
 - ACT Child Development Service.
- Students presenting with the greatest risk factors (risk to self or others) are prioritised. All school psychologists have the required training in undertaking risk assessments that help establish safety for the student and others.
- During the COVID-19 pandemic, schools provided remote learning for students. During this time school psychologists were able to swiftly deploy a telehealth model to ensure psychological supports continued for students and their families.

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Portfolio: Education and Youth Affairs

MARGARET HENDRY SCHOOL

Note: Refer to Estimates **Briefs 1.14 Expansion of Margaret Hendry Primary School, 2.2 Future of Education and 8.2 Inquiry Based Learning**)

Talking points:

- Margaret Hendry is one of the ACT's newest schools (opened 2019).
- It currently **caters for 600 Kindergarten to year 6 students** in the suburbs of Taylor, Moncrieff and Casey in Gungahlin's north.
- Margaret Hendry is committed to providing all public school students equal access to the best education possible.
- The school has experienced higher than expected population growth with **246 students enrolled in 2019**, increasing to **486 in 2020** and **602 students in 2021**.
- During its first three years of operation, the school has faced the same challenges as other ACT Public Schools in responding to a pandemic, moving to accommodate the learning needs of its students while adhering to COVID-19 protocols introduced by the ACT Government.
- Margaret Hendry School's learning and teaching models are consistent with a broad range of ACT Public Schools, with a focus on student centred learning and student agency.
- Learning and teaching models in all ACT public schools are based on the Future of Education strategy and focus on student centred learning using multi-age classes and open spaces, both indoors and outdoors
- All ACT public schools deliver on the Australian Curriculum with a strong focus on literacy and numeracy skills.
- School teaching and learning methodologies at Margaret Hendry School are the same as those used across the entire ACT public school system. Pedagogy in ACT Public Schools is responsive to a child's need. Strategies employed include explicit teaching done via whole class learning, small group learning and one on one teaching.
- The focus is on making sure students get the help they need to learn and succeed.
- All ACT public schools are committed to a process of continuous review and improvement to ensure they offer high-quality educational outcomes for students. Our school improvement process is open and transparent and provides quality, independent feedback tailored to the individual school context.
- Each ACT public school has school improvement plans with support provided by the Directorate to implement them as part of a systematised approach to whole of system improvement for public schools.

Cleared as complete and accurate: 07/10/2021
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Background Information

- Enrolment growth at Margaret Hendry School has exceeded initial estimated growth during its three years of operation as well as responding to a pandemic, moving to accommodate the learning needs of its students.
- The school has a diverse and vibrant community with **48 language groups** identified not including English.
- All ACT Public Schools participate in a continuous improvement cycle, which also includes a School review conducted by the Australian Council for Educational Research (ACER).
- During Term 1, 2021 the school underwent an external School Review by ACER that reconfirmed areas of strength, but also areas of focus.
- The review is publicly available on the schools website.
- The Review commended the school on its establishment plan including their response to the impact of 2020.
- **The Review identified two areas to deepen its focus.** One key area of focus for the school following is around **deepening its academic focus on literacy**, including reading across the school.
- This includes continuing and deepening work around the *10 Essential Literacy Practices*, the evidence-based teaching strategy used across ACT Public Schools.
- Another focus will be on further **strengthening approaches to student wellbeing**, including behaviour management.
- The school is already working on further expanding and developing its Positive Behaviours for Learning program and this work will continue and be further strengthened.
- The Independent School Review will be used to inform the schools five-year School Improvement Plan which includes strong community consultation and engagement.

Parent and Community Engagement and Complaints Responsiveness

- The school, supported by the Education Directorate continues to work closely with the school community to understand and respond to any concerns which are raised by parents and carers.
- A series of community engagements were held at the school in May 2021 with consultations ongoing as the school developed its five-year School Improvement Plan.
- The school and Directorate has actively engaged with community and openly sought the views of parents and community.

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- Prior to the lockdown, in response to COVID-19 a number of different forums were provided to families to share any concerns including informal Coffee Cart Chats, guided school tours, a Community Conversation including individual supports and follow ups.
- Parent concerns are proactively case managed as they arise and the Directorate will continue to engage with any issues that students and parents raise.
- School Operations team are working proactively to ensure the school leaders have necessary supports in place for the return to on-campus learning in Term 4 2021.
- On Saturday 17 July 2021, the Canberra Times published an article around suspensions data (refer to [Attachment A](#)) released under Freedom of Information. (Refer to Estimates [Brief 7.6 Suspension Policy](#))

School expansion

- The 2021-22 budget has committed \$118 million for the expansion of Margaret Hendry Primary School and construct a new high school in Taylor, adjacent to the Margaret Hendry Primary School.
- The expansion of Margaret Hendry Primary School will be completed by the start of the 2023 school year to provide an additional 600 places for P-6 students.
- The high school will provide 800 permanent places for students in years 7 to 10 and is scheduled to open for the 2024 school year.

Student Id	Year	Date	Number of Days
		13/12/2019	2
		10/12/2019	3
		05/12/2019	1.5
		29/11/2019	3
		01/11/2019	3
		30/10/2019	1
		22/10/2019	2
		25/09/2019	1
		16/08/2019	3.5
		15/08/2019	1
		14/08/2019	1.5
		14/08/2019	2.5
		12/08/2019	1.5
		09/08/2019	2.5
		31/07/2019	3
		30/07/2019	2
		26/07/2019	1
		29/05/2019	2
		22/05/2019	2
		11/04/2019	2
		09/04/2019	1
		25/03/2019	3
		25/03/2019	4.5
		22/03/2019	1
		21/03/2019	1
		20/03/2019	5
		14/03/2019	3.5
		14/03/2019	3.5
		07/03/2019	1
		07/03/2019	1
		07/03/2019	1
		04/03/2019	2
		04/03/2019	2
		04/03/2019	2
		04/03/2019	2
		13/02/2019	1

Student Id	Year	Date	Number of Days
		15/12/2020	3
		07/12/2020	4
		03/12/2020	2
		03/12/2020	2
		03/12/2020	2
		02/12/2020	2
		01/12/2020	2
		27/11/2020	2
		27/11/2020	3
		23/11/2020	3
		20/11/2020	3
		20/11/2020	1
		18/11/2020	2
		18/11/2020	2
		17/11/2020	1
		05/11/2020	1
		05/11/2020	2
		04/11/2020	3
		04/11/2020	3
		29/10/2020	3
		28/10/2020	2
		28/10/2020	2.5
		26/10/2020	2
		26/10/2020	1
		26/10/2020	1
		26/10/2020	1.5
		25/09/2020	1
		25/09/2020	1.5
		22/09/2020	2
		21/09/2020	2
		10/09/2020	1.5
		03/09/2020	2
		31/08/2020	2
		28/08/2020	3
		27/08/2020	2
		27/08/2020	1
		20/08/2020	3
		17/08/2020	1.5
		17/08/2020	2
		17/08/2020	1.5
		14/08/2020	2
		12/08/2020	1
		12/08/2020	1
		11/08/2020	1.5
		11/08/2020	1
		07/08/2020	2
		07/08/2020	1
		06/08/2020	2
		31/07/2020	3
		30/07/2020	2
		30/07/2020	2
		29/07/2020	2
		29/07/2020	1
		28/07/2020	5.5
		27/07/2020	3

24/07/2020	2
22/07/2020	1.5
22/07/2020	1
20/07/2020	1
03/07/2020	1
02/07/2020	1
01/07/2020	2
01/07/2020	1
26/06/2020	2
26/06/2020	2
26/06/2020	2
24/06/2020	1
23/06/2020	2
18/06/2020	1
18/06/2020	1
11/06/2020	2
09/06/2020	4
05/06/2020	1
05/06/2020	1
04/06/2020	2
03/06/2020	2.5
29/05/2020	1
19/03/2020	2
19/03/2020	2
19/03/2020	2
16/03/2020	2
16/03/2020	2
16/03/2020	2
12/03/2020	2
12/03/2020	2
12/03/2020	2
12/03/2020	2
12/03/2020	1
05/03/2020	2
04/03/2020	3
19/02/2020	1.5
13/02/2020	2
11/02/2020	1

Student Id	Year	Date	Number of Days
		14/05/2021	1
		10/05/2021	3
		04/05/2021	5
		23/04/2021	1
		23/03/2021	3
		22/03/2021	2
		24/02/2021	1
		24/02/2021	3
		17/02/2021	2
		11/02/2021	1
		08/02/2021	4

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Portfolio/s: Education and Youth Affairs

INQUIRY BASED-LEARNING

Talking points:

- The ACT has a high performing public school system that gives children and young people a quality education.
- ACT public schools recognise that learning looks different for every student, with different learning styles, strengths and challenges required to succeed at school.
- All teachers in ACT public schools are guided by the same frameworks, training and resources for how teaching and learning happens within schools, so that every student benefits from the effective teaching methods.
- Inquiry-based learning is one of the teaching approaches and strategies used in ACT public schools. Some approaches are targeted and give more structure for learning, while other approaches are student-centred and focus on learning experiences.
- As a student-centred approach, inquiry-based learning requires students to learn through asking questions, determining way to answer questions, through research and experimentations, while developing problem solving and thinking skills.
- Teachers use a combination of different pedagogical approaches so that students gain both the knowledge and skills they need to think, create and work in an increasingly digital future.

Background

- While inquiry-based learning is student-centred, the teacher's role in the inquiry process is vital to ensure students' success in the learning. This includes explicitly teaching the inquiry process and the skills to engage in inquiry. Inquiry-based learning is used in conjunction with other approaches to ensure all students can learn and succeed at school, based on individual strengths and learning preferences.
- Some approaches are targeted and provide greater structure for learning. Some examples include:
 - Differentiated learning (targeted) – teaching is adjusted for a student's learning needs
 - Explicit instruction (targeted) – planned, teacher-directed learning on specific knowledge.
 - Structured lessons (targeted) – planned teaching and learning that reinforces routines and connects lesson and unit learning.

Cleared as complete and accurate: 05/10/2021
Cleared for public release by: Deputy Director-General Ext: 59158
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- Some approaches are student-centred and focus on learning experiences. Some examples include:
 - Inquiry based learning - students learn through asking questions and finding answers. Students may do project work or work on strategies to develop problem solving and thinking skills.
 - Collaborative learning (student-centred) – students working together to get a task done.
 - Personalised learning (student-centred)– adjusting learning to a student’s individual needs.
- Various learning areas of the **Australian Curriculum**, implemented by all ACT public schools, require students to develop inquiry skills in order to engage with curriculum content and meet achievement standards.
- The Education Directorate’s Enabling Pedagogies resource to support teachers development of teaching strategies provides evidence-based, high impact tools which support schools to improve student learning outcomes and deliver the school’s strategic priorities.
- Enabling Pedagogies promotes and supports targeted, explicit and scaffolded instruction for all students through differentiation, explicit instruction, response to individual need and carefully planned lesson structures. An inquiry-based learning approach does not replace these strategies but ensures that instruction is student-centred with opportunities for collaborative and personalised learning.
- The success of inquiry-based teaching approaches is dependent upon a range of factors including teacher experience, access to learning spaces, equipment and class readiness. When considered as a stand-alone approach, 2015 PISA showed a negative impact from inquiry pedagogies on 15-year old’s test results in Science. The ACT Education Directorate recommends a range of teaching strategies that best suit an individual school context. PISA (2015) also demonstrated that students who regularly engage in inquiry pedagogies hold stronger epistemic beliefs about science and are more likely to be in a science-related occupation at age 30 than those who are not exposed to inquiry pedagogies (OECD 2016).

Cleared as complete and accurate: 05/10/2021
Cleared for public release by: Deputy Director-General Ext: 59158
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TRIM Ref:

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Portfolio/s: Education and Youth Affairs

LANGUAGES IN SCHOOLS

Talking points:

- Languages is **one of the eight learning areas** delivered under the Australian Curriculum.
- ACT public schools can choose to deliver one of eight priority languages. These are: **French, German, Italian, Spanish, Mandarin, Indonesian, Japanese and Korean.**
- Decisions about the languages taught in individual schools are made by the Principal in consultation with the School Board and community.
- Schools may choose to offer more than one of the eight priority languages and, may also offer languages outside the eight identified priority languages.
- The Education Directorate is reviewing the delivery of languages in ACT public schools to ensure that languages continue to be implemented effectively across schools. The review will examine where and how languages are taught, the languages delivered and the provision of language pathways in ACT public schools.

Key Information

- There are currently a small number of ACT public schools that do not offer one of the eight priority languages. Reasons for this may include the inability to find teaching staff.
- In July 2021, the Directorate undertook a national, targeted recruitment drive to support these schools to engage languages teachers to deliver one of the eight priority languages. This recruitment process is ongoing.
- An ACT Languages Action Plan is currently nearing finalisation and will support schools and the ACT to continue to position language education as a valued and important part of the ACT's future economic, education and social fabric.
- The ACT Curriculum Policy and procedures mandate all ACT public schools to deliver a minimum of 60 minutes of language learning per week in year 3 to year 6; and 150 minutes per week, in years 7 to 8.

Background Information

- On 28 November 2018, a Motion was passed in the ACT Legislative Assembly. The resolution was to, 'develop an action plan to encourage, improve and support language education in Canberra Schools as a part of implementing the Future of Education Strategy'.
- The Directorate supports a number of language related initiatives including the provision of Language Teaching Assistants, support for language teachers through language networks and the support of Community Language Schools in the ACT.
- There are three schools in the ACT that provide bilingual education: Yarralumla Primary School studying Italian; Mawson Primary School studying Chinese; and Telopea Park School studying French.



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- The ACT has a strong and extensive Community Languages Network covering over **50 schools** and representing more than **30 languages**. The Education Directorate chairs the Community Languages Network and provides professional learning to the community language school teachers.
- The 2021 Language Census data informs the current status of languages in ACT public schools and provides information for future plans in languages delivery. Pathways documents are being updated to reflect language changes and projected pathways.

Cleared as complete and accurate: 06/10/2021
Cleared for public release by: Deputy Director-General Ext: 59158
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BUDGET ESTIMATES BRIEF

Portfolio: Education and Youth Affairs

POSITIVE BEHAVIOUR FOR LEARNING (PBL)

Note: Refer to Estimates [Brief 7.5 Occupational Violence and Complex Case Management](#)

Talking points:

- There are now **75 per cent** of **ACT public schools** in the process of Positive Behaviour for Learning (PBL) implementation, with all public schools planned to engage with PBL by the end of 2021.
- The ACT COVID-19 lockdown has had significant impact on the engagement and progression of schools with regards to PBL. In light of this setback it is planned that the PBL team will engage with the remaining 25% of ACT public schools during the remainder of 2021 and into 2022.
- Each school's implementation timeframe is unique and dependent on school context and setting. The Directorate actively supports each school through the stages of implementation.
- It is the expectation all schools will implement PBL. The Directorate is currently working through context-specific circumstances to meet the needs of some settings (for example, colleges).
- The PBL program is an international evidence-based approach for creating safe and supportive schools. Since the beginning of 2016, the ACT Education Directorate has had a PBL implementation team to support schools.
- The Research School of Psychology (ANU) has found that students in schools implementing the (PBL) program have overall better outcomes than students in non PBL schools.
- Improvements in PBL schools over non-PBL schools included lower depression, greater positive affect, greater emotional engagement, greater behavioural engagement, greater perceived support and safety, and greater school identification.
- Further, the research found that conducting PBL with high fidelity to the program had a greater protective effect on students.

Key Information

- Implementation of all three tiers of PBL (i.e. universal, selected, and targeted interventions) takes several years.
- PBL External Coaches provide shoulder to shoulder support for ACT Public Schools, through training and resources for each schools PBL team as well as information sessions for other internal stakeholders.
- The ANU study was conducted as part of ongoing cooperative research work program between ANU Research School of Psychology and the Education Directorate, in an effort to contribute to evidence-based decision making.

Cleared as complete and accurate: 05/10/2021
Cleared for public release by: Director-General Ext: 59158
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TRIM Ref: REC21/56846

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- The analysis compared six schools in which the PBL program had been fully implemented with six non-PBL schools. The schools were matched on school ICSEA, staff retention rate and student enrolments, and the research controlled for student demographic variables such as age and gender.
- The measures of student outcomes were collected through the School Satisfaction and Climate Survey and so were independent of the implementation of the PBL program. This lends weight to the conclusions.
- There was improvement in PBL compared to non-PBL schools in the following measures:
 - Emotional engagement
 - Behavioural engagement
 - Perceived support and safety
 - Anxiety
 - Depression
 - Positive affect
- These improvements were strongest in years 1 and 2 of the PBL program.
- The implementation of PBL did lead to increases in school identification when compared to non-PBL schools.
- The research found that PBL needs to be applied with high fidelity to be most effective.

Background Information

- The main components of the PBL program involve creating clear behavioural expectations for students, teaching these behaviours, reinforcing students who manifest these behaviours, and adjusting interventions based on data from that school. PBL is based on three tiers of interventions, with the first tier being a general (or universal) prevention program employed with all students in school. The second and third tiers are more specialised, with interventions aimed at students who are not responsive to the first-tier intervention (Horner et al., 2009).
- While every school may have its own unique set of behavioural expectations, these are put forward and promoted in a systematic way via the PBL framework. As a school-wide framework, it is applied consistently to the entire school, across all contexts (courses and free periods) and students.
- Data plays a critical role in initial implementation and ongoing monitoring of the PBL framework at both a school and system level. The data draws on multiple sources including School Review, assessment and reporting and a range of staff and student wellbeing indicators.
- The triangulation and overlay of a range of different data provides depth to the analysis and enhance the capacity of the team to provide differentiated approaches to schools.

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Portfolio/s: Education and Youth Affairs

Use of Technology in Schools

Note: Refer to **Budget Estimates Brief 1.1 Digital Access and Equity**

Talking Points:

- The ACT Government has delivered against the 2016 election commitment (Technology Enabled Learning [TEL]) to provide every ACT public high school and college student with access to a device since February 2018.
- \$18,8 million was committed to the four-year program in the 2017-18 ACT Budget.
- The TEL program is a voluntary program, with some families electing to Bring Your Own Device (BYOD) or not participate. Currently the participation rates in high schools are around 95%, and around 82% in colleges.
- The BYOD policy allows students to bring their own device to school to assist with their learning.
- Implementing the BYOD policy is a school-based decision made in consultation with the community, and implementation varies between schools.

Chromebooks for High School and College students

- **22,000 Chromebooks** have been distributed to ACT public school secondary students, of which over 3,300 were distributed in February 2021 to new year 7 secondary students and new students who have joined years 8, 9,10, 11 or 12.
- The secondary student device refresh began on 19 April 2021 and was completed by the end of June 2021, refreshing 8,295 secondary student devices which were provided as part of the first rollout in 2018.
- Feedback from students and schools regarding the rollout, support and new devices has been positive.

Chromebooks for primary school students

- **13,500 Chromebooks** were distributed to ACT public primary school students. The ACT Government provides primary schools with shared Chromebooks at **one device per three students ratio**.
- In August 2021, 2,332 Chromebooks were distributed to refresh primary school devices to maintain the ratio.

COVID-19 lockdown responses

- During ACT's COVID-19 lockdown that commenced on 12 August 2021, ACT public schools were able to shift quickly to support remote learning during Term 3, 2021.
 - Secondary students were well positioned for this as they already had access to a Chromebook device through the Technology Enabled Learning (TEL) Program. Over 300 secondary students continued to utilise free internet support since the 2020 lockdown response to enable their learning.

BUDGET ESTIMATES BRIEF

- Primary schools were also well positioned due to the recent refresh of 2,332 in August of Chromebook devices with 13,500 devices already available to primary students.
- During home learning and the remote learning period in August 2021, the ACT Government has **loaned a further 2,110 devices to schools for year 4 to year 6 students to support their learning over this period**. These devices will be returned to the school, following the return to on campus learning.
- ACT Education also provided an additional **989 internet support** to students and teachers as required.
- In 2020, during the first COVID-19 lockdown period, ACT public schools were able to shift quickly to support remote learning for Term 2, 2020.
 - Secondary students were well positioned for this as they already had access to a TEL device.
 - The ACT Government supplied devices to 11,000 year 4 to year 6 students to support their learning over this period. These devices were returned to the school, following the return to on campus learning.
 - Over 600 internet dongles and sim cards were provided to families to ensure they had connection to the internet to support remote learning.

Key Information

Devices in Schools/Personal Electronic Devices (including mobile phones)

- The Bring Your Own Device (BYOD) policy states that students may bring personal electronic devices (PEDs) to school to support their learning.
- The BYOD policy was developed over two years with extensive consultation with school staff, parents and interested community organisations.
- The policy provides recommendations to schools of what should be addressed as part of the parent and community consultation, including equity, diversity of devices, privacy, security and other local community needs.
- Schools who have implemented the BYOD policy hosted information forums for families and the broader community to provide input on implementation.
- The policy aligns with the Australian Curriculum, which requires students to understand how to independently select and operate various devices that they can personalise to assist in their learning.

Learn, Anywhere - student use of ICT

- The *ACT Learn, Anywhere* program provides a framework for schools, students and families to utilise ICT tools and services in education.
- The *Digital Backpack* is a simple entry point for students and teachers to access online tools which will aid their learning.
- Cloud services, such as *Google G Suite* and *Microsoft Office 365*, are accessible through the Backpack, as well as access to resources on cyber safety.

Cleared as complete and accurate: 05/10/2021
 Cleared for public release by: Director-General Ext: 59158
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 TRIM Ref: REC21/56840

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- A School Education Advisory Committee was established to provide recommendations to the Minister regarding the implementation of the *TEL program*.
- ACT public schools have access to a secure and high-speed network, with among the best speeds in Australia. Internet traffic is filtered to ensure that student accessed content is appropriate and safe.
- To enable students to successfully operate as digital citizens they are required to read, understand and sign the ACT schools Acceptable Use of ICT Policy. If they contravene this, they will be appropriately counselled by their school.
- ACT applies Australian Curriculum standards to embed ICT across the curriculum; this includes digital citizenship and safe behaviours in the use of technology.

BUDGET ESTIMATES BRIEF

Portfolio: Education and Youth Affairs

TEACHER LIBRARIANS

Note: Refer to Estimates Hearing Brief: [1.9 More Teacher Librarians](#)

Talking points:

- In the **2020-21 ACT Budget**, the ACT Government provided funding for the Masters of Education (teacher librarian) scholarships. This initiative supports **10 scholarships per year until 2024**.
- The scholarships will help support future growth in the number of teacher librarians.
- A qualified teacher librarian supports the delivery of the curriculum at a student, classroom and school level by enhancing digital, information and critical literacy skills, resourcing the curriculum and helping students become critical, creative and collaborative thinkers.
- Teacher librarian scholarships were made available to ACT public school teachers from early 2021.
- **Ten scholarship applications** were received in the first round of scholarships. The Teacher Librarian Scholarship Committee met on 2 March 2021. The Committee **approved six (6) scholarships** for ACT teachers to commence their **studies in Semester 2, 2021**.
- The next round of Teacher Librarian Scholarships opened 10 September 2021, for studies commencing in 2022.

Background Information

- The ACT Government has significantly invested in providing Information Technology for ACT Public Schools; ensuring that students and teachers have the tools required for 21st Century learning.
- An increase in teacher librarians will strengthen the learning supports available to teachers and students in assisting accessing and evaluating information, supporting access to a school's library resources and facilitating cooperative planning and teaching
- As at June 2021, there are 36 qualified teacher librarians employed in ACT public schools as teacher librarians. Fifteen (15) teachers work fulltime and 21 teachers work partime.
- Thirteen (13) out of 90 ACT public schools employ a full time qualified teacher librarian, and 19 schools employ a part time qualified teacher librarian. Two schools have qualified teacher librarian staff not working in the library.
- teachers are studying towards a Teacher Librarian qualification whilst currently working in the role. of these were awarded a recent scholarship in April 2021.
- Schools without a qualified teacher librarian have appointed classroom teachers, executive staff or administrative staff to manage their libraries either as a full-time

Cleared as complete and accurate: 06/10/2021
Cleared for public release by: Deputy Director-General Ext: 59158
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or part-time arrangement. ■ administrative staff have library qualifications and some schools have volunteers to support their library. Ten schools do not have a dedicated staff member in their library.

- Teacher Librarian qualifications are varied and include:
 - Master of Education (Teacher Librarianship)
 - Master of Information Studies with a Specialisation in Children’s Library
 - Master of Information Services Teacher Librarianship
 - Master of Applied Science in Teacher Librarianship
 - Graduate Diploma in Teacher Librarianship
 - Graduate Diploma in Library and Information Services
 - Graduate Diploma in Library and Information Science
 - Graduate Certificate in Information Studies
 - Diploma of Library Service.

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Portfolio/s: Education and Youth Affairs

ACCESSIBILITY AND INCLUSION

Refer to Estimates **Brief 01.2 – Disability Education Review**

Talking Points

Investment

- The ACT Government has committed \$450,000 over the next two years to work with young people with disability, their families, and the broader community to review how public schools deliver inclusive education.
- This consultation, “*A Community Conversation*” will inform planning for the **modernisation of ACT specialist schools** in the city’s north and an **Inclusive Education Strategy** with a detailed implementation plan.
- It will build on the extensive consultations already undertaken to ensure students with disabilities, their families and carers, as well as the broader ACT community are engaged in the reform program needed to ensure all students have the option to access high quality education and care at their local school.
- This project will aim to engage with groups in our community whose views and experiences may not have been heard strongly in previous consultation.
- We particularly want to hear the views of young people with disability, including current and former students. Families, caregivers and advocates will also be consulted to provide us with a foundation for strengthening inclusive education in the ACT.
- We are not starting from scratch, rather using the review to bring together and add to the information we have previously gathered to strengthen our system recognising “we’re not there yet”.
- The consultation will explore what Inclusive Education could look like in the ACT Public School System and enable coordinated and systematic reform through the development of an inclusion strategy- a policy framework and roadmap with a long-term vision.

Current practice

- The ACT Government is committed to delivering inclusive, equitable education.
- All schools are obliged to provide an environment where a universal sense of belonging is fostered for all students.
- Inclusion means embracing diversity in all its forms, as well as proactively ensuring students with disability and their families are included in a way which suits them.
- The ACT Government is investing in strengthening the capability of every school to respond to the diversity of individual student needs and behaviours. This commitment is reflected in the policies and procedures that drive and guide practice in our schools to ensure safe, supportive and inclusive environments.

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- ACT public schools use contemporary and holistic models of student wellbeing that draws on the expertise of professionals across a range of disciplines to meet the specific needs of individual students.
- All ACT public schools are obliged to provide reasonable adjustments to meet the needs of individual students.
- The ACT Government has invested in the development of safe and inclusive environments in ACT public schools. These infrastructure improvements are made to increase the accessibility of school sites for all students and improve the provision of inclusive education programs.
- These works are centred on the needs of individual students via recommendations from allied health experts and are underpinned by the principles of universal design outlined in the Education Directorate's Infrastructure Specification (EDIS). Universal design focuses on creating an environment that promotes inclusion.
- This includes initiatives such as;
 - **Flexible classroom spaces** with works done to enable adjacent small group learning areas – allowing small groups to work seamlessly with mainstream class to maximise the inclusion of students with disability;
 - **Quiet rooms and withdrawal spaces** where students can meet with a teacher or self-regulate;
 - **Sensory gardens, outdoor courtyards and playgrounds** to ensure everyone can enjoy an outdoor area with a range of sensory experiences; and
 - **Disability access compliance**, including automatic doors and ramps, and accessible toilets.

Programs and supports

- The February 2021 census shows **2,674 students** in ACT public schools **accessing inclusive education programs and services**.
- In partnership with students, parents, carers and other professionals, schools make reasonable adjustments for students with disability at the time of their enrolment and during the course of their education, supporting them to access and participate in the school curriculum, programs and activities on the same basis as their peers.
- The Education Directorate provides a range of programs and supports for schools and students with disability from preschool to year 12. Student support teams, with input from the school psychologist work with parents and carers to understand and support students' education needs and the necessary adjustments to support learning and engagement.
- The school psychologist will support parents to consider the range of eligible programs and supports. Families have input into selecting from the eligible programs either at their local Priority Enrolment Area (PEA) school, enrolment at an eligible Specialist School, or through a centralised placements process.

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Background:

- All ACT schools are required to adhere to legislation as set out in the *Disability Standards for Education 2005* and *Disability Discrimination Act 1991*.
- These both seek to ensure people with a disability have access to equal participation in education on the same basis as those without disability. All ACT public schools are required to consult with parents to understand their child's educational needs and the adjustments required to support the student.
- ACT public schools are also required to apply reasonable adjustments to enable students with a disability to take part in education on the same basis as other students. Adjustments may be made in areas of the curriculum, environment and/or teaching methods and will vary according to the individual student.
- All educational infrastructure projects constructed for the ACT Government, including new schools, are completed in line with the Education Directorate's Infrastructure Specification (EDIS) brief. The EDIS has been developed with input from education and design experts and ensures that educational infrastructure projects are guided by the following set of principles:
 - **Education Principles** - the Directorate's vision, values and priorities guide the design of all aspects of education—pedagogy, curriculum, professional learning, school organisation, leadership, inclusion, wellbeing, cultural integrity and engagement with community.
 - **Education Facilities Design Principles** - capturing the implications of the education principles for the design of facilities.
 - **Universal Design Principles** - the design of products and environments to be usable by all people, to the greatest extent possible, without the need for adaptation or specialised design.
 - **Cultural Integrity** - the capture and inclusion in the design of the connection to the local Ngunnawal Country.
 - **Sustainable Design Principles** - create sustainable education environments, comprised of architecture, landscape, transport, linkages to broader networks and infrastructure that are low carbon, water sensitive and resource efficient in both construction and operation.
 - **Architectural, Urban Planning and Master Planning Principles.**

BUDGET ESTIMATES BRIEF

Portfolio: Education and Youth Affairs

FINANCIAL LITERACY

Talking points:

- The ACT Public School system has a strong record of teaching financial literacy.
- Financial literacy is an element of the Australian Curriculum and is separate to school banking.
- Financial capability education in schools continues to be an important focus for the ACT Education Directorate.
- To support this focus, the Directorate has collaborated with the Australian Securities and Investments Commission (ASIC) to establish the Moneysmart Accreditation Program.
- The Program provides curriculum resources and professional learning for our teachers.
- The Program's Kindergarten to Year 10 component aligns to the Australian Curriculum and National Financial Literacy Strategy.
- The senior secondary component prepares young adults with the financial capability skills required in adulthood.
- A pilot of the Moneysmart Accreditation Program was planned to run from July 2021 to June 2022 but has subsequently been placed on hold due to COVID-19. Timeframes for the pilot program will be adjusted to commence in 2022.
- The Education Directorate continues to support schools in delivering financial capability education during remote learning.
- ACT Public Schools have transitioned away from school banking programs with all programs ceasing by the end of Term 2, 2021.
- This process of ceasing school banking programs has been sensitive to the needs of every school community and honoured the great work of volunteers working in our schools.

Key Information

- In response to the Financial Literacy Education and School Banking Programs resolution passed on Wednesday, 10 February 2021, the Resolution called on the ACT Government to:
 - a. Continue to work with students, the ACT Council of Parents and Citizens Association, the Australian Education Union, and the ACT Principals' Association to develop a plan to deliver quality financial literacy education in public schools; and
 - b. Transition away from banks and financial institutions delivering school banking programs in ACT Government Schools by the end of the 2020-2021 financial year.
- **Participation of ACT public school students in school banking programs had decreased significantly, from 19% of all ACT K-6 public school students in 2018, to 7% in 2020.**

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- The majority of school banking programs that operated in ACT public schools were managed by school parents and citizens associations (P&Cs). School banking provides revenue paid from providers to P&Cs or schools participating in a school banking program:
 - In 2018, \$36,000 was provided to P&Cs or schools.
 - In 2020, it is estimated that **no more than \$20,000** was provided to P&Cs or schools.
- Feedback from P&Cs and schools reported a decrease in student participation in school banking programs for the following reason/s:
 - parents choosing to withdraw their child from the program due to negative public attention and mistrust in school banking programs.
 - Principals and P&Cs choosing to no longer offer a school banking program at their school.
 - Lower participation following the remote learning period.
 - Lack of parent volunteers willing to run the program.
- 42 schools ceased school banking between 2018 and early 2021.
- Before programs ceased, school banking was being offered in 12 ACT public schools. These schools implemented a transition plan to cease school banking by the end of Term 2, 2021.
- The Directorate supported schools to cease school banking programs by:
 - communicating to school communities (school newsletter and frequently asked questions fact sheet)
 - promoting ASIC's *MoneySmart for Consumers and Investors* and *MoneySmart for Schools* resources
 - canvassing schools to ascertain and action 'one to one' support as requested
 - partnering with ASIC to formalise and extend the work ACT schools already do in Financial Literacy Education.

Background Information

- ASIC's *Review of School Banking Programs* was released on 15 December 2020.
- On 29 November 2020, Victoria announced that school banking programs would be banned in Victorian government schools from Term 1, 2021.
- On 10 February 2021, the ACT Government supported an Assembly motion put forward by ACT Greens MLA, Johnathan Davies to transition ACT Public Schools away from school banking programs. The Assembly Resolution is supported by:
 - the Royal Commission into Misconduct in the Banking, Superannuation and Financial Services Industry (the Royal Commission); and
- Australian Securities and Investments Commission's (ASIC) *Review of School Banking Programs* released on 15 December 2020 (ASIC's review).



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- School banking programs have been considered recently through the Review of School Banking Programs commissioned by ASIC. Following the Review, ASIC reported that school banking providers could not provide sufficient evidence that their programs resulted in financial capability outcomes.
- The value school communities placed on school banking programs varied, and the decision to offer these programs was at the discretion of individual schools. Student participation in the program run at the schools was approved by their families.

Cleared as complete and accurate: 05/10/2021
Cleared for public release by: Deputy Director-General Ext: 59158
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Portfolio: Education and Youth Affairs

PRINCIPAL HEALTH AND WELLBEING

Talking points:

- The Directorate has a strong focus on principal health and wellbeing which is evidenced in our partnership with ACT Principals Association (ACTPA) and in the implementation of a Principal Health and Wellbeing Plan (the Plan) for ACT School Leaders.
- The Plan delivers a range of immediate, short and long term initiatives to support the focus on principal health and wellbeing.
- The Directorate, through regular engagement with ACTPA, developed a workplan which recognises the inextricable linkages between principal health and wellbeing work, Education Support Office (ESO) business improvement, service standards, leadership capability and enterprise skill development.
- The nine recommendations of the Plan support health and wellbeing by investing in principal capability and efficacy which translates into increased job satisfaction and means principals are better equipped and skilled in executing their roles.
- The implementation of the Plan is continuously assessed by the Directorate and ACTPA through a series of workshops.
- The Directorate has received advice and input from national and international experts to ensure principal health and wellbeing is prioritised for our system.
- The impact of COVID-19 connected School Improvement Group with the expert advice of Carol Mutch, Professor of Critical Studies in Education in the Faculty of Education and Social Work from the University of Auckland and UNESCO Advisor on Education Post Disasters. Her advice impacted on how we support School Leaders as a system through these challenging times and ensured Directors of School Improvement tailored their approaches to support principal wellbeing.
- Principal Health and Wellbeing is an ongoing priority and focus, given the impact of world events on society and the critical role our schools play in supporting students and parents in these difficult times.
- The Directorate supports principal health and wellbeing through a number of programs that include:
 - Principal Coaching and Mentoring Program –developing a workforce of highly capable school leaders who are supported at all stages of their career.
 - Post Incident Support Model for Principals and Deputy Principals -provides differentiated and tailored physical and psychosocial wellbeing supports for school leaders when responding to critical incidents.
 - Early Career Principals Program – delivers a series of collaborate and connect engagement opportunities, enterprise skills and leadership development for principals in their first three years.

Cleared as complete and accurate: 06/10/2021

Cleared for public release by: Director-General

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- Complaints Management Reform – reforms includes working with school leaders as they respond to complaints.
- Complex Case Support – coordination of ESO and inter-agency supports to ensure a joined up approach to managing complex situations.
- Increased support from the Directorate for schools in incident management capability including post incident support – strategic and operational management of incidents.
- Term calendar of Key Dates for Principals – ensures alignment of ESO contact with schools as part of the business cycle alignment and reform.
- School and Principal focused design and delivery via ConnectED and Service Portal – delivers accessible information for school based staff that is easy to navigate
- Business cycle alignment and reform – ESO, working with Principals to streamline processes, information and supports around the school business cycle. This work further aligns the delivery of financial information and enrolment projections to Principals to ensure they have the information they need at the right time to guide their Performance and Development conversations with staff.
- Work Health and Safety and Occupational Violence support team

Key Information

- Principal Health and Wellbeing is acknowledged by the Directorate as an important contributor to retaining and developing high-quality school leaders and positive impact for school improvement.
- Principal Health and Wellbeing is a key improvement strategy as part of the *Empowered Learning Professionals Leadership Plan 2018-2021* designed to support job confidence and satisfaction.
- In 2021, a **Post Incident Support Model** has been delivered for school leaders with a specific Employee Assistance Program to provide leaders with the personal support required over a period following a critical incident. The Model delivers on Key Improvement Strategy Four of the *Empowered Learning Professionals Leadership Plan 2018-21* as well as Recommendation Eight of the *ACT Principals Association Principal Wellbeing* report.
 - The service offers differentiated and tailored physical and psychosocial wellbeing supports for School Leaders and Education Support Office senior leaders when responding to critical incidents in school environments or support for intervention strategies for schools experiencing cumulative incidents or issues.
- School Operations team **provides strategic and operational management of incidents** and proactive support to principals and school leaders. The team does this by using multiple sources of evidence to manage incidents and monitor the functional health of schools. This approach means the team has a comprehensive picture of schools and their climate.

Cleared as complete and accurate: 06/10/2021

Cleared for public release by: Director-General

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- **Principal Coaching and Mentoring (PCM) Program** delivers on the third phase of the *Empowered Learning Professionals Leadership Plan 2018-2021* to support principals at all stages of their careers. The coach mentors work alongside the supervisory support and feedback from a Director of School Improvement, creating a strengths-based approach to principal development while ensuring high levels of principal agency.
 - A panel of 14 principal coach mentors was formed at the start of 2021. To date, the program has supported 12 acting principals, [REDACTED] principals in the first year of their appointment and a further [REDACTED] principals who have requested personalised support from a coach mentor.
 - The coach mentors ensure a focus on:
 - Strengthening a collaborative and reflective culture of improvement with a focus on coaching and differentiated support
 - Building the capacity of teachers and leaders to deepen learning; and
 - Support and strengthen leadership wellbeing.
 - The PCM Program deepens work across the Directorate in developing a workforce of highly capable school leaders who are supported at each stage and for all aspects of their career.
 - PCM is a 14-month trial with program funding directed to school staffing allocations for both the coach mentor and the principal being coached. This is calculated according to the type of coaching engagement. The funding provides backfill for the participating coach mentor and principal, allowing them to privilege their time together. To date, the program engagements have totalled \$6,499, representing 86 hours of funded program time.

Background Information

- The Principal Health and Wellbeing Plan was launched in October 2018 with nine recommendations and is aimed at increasing the focus on the mental and physical wellbeing of our principals and to instigate cultural change more broadly.
- The plan has been shaped by our own work with Principals in the ACT as well as the *Australian Principal Occupational Health, Safety and wellbeing Survey Report (2019)* by Philip Riley and Sioau-Mai See and addresses recommendations in the ACTPA report on *Principal Wellbeing in ACT Public Schools Report*.
- *The Empowered Learning Professionals Leadership Plan 2018-2021 (ELPLP)* ensures principal health and wellbeing is a key component of professional conversations with leaders at all levels.
- Phases one and two of the *Empowered Learning Professionals Leadership Plan* provided universal support with an investment in laying the foundations for a system approach to strengthening leadership at all levels bringing coherence and clarity to the capability development of school leadership teams.



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- Phase three aims to deepen work across the Directorate to develop a workforce of highly capable school leaders who are supported at each stage and for all aspects of their career.

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Cleared for public release by: Director-General Ext: 59158
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BUDGET ESTIMATES BRIEF

Portfolio/s: Education and Youth Affairs

AEU SURVEY AND TEACHER SHORTAGE TASKFORCE

Note: refer to Budget Estimates Brief **09.3 Education Directorate Workforce Strategy**

Talking points:

- Every ACT public school is a great school and our teaching workforce is the cornerstone of that. We know that, outside of their own homes, teachers are the most important factor in determining the quality of a child's education.
- We also know that Australia is currently experiencing a nation-wide teacher shortage and this is having impacts in the ACT.
- On 30 August 2021, the ACT Government announced the establishment of a Teacher Shortage Taskforce (Taskforce) for ACT public schools.
- The ACT Government, through the ACT Education Directorate, is working collaboratively with the Australian Education Union (ACT Branch) (AEU) to progress the important work of this Taskforce.
- The Taskforce is meeting fortnightly to discuss and progress development and implementation of tangible actions and initiatives with immediate, medium and long-term impacts, making a difference to the quality of life of staff members by the end of the year.
- Three meetings have been held on the 2 and 22 September 2021 and 7 October 2021.
- The Taskforce have finalised the following key actions from the meetings:
 - Agreement on the Terms of Reference for the Taskforce,
 - Finalised drafted advice on Learning Support Assistants and Student Supervision for publication,
 - Agreement on the EDU Staff Exit Survey for implementation in Term 4, 2021, and
 - Development of the reporting questions and regularity for splitting and cancelling classes to be implemented following return to onsite learning.
- Further, the Teacher Shortage Taskforce Workplan has been developed and agreed that provides the framework for the immediate and medium-term work program ongoing. This ranges from the key actions listed above to those arising from a review of recruitment related procedures, steps to address immediate workload management concerns, and work, healthy safety and wellbeing supports.

Key Information

- The Taskforce is drawing upon the findings of the recently released AEU 2021 Educator Survey and work already underway in the Education Directorate to scope

Cleared as complete and accurate: 05/10/2021
Cleared for public release by: Executive Group Manager Ext:
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TRIM Ref: FILE2021/436

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its future workforce, implement a whole of system workforce approach and assist each ACT public school to develop its own workforce plan.

- At present, we have sufficient teachers to meet core requirements but we experience pressure points in some schools due to workforce supply shortages.
- It is also important to note that our system is growing. Public school enrolment has increased by 31% from 2010 to 2020. To meet this increased demand, the number of permanent teachers employed by the Education Directorate has increased by 25.2%.

Background Information

- The Taskforce is made up of representatives from the Education Directorate and the AEU. The Taskforce is considering a range of issues relating to the teacher shortage, including:
 - attraction and retention processes for the teaching workforce,
 - teacher and school leader recruitment processes,
 - covering staff absences,
 - how we utilise our existing workforce and ensure equity across the system,
 - continuity of education (including the practice of splitting classes).
- It will also seek to gather more information about the teacher shortage locally, including existing or ongoing measures being used to address teacher shortages in individual schools. The Taskforce will make findings based on the information gathered and prepare recommendations on the best way for the ACT Government to address the shortage and manage its impacts.
- The Taskforce is expected to complete its work and provide a report to Government by the end of Term 1, 2022.
- The Taskforce will also have the capacity to seek the engagement of other stakeholders, including the Teacher Quality Institute, teacher education providers and relevant experts.
- While the Taskforce is undertaking this important work, the Education Directorate will continue to conduct targeted and strategic recruitment campaigns of teachers and education professionals for the growing ACT public school system.

BUDGET ESTIMATES BRIEF

Portfolio/s: Education and Youth Affairs

EDUCATION DIRECTORATE WORKFORCE STRATEGY

Note: Refer to Estimates Hearing Brief [09.2 AEU Survey and Teacher Shortage Taskforce](#).

Talking points:

- In March 2021, the ACT Government launched the *EDU Workforce Strategy 2021-23* (Workforce Strategy) which will make sure that we have the right workforce, with the right capabilities, in the right capacity, at the right time to deliver learning outcomes for children and young people in the ACT.
- The Workforce Strategy has been designed to deliver improved planning of workforce requirements, participation, and student learning outcomes through an integrated and evidence-based workforce planning framework.
- It provides a shared vision for the workforce that aligns our strategic priorities and drives the capability of our people to deliver learning outcomes.
- The **Workforce Strategy is underpinned by six focus** areas that will shape and drive actions across a three-year horizon:
 1. Strategic recruitment of teachers and education professionals to meet current and emerging needs,
 2. Evidence-driven and integrated workforce planning to enable our service delivery model,
 3. A highly capable, skilled and future-focused workforce,
 4. Leadership excellence and development at all levels,
 5. Workforce Safety and Wellbeing, and
 6. A diverse and inclusive workforce to reflect the communities we serve.
- Classroom teacher staffing and workforce continue to be a key challenge across the ACT public school system at a national level.
- Given this, the Education Directorate has accelerated the delivery of projects identified in the Workforce Strategy to respond to current and emerging workforce challenges, specifically staffing and workforce planning over the next 12 months.
- The Workforce Strategy Projects have and will continue to deliver the following supports and outputs from Term 3, 2021:
 - a dedicated recruitment hotline and support staff to assist schools with immediate staffing requirements/placements, including optimising the use of casual relief staff,
 - development of a comprehensive strategic recruitment and marketing framework to support attraction of teachers,

Cleared as complete and accurate: 05/10/2021
Cleared for public release by: Executive Group Manager Ext: 75716
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TRIM Ref: FILE2021/3889

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- the Human Resource and Finance Project Team (Project Team) will assist schools to review and validate their individual staffing profile alongside their staffing allocation to develop a School Workforce Profile, and
- the Project Team will identify workforce gaps and needs in the school using the profile and will co-design the School Workforce Plan with the Principal which outlines critical actions to enable effective workforce management and planning at a school and system level.

Teacher shortages

- On 30 August 2021, the ACT Government announced the establishment of joint taskforce with the Australian Education Union (AEU) to help address teacher shortages to ensure that our public education system can continue to provide world class education for Canberra families.

related to Estimate Hearing Brief 9.2 AEU Survey and Teacher Shortage Taskforce

- The inaugural meeting Teacher Shortage Taskforce took place on 2 September 2021 and is meeting fortnightly.

Key Information:

- Currently, the ACT is experiencing ongoing demand for casual, temporary and permanent classroom teachers across all sectors and all teaching specialisations with the greatest area of need being Disability Educators.
- The ACT is actively pursuing various short-term and long-term strategies in response to resource challenges, including:
 - National recruitment campaigns for Primary and Secondary Teachers (all specialisations) including a targeted push into New Zealand,
 - National recruitment campaign for graduating classroom teachers,
 - Participation in Careers Expos and ad hoc sessions with University of Canberra (UC), Australian Catholic University (ACU) and others,
 - Implementation of Accredited Sponsorship status by Australian Government, Department of Home Affairs for visa sponsorship of workers already in Australia, and
 - Engagement with Universities across Australia offering teaching qualifications.
- The Directorate has and will continue to work collaboratively with Principals in the development and implementation of these projects. This engagement will be undertaken primarily through the Teacher Transfer Principal Reference Group, as well as through other existing forums to allow for broad consultation and to gain a deeper understanding of the different needs of individual schools.

Cleared as complete and accurate: 05/10/2021
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Lead Directorate: Education
TRIM Ref: FILE2021/3889

BUDGET ESTIMATES BRIEF

Portfolio: Education and Youth Affairs

AUDITOR-GENERAL REPORT TEACHER QUALITY

Talking points:

- During 2020, the ACT Audit Office commenced an Audit into teaching quality in ACT public schools. The Auditor-General's 'Teacher Quality in ACT Public Schools' audit focused on assessing the effectiveness of the Education Directorate's strategies and activities to improve the quality of teaching practices in ACT public schools.
- The Auditor-General's Report No. 6/2021 'Teaching Quality in ACT public schools' (the Report) was tabled in the ACT Legislative Assembly on 23 June 2021. **The Report made 14 recommendations.**
- The ACT Government will table a Government Response to the Report once it has fully considered the recommendations.
- The Report acknowledges the significant work of the ACT Government in prioritising and improving the quality of teaching practices across ACT public schools.
- In particular, the report notes: "The Education Directorate recognises the importance of improving teaching quality for the purpose of enhancing student performance. Since 2014, strategic planning and government-led initiatives have identified priorities to improve the quality of teaching practices across ACT public schools."
- The ACT Government is committed to supporting opportunities for the continuous improvement of teaching professional practice, which is critical for positive student outcomes.
- The Education Directorate provides professional learning and ongoing support to its teaching workforce to improve their professional practice, including:
 - Professional learning that is accredited by the Teacher Quality Institute.
 - Targeted professional learning and support for new and early educators, to strengthen their practice and ways of improving it throughout their careers.
 - A robust school improvement methodology and use of the National School Improvement Tool.
- The ACT Government is encouraged by the Auditor-General's Report while acknowledging the importance of continuing to strengthen our systems as we work to improve teaching quality in our ACT public schools.

Cleared as complete and accurate: 28/10/2021
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TRIM Ref: REC21/56833

BUDGET ESTIMATES BRIEF

Key Information

- The Auditor-General's Report No. 6/2021 'Teaching Quality in ACT public schools' was tabled in the ACT Legislative Assembly on 23 June 2021.
- The Public Accounts Committee referred the Report to the Standing Committee on Education and Community Inclusion for consideration on 6 October 2021.
- The report acknowledges the significant work of the ACT Government in prioritising and improving the quality of teaching practices across ACT public schools.

Background Information

- The Auditor-General's 'Teacher Quality in ACT Public Schools' audit focused on assessing the effectiveness of the Directorate's strategies and activities to improve the quality of teaching practices in ACT public schools. The key audit criteria focussed on:
 - strategies for teaching quality,
 - school improvement,
 - professional learning and development, and
 - teaching workforce management.
- A number of the findings that the auditor articulated in the report included:
 - The Education Directorate and the ACT Teacher Quality Institute collaborate extensively to ensure the ongoing professional learning requirements of ACT public school teachers are met.
 - The Directorate's 2018-2021 Strategic Plan, there has been a significant increase in school leader confidence as instructional leaders, through the implementation of the empowered learning professionals plan and associated leadership forums and symposiums.
 - The Education Directorate provides targeted professional learning and support for new and early educators, to strengthen their practice and ways of improving it throughout their careers
 - The Education Directorate supports a School Improvement methodology, including supporting schools to improve their practice against the domains identified in the National School Improvement Tool. This tool provides a robust framework and associated supports that assists schools in their continuous cycle of improvement, including teaching practice.

BUDGET ESTIMATES BRIEF

Portfolio/s: Early Childhood Development

CHILDREN'S EDUCATION AND CARE ASSURANCE (CECA) INVESTIGATIONS

Talking points:

- During the COVID-19 pandemic the safety and wellbeing of children has remained a priority and CECA have continued to assess incidents or complaints.
- CECA has a dedicated investigation team and a team of experienced officers who assess any incidents or complaints.
- CECA has a range of compliance tools available including: **administrative letters; compliance notices; compliance directions; suspension powers; enforceable undertakings; conditions upon approvals** and, where people pose a risk of harm to children, **prohibition from participating in the sector**.
- CECA is part of the professional community of practice around reportable conduct and works with ACT Policing, Child and Youth Protection Service, the Working With Vulnerable People Team, and the Senior Practitioner in relation to restrictive practices.
- The ACT has comparatively high rates of notification. This is due to CECA's high level of engagement with the Sector, and providers reporting all legally notifiable matters, including those involving no risk to children.

Key Information

- CECA assessed **1516 notification** between 1 July 2020 and 30 June 2021 (inclusive). The total included **1240 incidents** and **276 complaints**.
- **826 incidents were serious incidents, 351 were "other incidents" and 63 assessed as non-regulatory.**
- **94 complaints were made direct to the Regulatory Authority, and 182 complaints were notified to the Regulatory Authority by approved providers.**
- **59 investigations commenced** during this financial year. Between 1 July 2020 and 30 June 2021, **49 cases that required investigation were closed** of which 15 had been carried over from 2019-2020.
- **19 investigations remained open.**
- Between 1 July 2020 and 30 June 2021, **128 compliance actions were taken.**

Background (Annual Report 2019- 20)

- ACT Education and Care Services notified 637 serious incidents in 2019-20. This represents 227 notifications per 100 services compared to a national average of 138 per 100 services. The rate has been consistently higher than the national average for some time and is at least partly attributable to the responsive regulation approach taken by the Regulator and the small size of the jurisdiction where all services are well known to the Regulator and vice-versa.

BUDGET ESTIMATES BRIEF

- In 2019-20 CECA assessed 1,318 notifications of incidents or complaints at services. Of those notifications 51 matters were investigated and 8 matters were subject to both investigation and risk audit. Other matters were managed appropriately by the providers who were not relevant to the National Law.
- Major areas of investigation are allegations of harm to children, non compliance staffing arrangements, inadequate supervision and missing or unaccounted for children.

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Portfolio: Early Childhood Development

EDUCATION AND CARE PLACES: AFFORDABILITY AND AVAILABILITY

Talking points:

- The ACT Government is addressing equity and access to quality early childhood education through *Set up for Success: An Early Childhood Strategy for the ACT*.
- Under this strategy the ACT Government is committed to providing universal access to free, quality early childhood education commencing with a day per week in this term of Government.
- Currently it is delivering the first phase of universal access for priority three year-olds – those experiencing vulnerabilities and disadvantage – with **500 places in participating education and care services on offer in 2021**.
- There are also up to **100 places available in Koori Preschool** for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander three year-olds to enhance cultural safety.
- This flagship initiative will improve access to quality early learning and care and reduce costs, starting with the families most in need.
- The *2020 Report on Government Services* shows centre based care and family day care services in the ACT continue to be the most expensive in Australia.

Key Information

- The factors informing the cost of long day care in the ACT are set out in a report published in 2017, following a review of affordability of the ACT' Early Childhood Education and Care (ECEC) sector.
- The cost of property, rent, staffing and the ratios of staff to children according to age are all factors.
- ECEC providers determine the fees they charge. States and Territories have responsibility for regulating the safety and quality of providers and services, but do not engage in price regulation. The Australian Government provides a national Child Care Subsidy system under the *Family Assistance Law*.
- Since 2001, the **number of centre-based places** across the ACT has **more than doubled**. Centre based services include long day care, school age care, Government and independent preschools.
- The current **370 services operating** includes centre based services as well as family day care. In January 2012 there were approximately 280 services in the ACT. Now there are 370, an **increase of 90 services** over eight years.
- In 2019, **18,514 children** from birth to 5 years-old were accessing an approved centre based service compared to 13,045 children birth-5 years olds in 2012.

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- Report on Government Services data shows that between **2013 and 2016** the workforce who have primary contact with children grew by almost a 1000 staff, which is approximately a **30% increase**.
- As at 30 June 2021, there are approximately
 - **14,500 full time long day care places** available for children preschool age and under in centre-based education and care services.
 - **3,700 full time places** across **76 government preschools**.
 - **1,300 full time places** for preschool aged children in **non-Government preschools**.
 - **10,500 places** in outside school hours care.
- Approximately 17,500 children aged 0-12 attended a long day care setting, and 5,600 were enrolled in a preschool program in the year before full time schooling.¹
- *Set Up For Success: An Early Childhood Strategy for the ACT* was launched on 31 August 2020.

Background Information

- The ACT has one of the highest uptakes of early childhood education and care services in the country.
- In 2020, **58%** of one year olds, **71%** of two year olds and **78%** of three year-olds **attended centre based services**.
- In February 2016, the then ACT Minister for Education (Minister Rattenbury) commissioned a review to advise Government on cost, access and quality issues related to long day care services in the ACT.
- The review found that the sector has moved from an under supply of places to an oversupply over the last few years. This **oversupply** of places may be as much as **20%**, although the impact is not being evenly experienced across providers in the ACT.
- Early childhood education and care services are part of a market based system. The cost of services is driven by factors such as:
 - the ACT's high employment rates and per capita incomes;
 - Relatively high property costs;
 - the relatively small cohort of available early childhood workers;
 - uneven interaction between Government and non-Government early childhood services; and
 - our small geographical footprint with higher price tolerances across the whole of the ACT.

¹ Report on Government Services (ROGS), released 2 February 2021.

Cleared as complete and accurate: 18/10/2021

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BUDGET ESTIMATES BRIEF

Portfolio/s: Education and Youth Affairs

ACT NON-GOVERNMENT SCHOOLS

Note: Refer to Budget Estimates Brief **1.26 Infrastructure Upgrades for Non-Government Schools and 04.3 Commonwealth Schooling Resource Standard**

Talking points:

- Non-government schools (NGS) are responsible for educating approximately **37.5% of all students attending ACT schools**. They must be registered and must meet the conditions of registration outlined in the *Education Act 2004*, as well as Commonwealth requirements pertaining to funding and governance of the school, and other Territory and Commonwealth legislative and regulatory requirements.
- The Education Directorate is responsible for managing the processes of a non-government school's registration and registration renewal which relies on the school's compliance with the requirements of the *ACT Education Act 2004*.

Key Information

- There are **47 registered Non-Government Schools** comprising **18 independent schools** and **29 Catholic systemic schools** in the ACT.
- During 2021 the registration of seven independent schools and six Catholic systemic schools are scheduled for renewal.
- Some of the 2021 registration renewal processes have been conducted without site visits to accommodate the emergency health measures in place in the ACT.
- On 1 January 2021 the *Education Amendment Act 2020* commenced. Two amendments applied to non-government schools:
 - An amendment to ensure boarding schools comply with the relevant Australian Standard for boarding schools as part of registration and re-registration; and
 - An amendment that ensures the obligation for attending school applies equally to NSW residents who are enrolled in any school in the ACT.
- The Education Directorate is currently consulting on and drafting further amendments to the *Education Act 2004*. It is anticipated the *Education Amendment Bill 2021* will be introduced in the Legislative Assembly in early 2022.
- The purpose of these amendments is to clarify and streamline non-government school registration, registration renewal and reporting processes. The proposed amendments are arranged under five core areas, which include:
 - clarifying the role of non-government school leaders, and their obligations to meet legislative and compliance requirements;
 - streamlining the non-government school registration process and requirements, including implementing ongoing registration, comprehensive registration standards and strengthening regulatory powers;

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- amending the powers of the Registrar of NGS to investigate and enforce compliance in non-government schools, including processes to escalate complaints;
- strengthening the reporting of unenrolments, contract terminations, transfers, expulsions and exclusions by all schooling sectors; and
- updating the processes and inserting definitions for suspensions, transfers, expulsions and exclusions for all schooling sectors.

Background Information

- NGS numbers decreased by one in 2021 because Canberra Jewish School, did not open in 2021. The school operated as a provisionally registered school with less than 10 student enrolments during 2020.
- The *Education Act 2004* and *Education Regulations 2005* require the proprietor of a NGS to be a corporation and have a complaints policy; and require NGS to have (in summary) policies, facilities and equipment for the delivery of the curriculum and safety of students, to meet boarding school standards, to be financially viable, and comply with the *Education Act 2004*.
- The Commonwealth *Education Act and Regulations* requires the NGS body approved to receive funding for students enrolled at the school (the Approved Authority) to be (amongst other things) not-for-profit, and fit and proper. The Commonwealth law also requires Approved Authorities (amongst other things) to implement the Australian Curriculum, participate in the national assessment program, comply with disability discrimination laws of the Commonwealth or the Territory, and provide stipulated information. These Commonwealth requirements are not replicated in the *ACT Education Act 2004*.
- Under the terms of former Memoranda of Understanding, Catholic Education Canberra and Goulburn and the ACT Association of Independent Schools agreed to provide to the Minister annual assurances of legislative compliance by their relevant schools and bi-annual reports of critical incidents. With the lapsing of the former memoranda, annual assurances of legislative compliance are no longer made by non-government schools. Planned changes to the *Education Act 2004* relating to NGS will mean that such memoranda are no longer necessary.
- The Future of Education Strategy identifies the review of and amendment to the *Education Act 2004* (the Act), in order to strengthen equity, student agency, access and inclusion.
- A phased approach is being applied to the process of revising the Act. The first tranche of amendments was passed by the Legislative Assembly in February 2019, through the *Child Safety in Schools Amendment Bill 2018*. The second tranche of amendments was passed in August 2020 as the *Education Amendment Act 2020*.

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Portfolio/s: Education and Youth Affairs

HOME EDUCATION

Talking points:

- In the ACT parents and carers have the right to choose an educational setting for their children. Under the *Education Act 2004* ACT parents are able to enrol their children in a school, register them for home education, or both.
- The ACT Government acknowledges the critical importance of ensuring all children and young people receive a high-quality education in an environment that is safe and suitable for learning.
- In December 2019, the Legislative Assembly passed important changes to the *Education Act 2004* that delivered from June 2020 a simplified registration pathway for parents choosing to educate their children at home and clarified the expectations and requirements of home education registration. The changes also supported the ACT Government's commitment to ensure every child and young person has access to a high-quality education.
- During the past three years we have seen **significant growth** in the number of children registered for home education in the ACT:
 - **2019** February census — **305 children and young people were registered**
 - **2020** February census — **322** children and young people were registered
 - **2021** February census — **396** children and young people were registered.
- The annual growth of home education registration is much higher than enrolment growths in all ACT schools as well as in ACT public schools.
 - From 2019 to 2020, home education registrations increased by 5.6% whilst the growth rate of school enrolments was 2%.
 - from 2020 to 2021, home education registrations increased sharply by 23% while school enrolments increased by less than 2%.
- While the census data clearly demonstrates that home education has grown in the ACT, census data does not fully represent the number of students who are home educated at some point in the year. For example:
 - **503 different students were registered** for home education **at some point during the 2020** calendar year; and
 - **133 children and young people left home education during the same period** for a range of reasons – but mostly to return to school, move interstate, or because they had turned 17 and were no longer required to participate in compulsory education.
- As at **30 September 2021, 427 children and young people are registered** for home education in the ACT. This is an **8% [31] increase** in registrations **since the February 2021 census**.

Cleared as complete and accurate: 13/10/2021

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