

## OPEN ACCESS INFORMATION SCHEME

### 2018 Q1 (JANUARY TO MARCH) - QUESTION TIME BRIEFS

Record Number	Description	Record Date	Decision (Full release, Partial release, Non-release)	Reason for Partial release or Non-release
1	North Gungahlin Schools	20180130	Full release	
2	Safe and Supportive Schools (Including Bullying)	20180131	Full release	
3	Priority Enrolment Areas	20180131	Full release	
4	Car Parks and Traffic Safety Program	20180131	Full release	
5	Heating and Cooling in ACT Public Schools	20180131	Full release	
6	NSW Enrolments	20180201	Full release	
7	Cleaning Contractors in Schools	20180202	Full release	
8	Education and Care Places: Affordability and Availability – with tracked changes and comments	20180202	Full release	
9	Family Day Care Fraud and Quality	20180202	Full release	
10	Canberra Teacher Recruitment Assessment (CANTRA)	20180202	Full release	
11	Health Care Access at School (HAAS)	20180205	Full release	
12	Implementation of the National Disability Insurance Scheme and Early Intervention (Including Child Development Service, Therapy Assistance in Schools and Transition for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Students)	20180205	Full release	
13	Safe and Inclusive Schools Initiative	20180205	Full release	

14	Schools for All Implementation	20180205	Full release	
15	Mental Health and School Psychologists	20180205	Full release	
16	School Planning	20180205	Full release	
17	Escalation Process for Reports of Bullying in Schools	20180206	Full release	
18	Learn Anywhere Students Use of ICT in Schools	20180206	Full release	
19	Universal Access to Early Childhood Education	20180206	Full release	
20	Early Childhood Advisory Council	20180206	Full release	
21	Condition of ACT Public Schools	20180207	Full release	
22	Lifting Our Game Report	20180207	Full release	
23	Teaching Conditions: ACT Comparisons with Other Jurisdictions	20180207	Full release	
24	Funding for ACT Non-Government and Public Schools	20180302	Full release	
25	Family Day Care Fraud and Quality	20180305	Full release	
26	Koori Preschool Program	20180306	Full release	
27	Commonwealth Education Funding	20180306	Full release	
28	Islamic School of Canberra (ISC) and Commonwealth Registration Funding Concerns	20180306	Full release	
29	Gifted and Talented Education	20180307	Full release	
30	Suspensions in Canberra Public Schools	20180307	Full release	
31	Respectful Relationships Education in ACT Public Schools	20180307	Full release	
32	Occupational Violence	20180307	Full release	
33	Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Scholarship Programs	20180308	Full release	

34	Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education Programs	20180308	Full release	
35	Closing the Gap in Education - Literacy and Numeracy	20180308	Full release	
36	Closing the Gap in Education - Attendance	20180308	Full release	
37	International Students - Fee Exemptions	20180308	Full release	
38	International Students - Full Fee Paying	20180308	Full release	
39	Support for Students with Disabilities	20180308	Full release	
40	Withdrawal Spaces in Schools to Support Students with Challenging Behaviours	20180308	Full release	
41	Learn Anywhere Students Use of ICT in Schools	20180308	Full release	
42	Health and Safety Requirements	20180308	Full release	
43	Auditor-General's Audit on Accountability & Strategic Indicators	20180309	Full release	
44	Auditor Generals Audit Performance Information in ACT Public Schools	20180309	Full release	
45	Closing the Gap in Education-Year 12 Attainment	20180309	Full release	
46	Science Technology Engineering and Mathematics (STEM)	20180309	Full release	
47	Heating and Cooling in ACT Public Schools	20180309	Full release	
48	Cleaning Contractors in Schools	20180309	Full release	
49	Aluminium Composite Panels in ACT Schools	20180309	Full release	
50	Future of Education	20180313	Full release	
51	National Assessment Program – Literacy and Numeracy Results and Participation	20180316	Full release	
52	NAPLAN Online	20180316	Full release	

53	Performance of the ACT Education System	20180316	Full release	
54	Priority Enrolment Areas	20180316	Full release	
55	School Planning	20180316	Full release	
56	Land Release for Non-Government Schools	20180316	Full release	
57	NSW Enrolments	20180316	Full release	

## Portfolio/s Education &amp; Early Childhood Development

**ISSUE: NORTH GUNGAHLIN SCHOOLS****Talking points:**

- The government is committed to deliver increased school capacity in growing locations of the ACT, particularly in Gungahlin.
- The geographic distribution of enrolment growth is mirroring population growth of the ACT, with the strongest growth in Gungahlin.
- New public schools are due to open in Taylor in 2019 and expansions at Gold Creek, Neville Bonner and Harrison schools are also responding to enrolment growth at public schools.
- Planning is underway for East Gungahlin and expansions to the Franklin Early Childhood School and Gold Creek School.

**Key Information**Gungahlin region growth - space in schools

- The *Education Act 2004* requires that priority be given to the enrolment of children in the government school in their neighbourhood.
- Enrolments for the North Canberra/Gungahlin network are projected to grow at the fastest rate in the ACT over the five years to 2021. Growth can be attributed to the continuing development of the recently established suburbs of Casey, Crace, Bonner, Franklin, Harrison and Jacka, and to the planned suburbs of Moncrieff (2017), Throsby (2019), Taylor (2019) and Kenny (mid 2020s)..
- These forecasts indicate that decisions around further capacity in the Gungahlin region will need to be made during the forecast period. Expected enrolments in primary schools will be initially absorbed through planned capacity expansion at Amaroo, Neville Bonner, Gold Creek and Harrison schools as well as through the new P-6 primary school to be located in the suburb of Taylor
- Planning is well advanced for the construction of a new primary school in the suburb of Taylor to cater for enrolments generated by the future suburbs of Moncrieff and Taylor.
- It is important that we make sure that the capacity increases in the Gungahlin region that are required are made in a timely fashion, and put in place neither too soon or too late.
- Taking account of the new North Gungahlin P-6 school and of other planned capacity increases, I expect that there will still be a surplus of places over students across the

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## QUESTION TIME BRIEF

network in 2021 and that, as has always been the case, there will continue to be places for Canberra's children in their neighbourhood schools.

- The Government's 2016 School Infrastructure Platform to deliver new school capacity in growing locations included:
  - The commitment to deliver feasibility and design work for new schools Gungahlin and West Belconnen to ensure schools are catering to future growth.
  - Capacity upgrades in Gungahlin would be designed to adapt in future as student demand peaks and then subsides.
  - The commitment to deliver expansions of Franklin Early Childhood School (ECS) and Gold Creek School, where expansion is being progressed by a separate proposal. The expansion at Franklin ECS would be delivered in consultation with parent and community groups and build upon upgrades at several Gungahlin schools from the 2016 Budget.

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Portfolio/s Education & Early Childhood Development

**ISSUE: SAFE AND SUPPORTIVE SCHOOLS (INCLUDING BULLYING)**

**Talking points:**

- Every child and young person has the right to a positive and engaging learning environment where they feel safe, connected and respected.
- The ACT Education Directorate has developed the Safe and Supportive Schools policy that provides guidance to schools on promoting safe, respectful and supportive school environments.
- Each school has processes and procedures in place to address bullying, harassment and violence, including cyberbullying. This includes social and emotional learning programs and digital citizenship programs that support the development of resilience, critical thinking and social skills.
- Bullying can have a lasting impact on everyone involved, including those who witness it, so it is important our schools, young people and families work together to create safe school communities for everyone.

**Key Information**

Policy and Procedures

- The Safe and Supportive Schools (SSS) policy was implemented in April 2016 and provides guidance for Canberra Public Schools on promoting safe, respectful and supportive school environments.
- This policy reflects the guiding principles outlined in the National Safe Schools Framework which assists school communities with developing student safety and wellbeing practices.
- The SSS policy retains the focus on safety from the previous Providing Safe Schools P-12 policy, by ensuring that schools have processes and procedures in place to address bullying, harassment and violence. The new policy promotes embracing diversity as a core value which underpins all Canberra public schools.
- The policy complements the strategic intent of creating safe school environments for all students from the Report of the Expert Panel on Students with Complex Needs and Challenging Behaviours (2015). Shortly after the policy's release in 2016, an early review of the Policy and Guideline was completed in early October 2016. This was influenced by significant interest and feedback from stakeholders (particularly in relation to Guideline B which focuses on Complex and Challenging Behaviour).

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- Complementary to the SSS policy is the Directorate's resources relating to digital citizenship and e-safety. The *Communities Online: Acceptable use of ICT – Parents and Students Policy* and related guidelines define the parameters of acceptable use by students and parents of ICT resources provided by and through the Education Directorate.
- Implementing this policy involves teaching students about acceptable use of ICT. All students sign an Acceptable Use of ICT Statement agreeing to the conditions of this policy and agree to accept the consequences of any breach. This policy details appropriate use of ICT resources and the relationship with school-based behaviour management policies and procedures and the relationship to online behaviour.

### Implementation Support

- Schools continue to be provided with information about the policy, procedures and other supporting resources (e.g. fact sheets and training) to help with implementation of the policy.
- The policy and procedures provide direction for schools in managing complex and challenging behaviour. The use of preventative measures is promoted in the policy to lessen the need for more intensive interventions such as a protective action in relation to managing behaviour.
- The policy encourages schools to seek additional support and expertise through making appropriate referrals when they are working with students with complex and challenging behaviour. The policy will be reviewed again within three years.
- The Education Directorate also works under the ACT Engaging Schools Framework (2013). This is an evidence based, best-practice guide for Canberra public schools in improving the engagement of their students. It has a focus on fostering relationships between students, valuing and supporting all students and providing a safe and supportive school environment.

### Using data to support student wellbeing

- The SSS policy and procedures encourage critical evaluation of the effectiveness of Social and Emotional Learning approaches and the implementation of local school processes and procedures to address bullying, harassment and violence.
- Data sources available to schools to support them in identifying and monitoring student wellbeing trends include:
  - School Satisfaction Surveys conducted yearly with parents student and staff input
  - Suspension data and attendance data
  - Critical incident reporting by the Directorate
  - The Australian School Climate and Identification Measurement Tool (ASCIMT). This is a survey about the social environment or climate at a particular school. The survey was jointly developed by the Directorate and

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Australian National University. It focuses on relationships between parents, carers, students and teachers, connection to the school (school identification) and engagement in learning. The tool includes five measures on challenging behaviours including bullying. Results are available to principals to monitor and evaluation safe and support school improvement strategies.

#### Student, parent and carer voice in countering bullying behaviour

- The National Day of Action against Bullying and Violence is held annually and in 2017 23 Canberra public schools registered and participated in activities that promoted taking a stand against bullying and violence and dedicating a focus on this important issue. In 2018 the National Day of Action will be held 16 March.
- The Minister's Student Congress (MSC) is made up of two representatives per ACT public school and typically meets twice per year. The MSC executive body of ten students meets three times per term. In 2017 the MSC will meet three times to provide an avenue for students to contribute to the Future of Education conversation.
- The Safe Schools Roundtable is an advisory body which meets on a needs basis and considers issues relating to the National Safe Schools Framework and provides a forum for ongoing consultation with stakeholders. Stakeholders include the Directorate, ACT school principals, Catholic Education Office, representatives from the Association of Independent Schools, the ACT Council of Parents and Citizens' Associations, Association of Parents and Friends, Australian Education Union, Australian Federal Police, Independent Education Union, Youth Advisory Council, Human Rights Commission, Community Services Directorate, Minister's Student Congress.

#### Curriculum

- The SSS policy requires all Canberra schools to provide evidence based Social and Emotional Learning (SEL) programs. For example -Friendly Schools Plus is designed to directly address bullying including cyber bullying. Many schools participate in Kids Matter and Mind Matters which support the development of resilience and social skills through evidence based programs.
- Regular SEL professional learning opportunities are provided to Canberra public school teachers. The Australian Curriculum also includes content for students and teachers on social skills, getting along with others and ethical behaviours.
- Guided by the Australian Curriculum, schools adopt cyber-safety programs which focus on critical thinking and understanding in social situations, overlapping with objectives from SEL and Respectful Relationship programs. Schools tend to combine online awareness training and cyber bullying together, which spans a range of Learning areas, particularly Technologies and Health and Physical Education

#### Support for Students experiencing bullying

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## QUESTION TIME BRIEF

- Students can seek support from teachers, school psychologists, youth support workers and other staff in Canberra public schools. These support staff are able to provide support to victims and perpetrators of bullying.
- Just as bullying, harassment or abuse would not be tolerated in the classroom or on the playground; they are similarly not tolerated within online environments. Schools are advised to deal with online breaches of the school's behaviour policies as they would, had they occurred in the physical environment.
- The new Safe and Supportive Schools policy requires every school to have a Safe and Supportive Schools Contact Officer (SASSCO). These officers are trained to provide support to students who have experienced bullying, sexual harassment and racism. Conciliatory procedures are typically followed for addressing bullying, violence and harassment between students.
  - If a conciliatory outcome is not able to be achieved, the school's behaviour management procedures will be followed at the discretion of the principal.
  - Young people experiencing distress are also encouraged to contact Kids Help Line, Headspace or the Bullying, No Way! online help line.
- The Directorate has partnered with the Office of the Children's eSafety Commissioner to provide schools an enriching digital program aimed to educate our students to be safe online.
- Many schools have participated in a range of webinars. The program includes a range of virtual classroom events, which are facilitated by the Directorate and The Office of the Children's eSafety Commissioner presenters. Virtual Classroom topics on offer include:
  - 'Cyberbullying'
  - 'Being a good bystander'
  - 'Making good choices online'

### Background Information

- The Bullying, No Way! website, jointly administered by the Australian Government and all state and territory education departments, indicates that:
  - Approximately one in four (27%) year 4 to year 9 Australian government and non-government school students report being bullied each term or more often.
  - Approximately 10% of students in the government and non-government sectors experience bullying and harassment via mobile phone or internet technologies.
  - Parents, students and carers with concerns about cyberbullying are also advised they may visit the website for the Office of the eSafety Commissioner (<https://esafety.gov.au/>) and the Bullying, No Way! (<http://bullyingnoway.gov.au>) websites which provide comprehensive education and contact information for young people, parents/carers and schools. The Office of the E Safety Commissioner also provides a complaints service for young Australians who experience serious cyberbullying.
  - Experiences of frequent school bullying is highest among year 5 (32%) and year 8 (29%) students.

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- 84% of students who are bullied online are also bullied offline.
- Peers are present as onlookers in 87% of bullying interactions.
- Hurtful teasing is the most prevalent of all bullying behaviours experienced by students, followed by having hurtful lies told about them.

Parents, students and carers with concerns about cyberbullying are encouraged to talk with their teacher and visit the following websites which provide comprehensive education and contact information for young people, parents/carers and schools.

- the Office of the E-Safety Commissioner ([www.esafety.gov.au](http://www.esafety.gov.au))
- Bullying, No Way! (<http://bullyingnoway.gov.au>)

Following the Schools for All Young People report in 2015, there was significant interest from many stakeholders in the area of the use of Restrictive Practices. The SSS policy document, with its focus on management of complex and challenging behaviour provides guidance to schools about this issue.

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## Portfolio/s Education &amp; Early Childhood Development

**ISSUE: PRIORITY ENROLMENT AREAS****Talking points:**

- The *Education Act 2004* requires that the Director General of Education make arrangements to give ‘priority to the enrolment of children in the government school in their neighbourhood’. This is achieved through the establishment of priority enrolment areas.
- Priority Enrolment Areas are reviewed regularly to ensure that they continue to meet the changing circumstances of a school and of the families in its neighbourhood. Changes are published by the Directorate on the Directorate website.
- Each year, without fail, we find a place for every child who wants a place in their neighbourhood school. We expect that to continue this year.

**Key Information**

- Most public schools in the ACT have a defined priority enrolment area. Priority enrolment areas are how the Director General ensures that the obligation in the *Education Act 2004* to give ‘priority to the enrolment of children in the government school in their neighbourhood’ is met. Students who reside in that area have priority for enrolment at that school. The priority enrolment area takes into account geographical boundaries, school capacity, and the actual and projected student numbers. Each school is required to enrol students who live within its priority enrolment area.
- There are a small number of schools with special circumstances that do not have a priority enrolment area but have specific criteria for entry to the school. These include specialist language schools such as Telopea Park School (for entry to primary school), specialist education schools (which provide education for students with a disability), Allen Main Memorial Preschool (Duntroon) and the five early childhood schools.
- Schools must maintain available capacity to accommodate current and future students from within their priority enrolment area before they accept out-of-area students. When projections identify emerging capacity pressures schools may be directed not to accept out-of-area enrolments.
- While most school priority enrolment areas remain unchanged from year to year, some require adjustment in response to demographic changes, school openings or closures, or changes in enrolment capacity.

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## QUESTION TIME BRIEF

- Priority enrolment area changes are currently being examined for the 2019 school year to respond to urban infill and to other changes in demographic circumstances.
- In an effort to ensure that priority enrolment area arrangements are easily understood by both families and schools, the Directorate continues to develop simplified processes for updating priority enrolment areas, improved communication practices and, where possible, the reduction or elimination of shared areas or divided suburbs.

### **Background Information**

Schools and School Network Leaders participate in the process associated with changing priority enrolment areas. Decisions on changing priority enrolment areas are made two years in advance and a communication strategy is used to ensure the information is disseminated to schools and their communities.

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Portfolio: Education & Early Childhood Development

**ISSUE: CAR PARKS AND TRAFFIC SAFETY PROGRAM**

**Talking points:**

- The management of traffic and road safety around and within schools is a cross-directorate responsibility of the ACT Government. To ensure that parking and traffic safety is managed in and around school environments, the Education Directorate (EDU) works closely with Transport Canberra and City Services (TCCS), the Justice and Community Safety Directorate (JACS), and ACT Policing.
- The Education Directorate works directly with TCCS to ensure that traffic and parking safety matters are managed appropriately and that concerns are addressed. This results in EDU and TCCS meeting with the school which may include the principal, the senior school management team, the Parents and Community Association, and/or other key stakeholders, to ascertain the details of the concerns.

**Key Information**

Upgrade of car parks and improvements to traffic safety at Canberra public schools is funded from the annual Public School Infrastructure Upgrade Program .

This program addresses issues that impact on the safety of pedestrians, car parking spaces, safe school set-down and pick-up areas, and compliance with current ACT Parking and Vehicular Access General Code within school grounds.

The Parliamentary Agreement commits the ACT Government to improvements in road safety around schools:

- TCCS will be facilitating the crossing guard supervisors (lollipop officers) program at 20 of the busiest school crossings. This will allow children to safely cross at school crossings with a high traffic volume.
- The Directorate is working with TCCS to ensure that management and deployment of crossing guard supervisors is appropriately supported by each Directorate's governance arrangements.
- The school road safety plan includes new infrastructure, with bigger and better signage, dragon's teeth, dedicated school crossings and traffic islands. This investment will focus on the 20 schools identified as having the highest need. The Directorate has worked with TCCS to ensure the implementation of the measures is in line with the Active Streets program.

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## QUESTION TIME BRIEF

- TCCS will be rolling out the School Crossing Supervisor program at all 20 sites from Monday 5 February 2018. The full list of sites is available on the School Crossing Supervisor website. HOBAN Recruitment, the successful tender has recruited and trained approximately 35 supervisors and is continuing to recruit so they have a pool of supervisors trained.
- To increase safety around schools, the Directorate is working with TCCS in the creation of individual 'School Travel and Traffic Management Plans' and invest in effective and appropriate safety improvements including slower traffic speeds, more pedestrian crossings, improved walking and cycling connections, improved signage and education initiatives that will help both students and parents to use school car parks and roads more safely.

Following receipt of the February 2017 school census data, the parking requirements of all ACT public schools was reviewed.

With ongoing enrolment growth, the following 17 school sites do not fully comply with the ACT Parking and Vehicular Access General Code for the correct number of either regular spaces (three schools) or number of disabled parking spaces (two schools) or set-down areas (15 schools):

- Ainslie Primary School (general and set-down spaces)\*;
- Alfred Deakin High School (set-down spaces);
- Canberra High School (set-down spaces)\*;
- Chapman Primary School (set-down spaces)\*;
- Kaleen Primary School (set-down spaces)\*;
- Lyneham Primary School (set-down spaces)\*;
- Lyneham High School (general, disability and set-down spaces);
- Macquaire Primary School (set-down spaces)\*;
- Maribyrnong Primary School (set-down spaces)\*;
- Mawson Primary School (set-down spaces)\*;
- Mount Rogers Primary School (general spaces)\*;
- Mount Stromlo High School (set-down spaces)\*;
- Miles Franklin Primary School (set-down spaces)\*;
- Neville Bonner Primary School (set-down spaces)\*;
- Narrabundah College (disability spaces);
- North Ainslie Primary School (set-down spaces);
- Telopea Park School (set-down spaces)\*.

*\*Parking is available within the precinct or in close proximity to the school.*

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Planning for car park improvements at ACT public schools include:

- Wanniasa Hills Primary School (on Billson Place) – construction works are planned to be completed during 2018, pending planning approvals;
- Fraser Primary School – designs for an overflow car park on land adjacent to the school are complete;
- Palmerston District Primary School – preliminary designs for an overflow car park on the oval adjacent to the school are complete;
- Mount Rogers Community School – exploring options with the school for additional car park spaces to respond to increased student enrolments. These works will be considered for 2017-18 should funds be available or in future financial years;
- Ngunnawal Primary School – exploring options with the school for additional car park spaces to respond to increased student enrolments. These works will be considered for the 2018-19 financial year;
- Gold Creek School – the Directorate is working with TCCS to redesign the junior campus parent car park to improve pedestrian safety and traffic flow. In addition, a Temporary Traffic Management Plan was put into operation from June 2017 to facilitate a trial of the proposed changes;
- Theodore Primary School – investigation into relocating the disabled spaces, flow improvements to car park, signage and compliance improvements that will enable parking regulation enforcement;
- Hughes Preschool – investigations are ongoing into the provision of additional car park spaces; and
- Giralang Primary School – review of proposed design and investigation of bus access options are ongoing.

## Background Information

- Education has been provided with advice in relation to dwindling community facility-zoned land stocks. This issue has resulted in a government decision to suspend consideration of all direct sales of community facility land (apart from a few that were already significantly progressed), while a policy is developed for the remaining blocks/stocks. This has a direct impact on the proposed car park works at Wanniasa Hills School, Bilson Place (Block 5 Section 253 Wanniasa) as this space is a community facility zoned block. The policy work is being done by the Land Supply and Policy Division of EPSDD.

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Portfolio: Education & Early Childhood Development

## ISSUE: HEATING AND COOLING IN ACT PUBLIC SCHOOLS

### Talking points:

- All schools have an extreme temperature management plan.
- A program of works to increase the level of cooling in selected classrooms has commenced.
- \$3.35 million is being spent in 2017-18 addressing cooling issues in schools.
- The ACT Education Directorate policy for Managing Extreme Temperatures in ACT public schools requires schools to have a management plan to keep students and staff comfortable.
- ACT schools have a site specific management plans for extreme temperatures. Activities to manage high temperatures include:
  - Optimising natural ventilation, air movement and shade;
  - Using additional fans or coolers;
  - Easy access to water and increased use of water play;
  - Rotating classes through cooler areas on site;
  - Adjusting educational programs and access to certain areas of the school to minimise potential for heat stress;
  - Adjusting uniforms, if required; and
  - Limiting playground access to shaded areas in addition to ensuring all students playing outside have hats, sunscreen and a water bottle.

### Key Information

In the 2016 Election, ACT Labor committed to fund \$85m in ACT public school capital upgrades over the next 4 years. This program was intended to include upgrades to heating and cooling systems and build on the recent artificial cooling of all school libraries and administration areas.

- The Heat Mitigation in ACT Public Schools Program was initiated in early 2017 in response to the high temperatures experienced in some parts of ACT public schools in previous years.

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- The Infrastructure and Capital Works (ICW) Branch has selected interventions that are able to be delivered in the required time frame and with the least impact on the school in relation to disruption and long term energy consumption. The scope of works developed for each school will support the *Procedures for Managing Extreme Temperatures in ACT Public Schools* with a focus on the student spaces.
- More than 700 high priority spaces have been identified by the schools in this program. Due to the magnitude of issues, a phased approach over a number of years is being taken. This approach prioritises schools according to a risk matrix.
- An additional \$1.8m has been allocated in the 2017-18 ICW programs to address priority areas in consultation with the schools. This remediation is being delivered through a rolling program that includes passive solutions such as external shading, building insulation and glazing treatments. Where passive solutions are not suitable, installation of air cooling systems will be considered.

### *2017-18 Heating, Ventilation and Air Conditioning (HVAC) Program*

To the end of January 2018, there have been 973 maintenance calls to repair or replace existing HVAC assets, with 83% of the HVAC maintenance budget committed to date. The budget for HVAC specific works, which includes works requested by schools, is 86% committed.

### **Background Information**

The former Minister for Education and Training made a statement in the Legislative Assembly in June 2015, about the ACT Government's position on heating and cooling in schools. This affirmed:

- Preference for natural ventilation – consistent with the ACT Government's carbon neutral strategies to reduce energy consumption;
- Employment of extreme temperature management plans; and
- Installation of artificial cooling in priority areas of schools – specialist education facilities, libraries and administration area to allow students to circulate to cooler areas.

There is a direct scientific correlation between the temperature of a learning space and the concentration levels of students. Studies identified that both low (<20° C) and high (>27° C) temperatures have negative effects on performance.

On the occasions where existing management activities are no longer effective, the Principal will consult with the Directorate's Health, Safety and Wellbeing Team and the Delegated Official who will determine whether a school should be closed.

The Directorate maintains engineering controls for thermal comfort throughout the year:

- Currently the majority of heating and cooling plants across the Directorate are working to acceptable standards; and
- As faults are identified, maintenance providers attend the affected specific schools.

In 2015, a program commenced to ensure all schools had air conditioning or evaporative cooling in both library and administration areas. Across schools 11 libraries and 15 administration areas did not

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## QUESTION TIME BRIEF

have a cooling mechanism. This program is now complete with a total cost of \$0.75million from 2015 to 2017.

In addition, under the schools repairs and maintenance program, \$3.6 million is spent each year on heating and cooling maintenance.

In 2016, the Directorate sought tenders for new contractors to provide heating, ventilation and air conditioning (HVAC) maintenance services to schools. This contract is now performance-based and focuses on the thermal comfort of spaces within schools.

The Directorate is also looking to replace aged building management systems at schools. This is expected to improve the management of thermal comfort in schools as well as reduce energy consumption.

Loan funding for the first school – Erindale College – was secured from the Carbon Neutral Government Fund \$0.758million.

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## Portfolio/s Education &amp; Early Childhood Development

**ISSUE: NSW ENROLMENTS****Talking points:**

- The ACT is providing specific pathways for NSW students seeking to attend Canberra public schools commencing with 2018 enrolments and being progressively implemented over future years.
- The ACT Government has worked with the NSW Government to ensure the new arrangements provide a number of viable quality options for NSW families seeking schooling in the ACT.
- Selected schools in Tuggeranong and Belconnen have been identified to meet the needs of NSW resident students seeking to enrol in ACT public schools.
- The selection of these schools addresses multiple needs, including the need for NSW families to know as early as possible their schooling options and also for the ACT to better manage school capacity and the distribution of students.

**Key Information**

- NSW students are being directed towards schools in two zones, a southern zone, centred on Tuggeranong, and a northern zone, centred on Belconnen. Within each of these zones, NSW resident students are offered their choice from a defined set of primary schools, high schools, and colleges.
- NSW students currently enrolled in an ACT school are able complete their schooling in the school they currently attend.
- New enrolments of NSW students in ACT public schools will be accepted in identified pathway schools only. Parents from NSW seeking enrolment in ACT schools in 2019 can find advice on the new arrangements on the Education Directorate website, and further guidance will be available when enrolments for 2019 open in April 2018.

**Background Information**

- The ACT welcomes around 1,800 NSW students into our 87 public schools each year.
- Previously, NSW families wishing to enrol their child were required to apply to attend a Canberra public school and applications were considered on a case by case basis. This meant some families may not have received confirmation of their child's enrolment until close to the start of Term 1, once all ACT enrolments had been considered.

Cleared as complete and accurate: 01/02/2018

Cleared by: Director  
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Ext: 620 76197

Lead Directorate: Education

## QUESTION TIME BRIEF

- NSW Government has no plans to increase public school capacity in the ACT region over the next five or more years. Residential and other developments on the NSW side of the border, and the cost of non-government education rising faster than CPI increases, creates the likelihood of steadily increasing enrolments in ACT public schools by NSW residents.
- Eligibility for NSW residing students for each of the zones would be determined by the address of the applicant. Towns and suburbs such as Bywong, Geary's Gap, Gundaroo, Gunning, Murrumbateman, Sutton, Uriarra, Wamboin, and Yass, are all in the northern zone.
- The enrolment pathway for students from the Northern Zone includes Charnwood-Dunlop, Evatt and Florey primary schools, Melba Copeland and University of Canberra Kaleen high schools and Melba Copeland and Lake Ginninderra colleges.
- Towns and suburbs such as Bungendore, Burra, Googong, Jerrabomberra, Michelago and Queanbeyan are all be in the southern zone.
- The enrolment pathway for students from the southern zone includes Gilmore, Wanniassa, Richardson and Calwell primary schools, Caroline Chisholm, Wanniassa and Calwell high schools, and Lake Tuggeranong and Erindale Colleges.

Cleared as complete and accurate: 01/02/2018  
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Portfolio: Education & Early Childhood Development

**ISSUE: CLEANING CONTRACTORS IN SCHOOLS****Talking points:**

- A priority of government in delivering cleaning services to ACT public schools is the continuous improvement in the standards of cleaning performance and compliance, ethical employment and protection of the Industrial Relations and Employment (IRE) conditions of the cleaning staff.
- The Territory takes very seriously its commitment to the protection of workers' rights in the cleaning industry and has been instrumental in providing training on employment rights and conditions to ensure a level of compliance transparency by contract employers.

**Key Information**

- An open tender process was undertaken in 2017 valued at \$48 million over 4 years to replace a cleaning panel arrangement which had been in place since 2011 and due to expire 30 June 2017. The Directorate undertook broad industry stakeholder consultation throughout the process on which the tender requirements were based, including United Voice, the Building Services Contractors Association of Australia (BSCAA) and an independent cleaning consultant.
- As a result of the tender process financial and administrative efficiencies were achieved with the reduction of 88 individual panel Service Agreements plus another 23 Deed contracts based on school size, to just four (4) new Agreements across eight (8) contract school packages covering 87 schools and the Hedley Beare Centre for Teaching and Learning. Contract engagements are with:
  - ACT Commercial Cleaning Service Pty Ltd
  - Dimeo Cleaning Services Pty Ltd
  - Menzies International (Aust.) Pty Ltd
  - Vivid Property Services Pty Ltd.
- Contract Agreements to commence 1 July 2017 were executed on Tuesday 27 June 2017 and Wednesday 28 June 2017. Unsuccessful tenderers were notified of the outcome on Wednesday 28 June 2017 and agreements were made publicly available on the ACT Contracts Register on Monday 3 July 2017.
- Approximately 290 existing cleaning staff who were employed under previous cleaning arrangements were re-engaged by the new cleaning contractors.

Cleared as complete and accurate: 02/02/2018

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Lead Directorate:

Education

TRIM Ref:

- The production rate and Personal Pay Rate (PPR) payable under the Agreements was set by the Territory, the PPR being at a rate above the Cleaning Services Award 2010.
- Another initiative by the Territory is recently becoming a member of the Cleaning Accountability Framework (CAF) as a further demonstration of its commitment to improving outcomes in the cleaning sector, contractor reporting and accountability mechanisms leading to auditing and certification of ACT public schools to the CAF three star standard.

The focus on continuous improvement to provide high quality cleaning services in ACT public schools addresses:

- Compliance
  - Industrial relations and employment performance
  - Maintenance of police checks
  - Safety systems
- Quality
  - Performance management
  - Audits/inspections
  - Regular meetings
- Administrative efficiency
  - Fewer transactions
- Communication and cooperative contracting
- Value for money

## **Background Information**

### Act of Grace payments to eligible ACT public school cleaners

- To alleviate the effect of transition on the school cleaners, a direct payment equivalent to two weeks annual leave is being made by Government to eligible school cleaners who transferred to new cleaning companies, by way of Act of Grace payments.
- Time constraints to finalise procurement of school cleaning services prior to commencing the new contracts on 1 July 2017 led to a very limited time for workers to transition to the new cleaning providers.
- Due to the short transition timeframe between cleaning contracts, the majority of cleaners did not transfer on the commencement of the new contracts (1 July 2017) and were without employment for approximately 2 weeks.
- In addition, school cleaners will not have been able to accrue enough annual leave to be paid over the Christmas period. Generally, school cleaners have 4 weeks annual leave over the Christmas holidays.

Cleared as complete and accurate: 02/02/2018

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## QUESTION TIME BRIEF

- School cleaners are often vulnerable members of our community, from non-english speaking and low-socioeconomic backgrounds and are the least able to respond to periods without pay.
- There is a moral issue of addressing the financial impact of a short transition to new cleaning contractors on a vulnerable workforce.
- As there was not a legal requirement to make this payment, approval was sought and granted, from the Treasurer for Act of Grace payments under section 130 of the *Financial Management Act 1996*.
- All Act of Grace payments will be disclosed in the Directorate's financial statements, and includes details on each payment, the amounts and grounds for the payment, as required under this section of the Act.

Cleared as complete and accurate: 02/02/2018  
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## QUESTION TIME BRIEF

Portfolio: Education & Early Childhood Development

**ISSUE: EDUCATION AND CARE PLACES: AFFORDABILITY AND AVAILABILITY**

**Talking points:**

- Since 2012 the number of centre based early childhood services has increased from 280 to 341.
- The current 341 centre based services operating, includes long day care, school aged care and Government and independent preschools.
- There are approximately 13,000 full-time long day care places for children from birth to five years old.
- The ACT also has approximately 3600 places are in Government preschools and 1400 places in non-Government preschools.
- We have an early childhood education and care sector that is available and accessed by many of our families. The quality and standard of our early childhood sector is increasing every year and we are continuing to provide programs and resources to enhance what we provide our children and families.
- 54 percent of ACT children aged 0 to 5 years attended a centre based service eligible for child care benefit in 2017. This was the highest rate of any jurisdiction in Australia.
- There are children in our community who would benefit from early childhood education and care, who are missing out due to cost and disadvantage.
- The cost of services is driven by factors such as:
  - the ACT's high employment rates and per capita incomes;
  - 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.

Cleared as complete and accurate:	02/02/2018	
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## QUESTION TIME BRIEF

### Key Information

- 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.
- In January 2012 there were approximately 280 centre based services in the ACT. As at 22 January 2018 there are 341 centre based services in the ACT, an increase of 61 services over almost six years.
- As at 22 January 2018, there are approximately 13,000 long day care places available for children preschool age and under in centre-based education and care services. Additionally, there are 3595 places across 79 Government preschools.
- In addition there are 20 non-Government preschools offering approximately 1400 places for preschool aged children.

Commented [MJ1]: Data updated as to 22/1/18

### Background Information

- In February 2016 the then Minister for Education commissioned a review to advise Government on cost, access and quality issues related to long day care services in the ACT.
- Forty-seven long day care and independent preschools operate from ACT Government-owned facilities. The majority of long day care services that operate from ACT Government owned facilities pay a subsidised rent, while others receive a discount on commercial rents.
- The review found that the sector has moved from an under supply of places to an oversupply over the last few years. This oversupply may be as much as 20%, although the impact is not being evenly experienced across providers in the ACT.
- Since January 2016, CECA has reviewed approximately 35 development applications and lease variations which indicate further increases to sector capacity over the next two years.
- In 2016 seven new long care centres commenced operation. In 2017 nine new long day care centres have commenced operation in the ACT.

District	Suburb	Maximum places
Gunghalin	Nicholls	90 (2016)
	Nicholls	130 (2017)
	Amaroo	120 (2016)
Inner North	Turner	135 (2016)
	Acton	112 (2017)

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## QUESTION TIME BRIEF

Belconnen	Bruce	156 (2016)
	Higgins	70 (2017)
	Holt	60 (2017)
Tuggeranong	Gordon	44 (2016)
	Kambah	120 (2016)
	Kambah	83 (2017)
	Richardson	35 (2017)
	Fyshwick	57 (2017)
	Wanniassa	44 (2016)
	Wanniassa	50 (2017)
	Symonston	90 (2017)

**Commented [MJ2]:** Updated to include all of 2017.

- On 30 June 2016 Fyshwick Early Childhood Centre, operated by Community Services #1, ceased operation due to low occupancy levels.
- On 23 December 2016 two other long day care services ceased operation due to a lack of viability: Gordon Early Childhood Centre operated by Anglicare and Kambah Child Care and Education Centre operated by Communities@Work.

In 2017 the following services ceased operation;

- 24 March 2017 Kidlets Early Learning Centre.
- 1 September 2017 YMCA Duntroon Vacation Care.
- 30 September 2017 Honey Tree Early Childhood Centre.
- 15 November 2017 YMCA PMC Vacation Care.
- 11 December 2017 Sherpa Kids CCS.
- 18 December 2017 Sherpa Kids North Canberra
- 19 December 2017 YMCA Holy Trinity After School Care.

**Commented [MJ3]:** Updated to include all of 2017

### Costs

- The review found that the primary barrier to access to services in the ACT, relative to other jurisdictions, is the cost of those services, with a mean cost of \$105 per day, significantly higher than the national mean of just over \$80 per day. Costs in the ACT have been growing faster than in other jurisdictions for several years, making services relatively more expensive for families in the ACT than other jurisdictions.
- The factors driving higher costs in the ACT include:

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## QUESTION TIME BRIEF

- The high employment rates and per capita incomes in the ACT setting market tolerances;
  - A shortage of suitable workers for the ECEC sector compared to larger jurisdictions;
  - The uneven interaction of the non-Government ECEC sector and the Government preschool component of the ECEC sector; and
  - The small geographical footprint of the ACT combined with a relatively even social distribution of disadvantaged families, resulting in higher price tolerances across the whole of the ACT that do not account for the thresholds of lower income families.
- The Australian Government subsidises the cost of child care by providing a means-tested Child Care Benefit and a non-means tested Child Care Rebate for parents or carers who attend work, study or training. The rebate covers 50 percent of out-of-pocket costs up to an annual cap of \$7,500 per child per year.
  - The cost impact on families at the lowest two income deciles after the application of Australian Government rebates and subsidies is 31.6% and 27.1% of disposable income respectively. This compares to the national averages of 23.4% and 19% respectively. This makes ECEC comparatively more expensive for families in the ACT than other jurisdictions.
  - The Australian Government Family Assistance Office also provides financial assistance to families who choose to have their children cared for by grandparents, relatives, friends or nannies. Benefits for these types of registered child care are paid at a flat rate and are not income tested.
  - The Australian Government has announced a 'Families Package' which includes a new childcare subsidy, a two year In Home Care (Nannies) Pilot and a Child Care Safety Net to support families who are vulnerable and disadvantaged.
  - The Jobs for Families package is planned for implementation from 1 July 2018. It will replace the current *Child Care Benefit*, *Child Care Rebate* and *Jobs, Education and Training Child Care Fee Assistance* program with a single means-tested *Child Care Subsidy*.

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## Portfolio/s Education &amp; Early Childhood Development

**ISSUE: FAMILY DAY CARE FRAUD AND QUALITY****Talking points:**

- Unlawful FDC conduct continues to be part of national conversations through AESOC and Education Council.
- Jurisdictions including the ACT have applied enormous effort to remove the dodgy operators from the sector. New strategies and persistence is paying off with many bad operators being closed down and not re-emerging.
- There is still work to be done to tackle those remaining entities and to ensure that the national laws and systems are robust enough to prevent future fraud.
- The ACT continues to have a pro-active working relationship with the Commonwealth in a bid to prevent and remove dodgy operators.

**Key Information**

- Unlawful conduct in the family day care (FDC) sector is a national issue and is on the agenda of Education Council and AESOC. FDC services and providers represent a disproportionate number of compliance matters for Regulatory Authorities.
- State and Territory Regulatory Authorities, including the ACT, have expressed concerns regarding the steep increase in family day care provider and service applications and approvals. In an attempt to minimise the number of new providers in the sector the ACT Regulatory Authority has significantly tightened approval procedures for FDC applicants.
- The ACT has a positive and pro-active working relationship with Commonwealth, and State and Territory, colleagues on family day care cases.
- Education Council agreed to reforms to the National Law aimed to reduce non-compliance in the sector which came into effect with the amendments to the National Law on 1 October 2017. This includes improving the powers to check on educators and children operating from private homes, and the ability of regulatory authorities to apply Commonwealth non-compliance decisions to local services.
- At the beginning of January 2016 there were 28 family day care providers in the ACT (22 ACT providers and 6 interstate providers).

Cleared as complete and accurate: 02/02/2018

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## QUESTION TIME BRIEF

- During 2016 and 2017 twelve providers were cancelled. There are also two providers suspended (1 voluntary) from operating and three providers who have surrendered their approval. Fourteen applications for provider or service approval were refused at interview.
- As at 1 January 2018 there are 25 family day care providers in the ACT. This comprises of:
  - 9 providers that are CCB approved and are operating education and care services in the ACT;
  - 3 providers not operating any services as they await CCB approval from the Commonwealth;
  - 4 providers who hold an approval but are not exercising their option to operate a service or seek CCB approval; and
  - 9 providers who are not operational because their services are suspended or cancelled for compliance reasons.
- In 2016 and 2017 there were 20 applications for family day care provider approval. Of those eight were refused provider approval, one was found to be invalid and one surrendered their approval and two are currently being investigated for providing fraudulent documentation. Eight new ACT providers were approved by the regulatory authority; however three providers were refused service approvals.

### *Family Day Care (FDC) Quality*

- FDC services are assessed in accordance with the National Quality Standard.
- FDC services that demonstrate consistent non-compliance with the National Law and Regulations are not considered suitable to undergo the Assessment and Rating process.
- Ten FDC services have undergone the Assessment and Rating process, although Two FDC are no longer operational due to non-compliance issues.
- As of 1 January 2018 one FDC service is rated at Exceeding NQS, three FDC services are rated at Meeting NQS and three FDC services are rated at Working Towards NQS.

### **Background Information**

- The National Quality Framework is made up of the Education and Care Services National Law (National Law) and the Education and Care Services National Regulations (National Regulations). Each State and Territory is responsible for administering and monitoring compliance with the National Law and Regulations. The National Law is structured around safety and wellbeing of children and compliance measures to ensure children are safe and are positively learning.

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## QUESTION TIME BRIEF

- The Commonwealth Department of Education and Training has responsibility for administering, monitoring compliance and approving child care services with the Family Assistance Law (FAL).
- Approved child care services have Australian Government approval to pass on Child Care Benefit as a reduction in child care fees. This means parents have less out of pocket expenses. Approved care services include, long day care, family day care, outside school hours care, vacation care, in home care, and occasional care.

Cleared as complete and accurate: 02/02/2018  
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## Portfolio: Education & Early Childhood Development

### **ISSUE: CANBERRA TEACHER RECRUITMENT ASSESSMENT (CANTRA)**

#### **Key Information**

##### *Literacy and Numeracy Testing of Teachers (CANTRA)*

- The ACT Government is committed to the employment of high quality teachers.
- The Directorate delivered the Canberra Teacher Recruitment Assessment (CANTRA) in November 2015. This was under a specific agreement with ACER when the national instrument for Literacy and Numeracy testing (LANTITE) was being developed and trialled. When ACER was awarded management of the national test instrument, it was confirmed that the test be used for the sole purpose of testing initial teacher education students and is not accessible by employers.
- The ACT Teacher Quality Institute (TQI) assesses qualifications and, depending upon where study was completed, evidence of English language proficiency is requested in determining a teacher's eligibility for professional registration.
- The Directorate is monitoring national developments in demonstrated teacher personal literacy and numeracy standards and will consult with the TQI about potential to link these *skills to teacher registration*.

Cleared as complete and accurate: 02/02/2018

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## Portfolio/s Education & Early Childhood Development

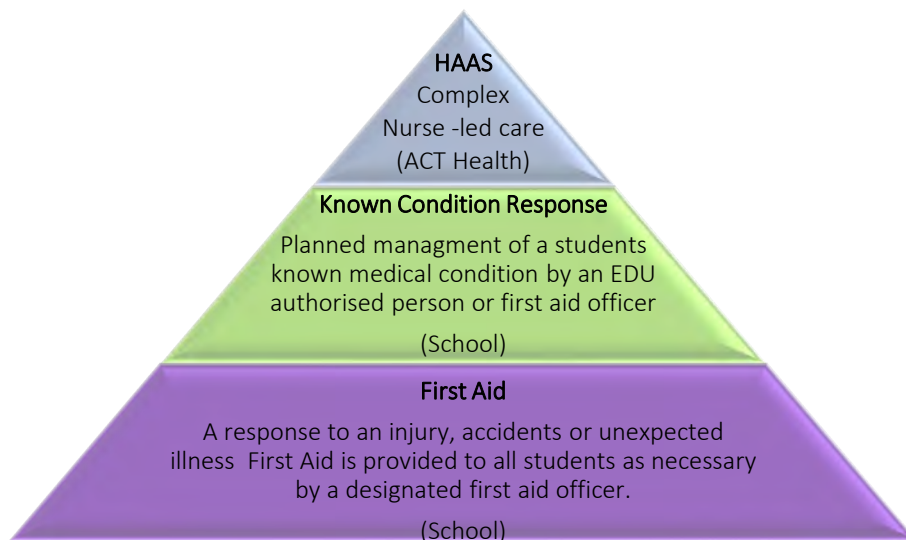
### ISSUE: HEALTHCARE ACCESS AT SCHOOL (HAAS)

#### Talking points:

- The HAAS model is being fully implemented across all ACT schools as a means of supporting students with complex healthcare needs, ensuring equitable access for students in mainstream and specialists schools.
- Education continues to work in partnership with Health to deliver the HAAS program and to support schools in meeting the needs of their students.
- There are currently 54 students in the HAAS program across 28 schools.

#### Key Information

- The HAAS model is based on a three-tiered approach to healthcare in ACT public schools and involves a combination of Registered Nurses, First Aid Officers and Learning Support Assistants (LSAs). There are no longer full-time nurses in ACT specialist schools.



- The HAAS tier, previously only available as nurse-led care in specialist schools, enables equitable access for students who require health tasks or procedures to be undertaken during the school day or whose health needs cannot be managed safely through an Education *Known Medical Condition Management Plan*.

Cleared as complete and accurate: 05/02/2018

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## QUESTION TIME BRIEF

- Specialist schools now have more designated First Aid Officers to respond to first aid incidents that may arise as well as an assigned RN to support staff in providing health tasks as required.
- There are currently 54 students on the HAAS program across 28 schools. This includes 21 students across the four specialist schools and 33 students in mainstream schools. Each student is supported by up to three LSAs who are trained and deemed competent by a Level 2 Registered Nurse. Examples of these tasks include:
  - care of tracheostomy
  - fluid, nutrition or medication via gastronomy
  - blood glucose testing and insulin administration
  - oxygen therapy.
- The number of students accessing the HAAS program has increased over the past four months, in particular students being newly identified as having type 1 diabetes.
- The training provided to HAAS workers is tailored to the needs of the student receiving the care. HAAS workers are also be required to undertake CIT training in a ‘targeted skill set’ of three nationally accredited competencies that can contribute towards a relevant Certificate IV.

### Background Information

- Historically, the HAAS program has provided nurse-led care to students with complex or invasive health care needs in specialist schools. A review of HAAS, led by ACT Health and involving parents, schools, and unions, was tabled in the Legislative Assembly on 13 August 2015.
- ACT Education and ACT Health have collaborated to develop a revised contemporary model of HAAS designed to meet the ongoing healthcare needs of students across all ACT public schools.

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## Portfolio/s Education &amp; Early Childhood Development

**ISSUE: IMPLEMENTATION OF THE NATIONAL DISABILITY INSURANCE SCHEME AND EARLY INTERVENTION (INCLUDING CHILD DEVELOPMENT SERVICE, THERAPY ASSISTANCE IN SCHOOLS AND TRANSITION FOR ABORIGINAL AND TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER STUDENTS)****Talking points:**

- The Education Directorate continues to support the transition of students with disability to the Scheme following the initial ‘ages and stages’ transition process that occurred in the ACT from mid-2014 to mid-2016.
- As the Scheme matures, Education continues to work closely with the NDIA, local areas coordination services, the non-government school sectors and the Child Development Service to support streamlined access and planning processes for young people in our schools.

**Key Information**

- As of August 2017, 2,312 children are accessing Disability Education programs in ACT public schools. The majority of those students with a lifelong and permanent disability have already applied to access the Scheme. Students with disability who have not applied to participate in the NDIS to date may not need funded supports at this time, but may apply to join the Scheme if such needs arise at a later date.
- At this point in time the ACT Government continues to provide personal care in school and transport to and from school for students who meet Directorate eligibility requirements as in-kind services under the Scheme. These supports need to be included in individual NDIS packages in order for the ACT Government’s in-kind contribution to be recognised. Policy work is underway at a national level to determine how these supports will be provided, as we move towards full Scheme, as they are considered in scope for NDIS funding.
- In 2017 there are 386 students who have been approved access to the Special Needs Transport program. There are approximately 723 students currently receiving personal care supports at school.

**Cross agency collaboration to strengthen implementation**

- As implementation progresses nationally, the Education Directorate continues to participate in regular meetings with the NDIA, Child Development Service and the non-government education sectors through the NDIS Children and Families Portfolio Working Group and the NDIS Education and Employment Portfolio Working Group. Participation on these working groups is crucial in addressing operational issues that

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relate to the mainstream interface and identifying opportunities for greater collaboration and planning into the future.

### Early Intervention

- The Directorate's Support at Preschool team meets regularly with NDIS registered Early Intervention providers and continues to work in partnership with the Child Development Service to strengthen collaborative practice across sectors.
- The Directorate contributes funding for 1.8 early childhood teachers and 3 psychologists to work as part of the multidisciplinary team at the Child Development Service.
- The early childhood teachers coordinate Developing Kids Playgroups run at the Child and Family Centres at West Belconnen, Gungahlin and Tuggeranong, and at Holder. The program caters for children aged from 18 months to preschool with delays in their development and who are not eligible for support services through the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS).
- The two Directorates also collaborate to deliver play based activities for young children who attend the Mums and Bubs group at Winnunga Nimmityjah Aboriginal Health Service. Allied health professionals attend the group to support children and families and ensure early identification of children at risk of developmental delay and provide assessment and referral to the NDIS for young children requiring early intervention support services.

### School Leavers Employment Supports (SLES) initiative

- The NDIS School Leaver Employment Supports (SLES) initiative is an individualised approach to supporting employment for Year 12 school leavers with a disability. This initiative has been delivered as a pilot in the ACT since 2015 and is expected to be an ongoing initiative across all states and territories.
- In the ACT, the initiative is delivered as a partnership between the NDIA and the three education sectors. Suitability for SLES is currently determined through a Functional Work Assessment that is conducted by staff in schools with knowledge of individual students. This online assessment is generally undertaken by Disability Education Coordinators or Transitions and Careers Officers in consultation with the student's family.
- The NDIA makes a determination of suitability based on this assessment and eligible students receive a package of supports valued at up to \$21,000 per year over two years in addition to their existing NDIS package. Supports are tailored to the individual needs of the student and range from packages including work experience in an open employment situation, job site training, travel training and activities that contribute to achieving an employment outcome as well as supporting linkages to ongoing employment support.

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## Portfolio/s Education &amp; Early Childhood Development

**ISSUE: SAFE AND INCLUSIVE SCHOOLS INITIATIVE****Talking points:**

- The ACT Government is committed to providing positive and engaging learning environments where young people feel connected, respected, and are fully engaged in education, regardless of their identity or background.
- Same sex attracted, intersex and gender diverse people report school as a significant site where they experience or have experienced bullying, discrimination and isolation.
- Schools, have important legislative and ethical responsibilities to ensure they are safe and inclusive environments for students, staff and families.
- We want everyone to be able to be themselves at school and to feel safe and welcomed as who they are. That's why we are funding this new initiative.
- The Initiative has been developed by Sexual Health and Family Planning (SHFPACT)
- The cost of the Initiative is \$100,000 per annum over four years from 2017-18 to 2020-21.
- The Initiative will be implemented in semester 1, 2018.

**Key Information**

- The planned support of LGBTIQ+ students in ACT schools is currently in a transition phase. Sexual Health and Family Planning ACT (SHFPACT), as the delivery partner of Safe Schools Coalition ACT (SSC ACT) withdrew from the Australian Government funded national Safe Schools Coalition Australia (SSCA) Program in 2016.
- Supported by ACT Government funding SHFPACT is currently providing support to schools on request, as well as developing a new initiative to support ACT schools address the needs of LGBTIQ+ students. The new Safe and Inclusive Schools Initiative (the Initiative) is close to being finalised.

Previous SSCA Program

- The SSCA Program has been the subject of focus from some members of the Australian community including concerns about content relating to gender, misconceptions about what is taught, and requests for parental permission for

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students to learn about particular content. While similar concerns have been raised locally, other correspondence from local constituents, including young people, has affirmed the importance of such a program.

- Under the SSCA Program, SSC ACT offered professional learning to school staff as requested by individual schools. Topics include information about
  - the SSCA Program,
  - sexuality and gender diversity,
  - inclusive practices and curriculum resources.
- SSC ACT also provided consultation support to schools where there were concerns about specific student issues.
- SSC ACT also engaged with both public and independent school parent peak bodies to address parent community concerns, and had positive responses in this engagement. The objective of this engagement is ensuring schools are safe, respectful and inclusive environments for all students.
- It has been important to clarify that SSC ACT has not directly taught students in classrooms as part of the SSCA Program. SSC ACT is not aware that any school has made use of the SSCA curriculum material.

#### New ACT Initiative

- In February 2017, the Education Directorate (the Directorate) finalised a procurement process engaging SHFPACT to develop a new initiative which will include:
  - a service model
  - guidelines,
  - evaluation framework and
  - communication strategy,
  - SHFPACT has also continued to provide ongoing support for schools. individualised support and advice for schools
- In September 2017 the Directorate approved the finalised Initiative documents. The documents included the Initiative Guidelines (including service model), an Evaluation Framework and a Communications Strategy.
- The goal of the Initiative is to build the capacity of ACT schools and education programs to develop and maintain safe and inclusive environments for all students regardless of their gender presentation/identity, intersex status or sexual orientation. The Initiative will do this through:
  - individualised support and advice for schools,
  - recommendations of high quality teaching resources,
  - supporting school staff and families to connect with relevant health and community supports and
  - professional learning programs.
- The Directorate is currently working with SHFPACT to finalise supporting resources such as fact sheets and a website prior to the Initiative becoming operational in Semester 1, 2018.

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- The Initiative has not produced any curriculum resources, however, schools will continue to have access to SSCA Program curriculum materials, as they are available on the [Student Wellbeing Hub](#) (administered by the Australian Government). These materials were modified following the Australian Government sponsored Loudon review.
- The Initiative will promote relevant curriculum resources to schools as they are discovered and reviewed. Schools will access support and services from the Initiative in a manner consistent with how the school regularly accesses and delivers other school activities and programs. If the school is seeking support for an individual student, the student's parents will be contacted to seek permission and will be invited to be part of the support process. If the school is seeking support to build its capacity (e.g. professional learning for staff or advice about policy and procedures) to enhance a safe school environment for LGBTQI students, parental permission is not required.

### Other Roles of SHFPACT

- It is important to clarify that SHFPACT is a health promotion charity assisted with funding from the ACT Government. In addition to the Safe and Inclusive Schools Initiative, *but separate to this initiative*, SHFPACT supports public, private and faith-based schools in Canberra to deliver effective, relevant, accurate and responsible sexuality education. This sexuality education is not part of the Safe and Inclusive Schools Initiative, or the previous SSCA Program.

### **Background Information**

- The ACT Government is committed to ensuring every student attending school in the ACT feels safe and supported, to enable them to learn. Canberra Public Schools are guided by the Safe and Supportive Schools Policy (2016) which requires them to provide safe and supportive learning environments.
- The Safe Schools Coalition Australia (SSCA) is an Australian Government funded program designed to build the capacity of schools to support and actively include same sex attracted, intersex and gender diverse students and reduce homophobic and transphobic behaviour in Australian schools.
- In August 2016, the ACT Government made the commitment to fund the Safe Schools Coalition ACT after changes to the Australian Government funded program limited school principal autonomy and made it difficult for school staff to respond to individual student needs. In September 2016, Sexual Health and Family Planning ACT (SHFPACT), in consultation with the ACT Government, declined to sign the new Commonwealth program agreement, but continued to provide support to schools.
- Due to concerns from sections of the Australian community an independent review of the SSCA Program resources was undertaken in March 2016 by Professor Bill Loudon (Loudon Review). The review examined whether the program resources were age appropriate, educationally sound and aligned to the Australian Curriculum. The Review recommended changes to curriculum materials, removal of links to third party materials on the program website and included the requirement for parental consent to participate in the program.

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## QUESTION TIME BRIEF

- SSC ACT previous work with schools has not had a “sex education” focus. Relationships and sexuality is a focus area of the Health and Physical Education learning area of the Australian Curriculum. Australian Curriculum content supports students to develop knowledge, understanding and skills that will help them to establish and manage respectful relationships and is delivered by teachers. These lessons support young people to develop positive practices in relation to their reproductive and sexual health and the development of their identity. While SHFPACT as an organisation have been engaged by some schools to support their “relationships and sexuality” focus area of the curriculum, this was not part of the SSCA Program.
- For example, SHFPACT’s Schools Disability Program has been in place for over 20 years and provides students with a disability in ACT Public Schools with a range of skills to enable them to better manage their relationships and interactions with others, especially their peers. The program supports teachers & Learning Support Assistants by providing professional development opportunities, curriculum support and access to resources and tools designed to educate young people with disabilities in areas of sexual and reproductive health.
- Research has shown that bullying, discrimination and isolation of young people who are same sex attracted, intersex and/or gender diverse often occurs in schools and this seriously impacts on student wellbeing. These experiences can negatively affect students’ sense of belonging, safety and engagement at school, with subsequent impacts on education participation, achievement, health and wellbeing.
- While the data identifies that young people report experiencing high levels of homophobic and transphobic bullying at school, research also demonstrates that supportive and inclusive schools can make a significant and positive difference to student outcomes.

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## Portfolio/s Education &amp; Early Childhood Development

**ISSUE:       SCHOOLS FOR ALL IMPLEMENTATION****Talking points:**

- 43 of the 49 recommendations for the ACT Education Directorate (EDU), and 19 of the 26 recommendations for Catholic Education (CE) have been closed. 6 EDU recommendations and 7 CE recommendations open.
- A key area of focus moving forward will be in ensuring the long term sustainability of changes made through the Schools for All program.
- The quarterly *Schools for All* program reports for December 2017 are scheduled to be released in February 2018. The *Schools for All* 2017 Annual Report is scheduled for release in March 2018. Both reports will be published on the ACT Education Directorate's website.

**Key Messages:**

- *Implementation of recommendations outlined in the Expert Panel Report on Students with Complex Needs and Challenging Behaviour.*
- An Expert Panel, comprising Emeritus Professor Tony Shaddock, Dr Sue Packer and Mr Alasdair Roy, released the Schools for All Report in November 2015, making 50 recommendations to improve how the ACT education system supports the learning and wellbeing needs of children and young people with complex needs and challenging behaviours.
- The Government Response acknowledged a strong cross-sectoral desire to build on existing reforms, improvements and initiatives where possible. Of the 50, 49 recommendations directly relate to Canberra Public Schools and 26 recommendations to CE.
- For Canberra Public Schools, the ACT Government established the three-year Schools for All Program with an investment of \$21.5M over the forward estimates to implement the 50 recommendations. The Program aims to develop and reinforce a student-centred vision; and bring together the capabilities required to catalyse systemic and sustainable cultural change across the ACT education system. CE has established a work program to implement their recommendations.
- The Association of Independent Schools of the ACT (AISACT) is working with each member school to consider the 26 recommendations which mentioned Independent Schools to refine and reflect on their approaches to further benefit their students' learning.

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### Schools for All Program – Present Status

- The Schools for All Program has now closed 43 of the 49 recommendations for EDU, and 19 of the 26 recommendations for CE. 6 EDU recommendations and 7 CE recommendations open.

The quarterly Schools for All program reports for December 2017 are scheduled to be released in February 2018 once endorsement has been received from the Schools for All Program Board and the Minister's Office. The Schools for All 2017 Annual Report is scheduled for release in March 2018. [Summary of achievements](#)

### *Focus on Wellbeing for Learning*

The Program aims to ensure all students benefit from a school-wide culture of wellbeing for learning through the applications of a range of universal and specialist supports and strategies. These include:

- Strengthening of Network Student Engagement Teams with allied health staff including psychologists, speech language pathologists, occupational therapists, physiotherapists, resulting in increased capacity to implement evidence-based models of wellbeing and learning.
- Implementation of Positive Behaviour for Learning (PBL) Framework, an evidence based, whole school approach for creating safe, and supportive school environments. This Framework has been implemented in 30 Canberra Public Schools.
- Implementation of neuroscience informed and trauma informed and sensitive strategies in schools.
- Implementation of social emotional learning programs KidsMatter and MindMatters in ACT schools.

### *Supporting Schools and Building Capabilities*

- The development of the Continuum of Educational Support (CES) model for high schools to bring together a range of inclusive and flexible learning options for all students. All ACT public high schools will be implementing the model from the beginning of the 2018 school year.
- Preliminary scoping for a primary action research project which will provide appropriate behavioural support and therapeutic intervention for primary school students with very challenging behaviours. Two projects will commence in 2018 school year which comprise of a language project and a therapeutic trauma informed targeted service.
- The review of the Suspension, Exclusion or Transfer of Students in ACT Public Schools policy to include reference to an early intervention and prevention approach as well as in-school suspensions options. This policy aligns with the Safe and Supportive Schools policy and Continuum of Educational Supports for high school and was developed in consideration of the current occupational violence work being

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undertaken by the Directorate. This policy is scheduled to be implemented in 2018 once feedback is received from the Minister and a final stakeholder consultation process is undertaken.

- The bringing together of information and resources needed by schools to support students on the Inclusion and Wellbeing intranet site and on the Inclusion and Wellbeing internet site for students, parent and carers and the broader community.
- Targeted professional learning in inclusive education, including the Everyone Everyday: Toolkit for Inclusion program; Online Training modules in disability and learning difficulties; Allied Health professional development workshops; Targeted Scholarships for postgraduate study relating to students with complex needs and challenging behaviour; and an ongoing review into initial teacher education.
- The ACT Government continues to target upgrades to safe, sensory learning spaces through an Expression of Interest process (EOIs). This process requires schools to work with occupational therapists in Network Student Engagement Teams to develop their proposals. Going forward, the occupation therapists will continue to work with schools to help them develop proposals which specifically meet the objective of the Schools for All Program. In addition, schools where there is unmet need will be identified and approached to develop appropriate proposals.

#### *Building Partnerships*

Improving partnerships and connections within and between the ACT school system and across community services:

- The program is working with education, community services and health sector partners to improve information and referral pathways including by working with Onelink and the forthcoming Office of Mental Health.
- EDU collaborated with CE and AISACT to develop a suite of parent engagement resources as a part of a cross-sectoral project. These resources were finalised in December 2017 and build on previous work from the Australian Research Alliance for Children and Youth (ARACY), and incorporate additional consultation with stakeholders. They provide evidence-based technical and plain English definitions of parent engagement, and practical resources that support effective parental engagement with families of children and young people. A particular focus on engaging families of children and young people with complex needs and challenging behaviours has been included. These resources will be utilised by all ACT education sectors.
- To support students in out of home care, community service and education system partners have formed an Improving Educational Outcomes Committee. A Collaboration Agreement has formalised this approach to improve the coordination of services and information sharing, so that all children and young people in out-of-home care achieve better educational outcomes.

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- The Education and Community Services Directorates are applying the Strengthening Families approach through dedicated Network Student Engagement Team leaders and in partnership with OneLink.
- The Education and Community Services Directorate have also partnered together to ensure that the transition of children into pre-school (Prep for Pre) and pre-school students into primary school (Big School Ready) are a positive experience for both the child and the family.
- The Prep for Pre program focuses on early intervention, connectedness and service linkages, and provides parents and carers an opportunity to observe their children's participation in a preschool program and have direct access to early intervention therapists, Child and Family Centre Workers and early childhood teachers. The program also helps children build their understanding and confidence to start school through directly experiencing an early childhood program, whilst parents and carers received practical advice on how they can support a smooth transition for their children to preschool. These programs were successfully implemented in 2017 and will continue in the 2018 school year.
- The resource kit for Student Voice was delivered by Youth Coalition. The kit was produced and will be launched ready for use in in 2018.
- A set of resources were designed from the lessons learned during the implementation of the Schools for All program. These resources were shared with the Student Resource Allocation team and the Future of Education (EDU) community conversation to inform decision making, practice and process.

### Next Steps

EDU, AISACT, and CE, in partnership with the broader human services, will continue to implement the remaining recommendations. A key area of focus moving forward will be in ensuring the long term sustainability of changes made through the Schools for All program. This goal, as well as the implementation of the remaining recommendations, will be supported by the following:

### *Change Management*

As the responses to the recommendations are designed and embedded into usual business practice, the program is monitoring the change they effect through internal governance and accountability mechanisms.

### *Evaluation*

The Schools for All Program Board endorsed the Schools for All Evaluation Plan in September 2017, and the baseline development in December 2017. The Evaluation will analyse the impact of the program and assess progress in achieving the program objectives and vision.

The EDU Planning and Analytics are aligning as much of it as possible with other ongoing strategic programs and evaluations to ensure the longer term usefulness of the evaluation.

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## Portfolio/s Education &amp; Early Childhood Development

**ISSUE: MENTAL HEALTH AND SCHOOL PSYCHOLOGISTS****Talking points:**

- Wellbeing needs of students in schools is an ongoing commitment for the Education Directorate. There are 67.5 FTE school psychologists and senior psychologists supporting students, parents/carers and teachers across 87 ACT public schools.

<b>Increase in school psychologists (FTE) between 2015 and 2018</b>	
June 2015	52.16
February 2016 - post Enterprise Bargaining Agreement (EBA)	56.16
February 2017 – increased allocation under 2016-17 budget	62.5
February 2018 – increased allocation under 2017-18 budget	67.5

- Their work is informed by an early intervention and prevention model which is ecologically informed. This means that all parts of student's life (family, classroom, peers etc) can be worked with to address student wellbeing and learning concerns.
- In addition to school psychologists, Network Student Engagement team in each of the Canberra districts provides multidisciplinary input from professionals comprising of social worker, speech pathologist, occupational therapist and educators who are trained in positive behaviour support for learning.
- School Psychology Service is part of the wider mental health system which exists for the community in the ACT, including ACT Health, Headspace and the Australian Child and Adolescent Trauma, Loss and Grief, Australian National University.
- 11.5% of students used school based mental health services in 2015 throughout Australia (Australian Government Department of Health 2015) for emotional and behavioural issues.

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## QUESTION TIME BRIEF

- In 2016, 16% of ACT Public School students accessed support from a school psychologists. This data indicates that the number of students ACT Public School psychologists support, is higher than the national average.
- In the environment of increased need for mental health support for students, ACT Government committed to additional resources for 20 more psychologists in schools over four years. Five new psychologists have been recruited and are starting in their allocated schools in term 1 2018.

### Key Information

- The allocation of school psychologists to schools is based on student enrolment and the targeted needs of students in schools. Staffing for the beginning of Semester One 2018 is:
  - Total school psychologists supporting students and schools: 67.5 FTEs.
  - 49.5 FTE are deployed within schools (including 0.7 FTE purchased by schools). This includes an additional four psychologists provided under the Teachers Enterprise Agreement 2014 -2018.
  - 12 FTE Senior Psychologists within Network Student Engagement Teams (NSET) working with schools to support students with complex and challenging behaviours, as well as providing support to school based psychologists.
  - 1 FTE Senior Psychologist is working with Positive Behaviours for Learning (PBL) team. This is a temporary position for two years (2017 – 2018) aimed to strengthen trauma sensitive practices within the PBL framework.3 FTE are supporting families and children to be school ready through the Child Development Service.
  - 1 FTE Senior Manager for Clinical Practice and 1 FTE Manager of School Counselling.
- The 2017-2018 Budget provided resourcing to recruit an additional five full-time school psychologists for ACT public schools. The five psychologists commenced in January 2018.

### Future Directions

- All schools have a psychologists to provide assistance to students, their families and teachers. The focus of service delivery will include varied and innovative ways of service delivery for children to address their learning and well-being needs.
- There will be an increased focus on early intervention and prevention of student difficulties to ensure that mental health and learning issues are addressed before

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they become established and resistant to change. The benefits of reduced mental health concerns will be seen in greater levels of engagement in schooling and participation in the community, and savings for government.

The School Psychology Service will continue to be part of the wider mental health system which exists for the community in the ACT. Currently there is strong collaboration and partnerships with community and government agencies, including:

- ACT Mental Health;
- Headspace;
- the Australian Child & Adolescent Trauma, Loss & Grief, ANU College of Medicine, Biology and Environment; and
- ACT Child Development Service

### **Background Information**

- School psychologists are available to be accessed by all students, parents/carers and school staff in ACT Public Schools. School psychologists work across behavioural, social, emotional and learning domains to support a student's wellbeing and learning.
- School psychologist form an important part of the mental health approach in the community by identifying and working with personal difficulties early in the life of the problem, responding to an immediate crisis, working with school staff to put in preventative strategies at the whole school level, working with the family and referring moderate to severe mental health issues to other specialists.
- 11.5% of students used school based mental health services in 2015 throughout Australia (Australian Government Department of Health 2015) for emotional and behavioural issues. In 2015 13.8% and in 2016 16% of ACT Public School students accessed support from a school psychologists (School Psychologist 2015 and 2016 Annual Report). This data indicates that the number of students ACT Public School psychologists support, is higher than the national average and the severity and complexity of cases has dramatically increased over time.
- The percentage of students with a diagnosed mental health disorder who accessed school based mental health support has gone from 19.2% in 1998 to 54% in 2015 throughout Australia (Australian Government Department of Health 2015). In the environment of increased need for mental health support for students, ACT Government committed to additional resources for 20 more psychologists in schools over four years. Five new psychologists have been recruited and are starting in their allocated schools in Term one this year.

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## Portfolio/s Education & Early Childhood Development

### ISSUE: SCHOOL PLANNING

#### Talking points:

- The government is committed to deliver new school capacity in growing locations of the ACT.
- Public school enrolments across the ACT are projected to grow at an average 3.4 per cent per annum over the period 2018-27. The distribution of the growth varies across the act, with growth fronts in the north and northwest of Canberra.
- New public schools are due to open in Taylor in 2019 and in Denman Prospect in the following years.
- Planning is underway for new public schools in Gungahlin and in West Belconnen, plus expansions to the Franklin Early Childhood School and the Gold Creek School.

#### Key Information

- A program of school infrastructure planning is in place to address current and future needs for public school education in the ACT. The Education Directorate works with the Environment, Planning and Sustainable Development Directorate to ensure the availability of suitable land for new schools.
- The Directorate undertakes student enrolment projection modelling using information from land release data, sales data, birth data, dwelling occupation forecasts, school census and school capacities data.
- Planning for a new public school requires approximately five years from emerging evidence of the need for a new school to opening. The Directorate is assessing a number of potential new school sites, the majority in Gungahlin and in Molonglo.
- A number of areas in the ACT are subject to urban infill, placing demand on existing public school infrastructure. Evidence of school enrolment pressure is analysed to determine likely trends and solutions are explored including:
  - reducing out-of-area enrolments
  - adjusting the priority placement area boundary
  - planning for a temporary capacity increase (transportable buildings)
  - planning for medium term capacity increase (modular design buildings)
  - planning for a permanent capacity increase (school expansion)

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- changing the structure of the school.
- Requests for new non-government schools are referred to the Directorate for advice on their viability and impact on public schools. Non-government schools arrange their own site planning and construction through the Environment, Planning and Sustainable Development Directorate.
- The Directorate is working closely with the Environment, Planning and Sustainable Development Directorate to streamline processes associated with the release of land to the non-government school sector.
- Potential sites for non-government schools have been identified by the Environment, Planning and Sustainable Development Directorate in Molonglo and West Belconnen.
- Further information on non-government school registrations is available in the fact sheet Non-government School Registration Summary.

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**QUESTION TIME BRIEF**Attachment A

<b>Potential new public school locations</b>	<b>School type</b>	<b>Estimated opening</b>
Taylor (Gungahlin)	Preschool to year 10	2019
Denman Prospect (Molonglo 2)	Preschool to year 6	2021
East Gungahlin	Preschool to year 10	2022
Denman Prospect (Molonglo 2)	Year 6 to year 10	2024 - 2025
Group Centre (Molonglo 2)	To be advised	To be advised
Molonglo 3	To be advised	To be advised
Riverview (West Belconnen)	To be advised	To be advised

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Portfolio/s Education & Early Childhood Development

**ISSUE: ESCALATION PROCESS FOR REPORTS OF BULLYING IN SCHOOLS**

**Talking points:**

- Schools are well placed to address incidents of bullying, harassment and violence in collaboration with students, parents and carers. School interventions are based on the understanding that children and young people are growing and learning how to become responsible citizens.
- Research indicates interventions that work towards building or repairing relationships lead to better outcomes for all students involved, however, schools will take strong actions if there is an immediate threat to the safety of students.
- *The Safe and Supportive Schools (SSS)* policy was implemented in April 2016 and provides guidance for Canberra Public Schools on promoting safe, respectful and supportive school environments.
- Students are encouraged to raise their concerns with or seek support from teachers, school psychologists, youth support workers and other staff in Canberra public schools.
- These support staff are able to provide support to victims and perpetrators of bullying. The Safe and Supportive Schools policy requires every school to have a *Safe and Supportive Schools Contact Officer (SASSCO)*. These officers are trained to provide support to students who have experienced bullying, sexual harassment and racism. Conciliatory procedures are typically followed for addressing bullying, violence and harassment between students.
- Following this, parents and carers can contact the school principal to discuss any concerns.
- The Directorate also provides parents and carers with information and advice about bullying, keeping children safe online and dealing with cyberbullying, which can be found on the Directorate website.
- Parents and carers also have further options to discuss concerns about bullying. If parents and carers believe that the school's response is unsatisfactory, or external advice is considered necessary regarding the

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interventions put in place by the school, they can contact the ACT Education Directorate Liaison Unit. The Liaison Unit support families in addressing concerns about ACT schools. The Director for Families and Students is also a key contact for parents, students and the community to raise concerns when they have not been satisfied with the ACT public school response in meeting the needs of individual students.

## **Key Information**

### Policy and Procedures

- The Safe and Supportive Schools (SSS) policy was implemented in April 2016 and provides guidance for Canberra Public Schools on promoting safe, respectful and supportive school environments.
- Schools are required to develop and document clear support procedures to assist students who have been subjected to bullying (including cyber bullying), harassment and violence.

The Student Wellbeing Section within the Education Support Office employs a Safe and Supportive Schools Executive Officer whose role includes supporting schools to implement the policy.

### Support for students experiencing or perpetrating bullying

Students can seek support from teachers, school psychologists, youth support workers and other staff in Canberra public schools. These support staff are able to provide support to victims and perpetrators of bullying. The Safe and Supportive Schools policy requires every school to have a *Safe and Supportive Schools Contact Officer (SASSCO)*. These officers are trained to provide support to students who have experienced bullying, sexual harassment and racism.

In addition to academic skills, schools engage in teaching and modelling of positive social attitudes, personal resilience and wellbeing. Curriculum in ACT Public Schools contributes to primary prevention of bullying through the development of skills and attitudes necessary to develop positive and respectful relationships. Schools have codes of conduct, student welfare procedures and school values which provide a platform for embedding discussions about appropriate behaviour and treatment of others. Demonstrating respect for others and abiding by the requirements for the acceptable use of communication technology are two relevant expectations which are part of the Directorate Code of Conduct.

Schools are supported to develop Acceptable Use of ICT statements for all students or their parent/ guardian to sign which reinforces to students their responsibilities when using ICT resources. Statements typically include

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- A summary of acceptable/non-acceptable behaviour
- Consequences for the breach of the acceptable use conditions
- A statement that the student agrees to when signing the form

School-based behaviour management policies and procedures apply to online behaviour, just as they do to physical behaviour in the school. Just as bullying, harassment or abuse would not be tolerated in the classroom or on the playground; they are similarly not tolerated within online environments. Any online breaches of the school's behaviour policies are dealt with as they would, had they occurred in the physical environment.

Addressing instances of bullying may include using Restorative Practice. Restorative practice is a strategy that seeks to repair relationships that have been damaged, including those damaged through bullying, harassment, discrimination and violence. It does this by bringing about a sense of remorse and restorative action on the part of the offender and reconciliation with the victim. Restorative responses to incidents are conciliatory in nature and aim to restore a positive learning environment for all parties. If a conciliatory outcome is not able to be achieved, the school's behaviour management procedures will be followed at the discretion of the principal

#### Information on Bullying

Parents, students and carers with concerns about cyberbullying are also advised they may visit the website for the Office of the eSafety Commissioner (<https://esafety.gov.au/>) and the Bullying, No Way! (<http://bullyingnoway.gov.au>) websites which provide comprehensive education and contact information for young people, parents/carers and schools. The Office of the E Safety Commissioner also provides a complaints service for young Australians who experience serious cyberbullying.

The Directorate provides parents and carers with tips and advice for keeping safe online and dealing with cyberbullying. This is found on the Directorate website [https://www.education.act.gov.au/teaching\\_and\\_learning/learn-anywhere-ict-for-students/keeping-safe-online](https://www.education.act.gov.au/teaching_and_learning/learn-anywhere-ict-for-students/keeping-safe-online)

Young people experiencing distress are also encouraged to contact Kids Help Line, Headspace or the Bullying, No Way! online help line.

#### How can concerns be escalated?

1. In the first instance concerns should be raised with the relevant teacher
2. Following this, contact can be made with the school principal to discuss concerns
3. If the school's response is considered unsatisfactory, or external advice is considered necessary about the interventions put in place by the school, parents/ carers can contact:

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## QUESTION TIME BRIEF

- **The ACT Education Directorate Liaison Unit**

The Liaison Unit can support families in managing concerns about ACT schools. The Liaison Unit will speak with relevant people within the Directorate's support office to facilitate the school and family to identify a solution.

Phone: [\(02\) 6205 5429](tel:(02)62055429)

- **The Director for Families and Students**

The Director provides the key contact for parents, students and the community to raise concerns when they have not been satisfied with the ACT public school response in meeting the needs of individual students.

Phone: [\(02\) 6207 3723](tel:(02)62073723)

Email: [familiesandstudents@act.gov.au](mailto:familiesandstudents@act.gov.au)

### Where can more information about bullying be found?

- **Bullying. No way!**

[www.bullyingnoway.gov.au](http://www.bullyingnoway.gov.au)

### Where can information about cyber bullying be found?

- **Australian Federal Police**

[www.thinkuknow.org.au](http://www.thinkuknow.org.au)

- **E Safety Commission**

[www.esafety.gov.au](http://www.esafety.gov.au)

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## Portfolio/s Education &amp; Early Childhood Development

**ISSUE: LEARN ANYWHERE STUDENTS USE OF ICT IN SCHOOLS****Talking points:**

- The Education Directorate is committed to providing ACT Public school students with ICT that is fit for the needs of learners today.
- In determining these needs the directorate consulted with schools through a technology advisory group to determine the key areas required to enable effective use of ICT.
  - Access real world learning platforms that are easy to use and familiar to them.
  - Connection to reliable high speed internet
  - Use of own personal device of choice allowing personalised learning.

**Key Information**

- The Digital Backpack is a simple entry point for students and teachers that provides access to online tools to support learning anytime anywhere the internet is available (at school, at home or through public Wi-Fi).
- Cloud services continue to be available in the Digital Backpack from the start of the 2015 school year, including Google G Suite and Microsoft Office 365.
- The online services provided enable schools in partnership with parents, to support our young people to be safe and productive online. This is achieved by providing students with the technology and learning platforms they want to use, set up in a way that is safe and secure.
- Parents are provided with the Privacy Information sheet on the recommendations from the independent Privacy Impact Assessment, the Directorate commissioned relating to Google G suite and Microsoft services. Prior to a student's account being created and enabling the service parents must provide consent. If consent is not provided alternate options are provided.
- To enable students to successfully operate as digital citizens they are required to read, understand and sign the Acceptable use of ICT Policy.
- The Australian Curriculum sets out clear expectations for the use of ICT as a general capability to be implemented across the curriculum, this includes digital citizenship and safe behaviours in the use of technology.

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- Canberra Public schools' implementation of the Australian Curriculum ensures that students develop these vital skills in the use of ICT, which is embedded both within the classroom and brokered through the schools ongoing partnership with the parent community.

### Online Tools and what they are:

- *Google G Suite* - A cloud-based education platform offering online productivity tools for learning and classroom collaboration. G Suite provides students and teachers with unlimited cloud storage in Google Drive, Docs, Sheets and Slides. Google Apps also provides student email and other modern online learning tools like Google Classroom.
- *Microsoft 365* - A Microsoft office suite that is online (cloud based) including online storage. All students and teachers are also able to download the latest version of Office 365 on up to five personal devices.
- *eBooks (Overdrive)* - Online library with access to over 6088 eBooks and 686 audio books from their own personal device at school, home, and publically available Wi-Fi.
- *Scoutle* - Australian digital curriculum content library with over 15000 resources for teachers.
- *Cyber Safety Button* - provides internet users, particularly children and young people, with easy online access to cyber safety information and assistance available in Australia. It offers counselling, reporting and educational resources to assist young people deal with online risks including cyberbullying, unwanted contact, scams and fraud, and *offensive or inappropriate material*.
- *Clickview* - Online video management tool (available at selected schools who have opted into the subscription for the service).

### Teacher Professional Learning Opportunities

- Due to the high uptake and successful adoption of Google G Suite for Education in our Canberra Public Schools, The Directorate hosts a range of training and development sessions based around Google G Suite each term. These sessions have been running successfully since 2015.
- Annual Canberra Google Summits have been hosted by the Directorate since 2015. Over 350 teachers attended to the most recent 2017 Summit which was held at Erindale College on the 10<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup> of April 2017. The 2018 Summit will be held on 16 and 17 April 2018 at Gungahlin College.

### Wireless Access

- The wireless access in all Canberra Public Schools has been enhanced. There are now approximately 5000 wireless access points in primary and secondary schools and this has resulted in ACT schools being the best connected in the country.

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## Wireless – Health & Safety

- During the planning and implementation of the Wi-Fi in ACT Government Schools, the Directorate has utilised equipment that has been designed and manufactured to comply with the Australian Standards on Human Exposure to Radio Frequencies to ensure the safety of staff and children. ACT Government deployments of wireless access points within schools also exceed the minimum separation distance recommended.
- To align with the Australian curriculum the ACT Government will continue to provide our schools with digital capabilities fit for the modern learner, including access to wireless technologies which operate within the *Radiation Protection Standard for Maximum Exposure Levels to Radiofrequency Fields - 3 kHz to 300 GHz (2002)*.

## Devices for Students

- The Personal Electronic Devices (Bring Your Own Device) Policy has been adopted by the Education Directorate. Following consultation with the parent community a school can now allow students to bring their own device to school and connect to our secure ACT Government fibre “SchoolsNET” network. A Student using their own device provides a platform that they already understand for them to learn, create, communicate and collaborate from anywhere.
- Schools share in \$1.5million budget per annum to supply devices for student use at school.
- The ACT Government has initiated the Technology Enabled Learning Program which will supply over 14,500 ACER Spin 11 Chromebooks to all Year 7 to 11 students commencing in Term 1 2018.

## **Background Information**

- The Directorate is committed to providing students with ICT that is fit for the needs of learners today. To ensure ACT students develop the skills required for their further success in work and as engaged digital citizens. In determining these needs the directorate consulted with schools through a technology advisory group to determine the key areas required to enable effective use of ICT.
  - Access real world learning platforms that are easy to use and familiar to them.
  - Connection to reliable high speed internet
  - Use of own personal device of choice allowing personalised learning.

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Portfolio: Education & Early Childhood Development

**ISSUE: UNIVERSAL ACCESS TO EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION**

**Talking points:**

- The Universal Access National Partnership Agreement is a keystone to ensuring young children have universal access to early childhood education in the year before school.
- The ACT Government is the major contributor of free access to preschool, but the national partnership gets us to 15 hours a week of free preschool.
- The ACT Government is currently part of a national conversation around an ongoing, long-term National Partnership for Universal Access.
- The ACT, like other States and Territories would like to see the Commonwealth engage in a longer-term approach to early childhood funding.
- The Commonwealth has extended the Universal Access agreement for this year and announced that they will offer a further 12 month agreement for 2019.

**Key Information**

- The National Partnership Agreement on Universal Access to Early Childhood Education provides for a Commonwealth funding contribution to 600 hours of free preschool per year.
- The ACT Government has made a long-standing commitment to universal access of children to preschool.
- The objective of the NP UAECE is to support universal access to, and improved participation by, children in quality early childhood education in the year before full-time schooling with a focus on Indigenous, vulnerable and disadvantaged children.

**NP UAECE 2018**

- On 4 May 2017, Hon Simon Birmingham, Minister for Education and Training, announced the Australian Government's commitment to extending the existing National Partnership for Universal Access to Early Childhood Education (NP UAECE) for 12 months.
- Nationally, \$428 million was committed with around \$9 million allocated to the ACT.

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- The 12 month extension is the fifth in a series of such agreements.

## NP UAECE 2016-2017

- As well as 600 hours per year of free public preschool education, the ACT's NP UAECE 2016-2017 Implementation Plan includes:
  - a scholarship program available to educators in public preschools, non-government preschools and long day care services to strengthen qualifications
  - infrastructure support for non-government service providers
  - promotion of preschool participation to all children, including Indigenous, vulnerable and disadvantaged children, through the Preschool Matters Program and website
  - delivery of the Preschool Matters Grants Program to facilitate parental engagement for ACT preschool or long day care services delivering 600 hours of preschool education.
- The ACT will also maintain support to other settings including non-government preschools and long day care centres through:
  - provision of subsidies to non-government providers
  - capital upgrades and maintenance to long day care centres in ACT Government-owned accommodation.
- As a requirement of the NP UAECE 2016-2017, the ACT's performance was measured against six performance indicators.
- In 2016 the ACT met five of the six indicators under the agreement and received a full payment for five indicators.
- Almost 96% of four year olds in the ACT were part of a preschool program. The ACT achieved result of 91% of Indigenous children participating in a preschool program available for 600 hours per year. This result was 4% short of the agreed 95% target and resulted in a part-payment for that target.
- On 15 May 2017, the Australian Government notified the ACT of a partial performance payment to the ACT of \$4,933,561, representing one percent less than the maximum payment.

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## Background Information

- Quality early childhood education in the ACT is delivered in a range of settings including public preschools, non-government preschools and long day care centres.
- Since 2009, the Australian Government has made a funding contribution to states and territories to support preschool provision through the NP UAECE.
- The ACT Government had already committed to providing preschool programs for 12 hours a week. By 2013, all ACT public preschools had increased their preschool provision from 12 to 15 hours per week, delivered by a qualified early childhood teacher under the National Quality Framework.
- On 27 November 2015, the Chief Minister signed the NP UAECE 2016-2017.
- Past NP UAECE agreements are 2008-2013; 2013-2014; 2015; and 2016-2017.
- Late last year the Prime Minister made a formal offer to the ACT to extend the agreement to 2018. The offer is subject Cabinet ratification. On 3 February 2018, the Commonwealth announced that it intended to offer a further extension of the agreement to 2019.

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Portfolio: Education & Early Childhood Development

**ISSUE: EARLY CHILDHOOD ADVISORY COUNCIL**

**Talking points:**

- In 2017 the Early Childhood Advisory Council was established to bring together representatives of the Education and Care sector to discuss the development of an Early Childhood Strategy for the ACT.
- The Council is one of the ways the Government is continuing to grow positive and dynamic relationships with our early childhood education and care sector.
- The Council and the Government know that access to early childhood education and care can significantly help to overcome the impact of early disadvantage and improve the life chances of a child.
- Members were selected not solely as representatives of their organisations, but on the basis of their individual skills and expertise in the sector.

**Key Information**

- The Early Childhood Advisory Council was established in August 2017 to foster a stronger partnership between the ACT Government and the early childhood education and care sector.
- The Council is made up of key stakeholders and experts in early childhood education and care.
- The initial work of the Council will see it report back to the Minister on proposals that arise from the Early Childhood Strategy and the Future of Education community conversation, which are both currently in development.
- The Council is anticipated to examine the following key elements around early childhood:
  - access, equity and affordability
  - workforce and qualifications
  - transitions from education and care to school

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# QUESTION TIME BRIEF

- maximising the benefit to children from money spent.
- The Council is a mechanism to bring together the diverse parts of the education and care sector for collaborative input. Members have been selected not solely as representatives of their organisations but on the basis of their individual skills and expertise in the sector.
- The establishment of the Council presents an opportunity to create dynamic and strong partnerships within the sector, with the ultimate aim of increasing access to quality early childhood education and care for every child in the ACT.

## Background Information

The Chair of the Council is Ms Cathy Hudson. Ms Hudson is currently a policy advisor and Deputy Chair of the Australian Children's Education and Care Quality Authority (ACECQA).

Membership of the council is listed in the table below.

Name	Institution	Area of representation
Reesha Stefak	Centre Director Woden Early Childhood Centre	Independent not for profit providers
Lisa Syrette	Manager, (Childcare) AIS Site Services Branch Australian Sports Commission	Independent not for profit providers
Bernadette Carbin	Director Children's Services YWCA	Community not for profit providers
Bruce Papps	CEO Northside Community Service	Community not for profit providers
Darren Black	CEO YMCA and Chair of ACT Children First	Community not for profit providers
Lee Maiden	Deputy Chief Executive Officer Communities@Work	Community not for profit providers and family day care
Sandy Leitch	President, ACT Branch Early Childhood Australia	Peak body
Peter Curtis	President, ACT Sub-Branch Australian Education Union	Peak body

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Education

# QUESTION TIME BRIEF

Alice Castrission	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Catholic Preschool and SAC Officer</li> </ul> Catholic Education Office	Catholic Education
Joanne Garrison	Senior Manager, Strategic Programs Association of Independent Schools ACT	Independent Schools
Simone Bennett	Executive Manager Anglicare	Independent Schools and Community Providers
Symmone Turner	President Preschool Teachers Professional Association	Professional association

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## Portfolio: Education &amp; Early Childhood Development

**ISSUE:           CONDITION OF ACT PUBLIC SCHOOLS****Talking points:**

- Each year the government invests over \$20 million maintaining ACT Public Schools;
- Over the next four financial years, there will be \$85 million invested to improve the infrastructure of existing schools, including upgrades to learning spaces, expansions, accessibility improvements and replacement of end of life building systems and fabric.

**Key Information*****Maintaining and upgrading the condition of public schools in the ACT***

The Education Directorate has an annual allocation of \$16.4 million to undertake planned and unforeseen repairs and maintenance works at ACT public schools and preschools as well as compliance programs.

A further \$6.0 million is allocated each year directly to ACT public schools. This funding is for physical infrastructure costs covering minor repairs and maintenance works.

Building Condition Assessment Reports are undertaken for each school every three years. These Reports identify the priority workplace health and safety tasks to be undertaken by schools and those further works required as the plant, equipment and facilities age.

These Reports, together with feedback from schools, including works identified by compliance inspections, inform the annual school repairs and maintenance program managed by the Directorate and the annual Public School Infrastructure Upgrades Program.

In January 2017 the updated School Management Manual commenced and reflected a change in the apportioning of responsibility around schools repairs and maintenance activities.

The Directorate's Repairs and Maintenance Team now has responsibility for more functions related to compliance and safety. The schools are responsible for more general and low risk maintenance issues including painting, floorcoverings and minor electrical and plumbing issues. This affords the schools greater autonomy around their environment but assists greatly in piece of mind around important compliance responsibilities.

The 2017-18 Capital Upgrades Program includes:

- Aranda Primary School expansion;
- Arawang Primary School expansion;
- Garran Primary School expansion;

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- The Woden School – Stage 2 of the master plan works will be completed across the two financial years of 2016-17 and 2017-18;
- Mount Stromlo High School – roof replacement works (Stage 2);
- Learning area improvements at:
  - Mount Stromlo High School;
  - Canberra High School;
  - Melba Copland College;
  - Lyneham High School;
  - UC Kaleen High School;
  - The O’Connor Co-operative School; and
  - Wanniasa School.
- Internal capacity expansions to:
  - Palmerston Primary School;
  - Yarralumla Primary School.
- Toilet upgrades at:
  - Lake Ginninderra College;
  - Black Mountain School; and
  - Makara School.
- Heating and Cooling upgrades at multiple schools.
- End of life asset replacements at multiple schools.
- Implementation of the Schools for All program at multiple schools.

In the 2016 ACT Election, the Labor Government committed to investing \$85m to upgrade and maintain ACT public schools over the next four years.

A \$0.575m building tuning program is in place to conduct energy audits at schools where energy efficiency is low. Schools are selected according to annual and seasonal energy consumption compared against their peers with the high energy consumers being prioritised for audits, site visits and intervention works. The program identifies mechanical efficiencies to heating, ventilation and cooling systems in addition to building solutions that will assist in improving thermal comfort whilst managing energy consumption. The audits also assist in identifying investment priorities for inclusion in future works programs.

### **Background Information**

The 2017-18 repairs and maintenance works include:

- Specific projects (eg:, balustrade replacements, electrical switchboard upgrades);
- Heating, Ventilation and Air Conditioning maintenance and repairs;
- Stormwater and sewer line inspections and rectification works;
- Roof access safety system certification;
- Lifts and auto doors inspections and maintenance;

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- Emergency lighting inspections and maintenance;
- Fire alarm system monitoring;
- Asbestos materials surveys;
- Asbestos removal program;
- Building condition assessments;
- Work health and safety related works; and
- Security system upgrades.

An ACT Labor 2016 Election commitment was to provide \$84m over 4 years to upgrade and maintain public school infrastructure particularly in older schools under the School Infrastructure for the Future (SIF) program.

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Portfolio: Education & Early Childhood Development

**ISSUE: LIFTING OUR GAME REPORT**

**Talking points:**

- I thoroughly welcome and support the Lifting Our Game report by Professor Deb Brennan and Susan Pascoe AM.
- *Lifting Our Game* sums up the national and international evidence that shows the importance of early childhood education and care.
- *Lifting Our Game* is a great statement of the kind of policy the nation needs for early childhood and really resonates with the experience and thinking of States and Territories.
- The Report embraces six important themes to improve and expand access to early childhood education and care. The themes are:
  - embedding national funding for Universal Access to early childhood programs in the year before school;
  - broadening Universal Access to three year-olds;
  - supporting children and families with particular needs;
  - improving and supporting the early childhood workforce; and
  - improving parental engagement and better transparency and accountability.
- These themes align with the ACT Government's values on early childhood. I certainly think that as a community if we want quality early childhood education and care then we need to look at ways to improve the working conditions of early childhood staff.
- Quality early childhood education is a key element of enabling children to fully develop as humans. The report captures the large body of evidence that shows early childhood is critical to cognitive and emotional development. The first five to eight years are fundamental to

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a child's capacity for emotional control, relationship skills, language and numeracy.

- The ACT Government is developing an Early Childhood Strategy. *Lifting Our Game* is an excellent body of work and the Government will be giving the report close consideration to inform a position on the report's recommendations and developing an Early Childhood Strategy.

### **Key Information**

The Report supports States and Territories case for meaningful Commonwealth engagement on developing national early childhood policy. The report will form part of the evidence base put to the next COAG meeting by South Australia and Victoria to advance the early childhood policy.

The Report makes 17 recommendations around the themes of:

- Embedding foundations for future reform;
- Early childhood education for all three year olds;
- Access, equity and inclusion;
- Quality and workforce;
- Parent and community engagement;
- Transparency and accountability; and
- Implementation.

*Lifting Our Game* highlights the momentous early childhood education and care reforms in Australia over the past decade, including the introduction of Universal Access to Early Childhood Education in the year before school and a consistent National Quality Framework.

The report and findings intend to complement the Commonwealth Government's *Review to Achieve Educational Excellence in Australian Schools*, chaired by Mr David Gonski AC, which is due to report in March 2018.

### **Background Information**

- The Australian Government established the Review to Achieve Educational Excellence in Australian Schools (Gonski Review).
- States and territories commissioned an additional piece of work which takes the Gonski Review's terms of reference to apply to the early years (0-5), the *Review to Achieve Educational Excellence in Australian Schools through Early Childhood Interventions* (the Review) led by Professor Deb Brennan and Ms Susan Pascoe (the Panel).

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## QUESTION TIME BRIEF

- The Panel presented the Review to COAG's SOM on 24 November 2017. Jurisdictions supported the report being reviewed and considered by Education Council and COAG.
- On 12 October 2017, the Panel conducted a consultation session with the ACT early childhood education sector and government representatives. The consultation session provided an opportunity for ACT stakeholders to contribute to the Review and provide an ACT context for consideration.
- On 6 November 2017, the draft report of the Review was provided to jurisdictions for comment and feedback. The Panel specifically asked for feedback on ways to improve the quality of the analysis and argument in the report, and:
  - whether the 2009 COAG strategy, Investing in the early years, is still relevant and/or resonant; and
  - whether more could be made of the link to the First 1000 Days Working Group of the Prime Minister's Community Business Partnership.
- CAF Secretariat are considering jurisdictional feedback and the Expert Panel is preparing its Report for release, preferably by Education Ministers early 2018.
- On Monday 18 December 2017, the national working group participated in a teleconference to discuss the media and communications plan for release of the Panel's Report.

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Portfolio: Education & Early Childhood Development

**ISSUE:           TEACHING CONDITIONS: ACT COMPARISONS WITH OTHER JURISDICTIONS**

**Talking points:**

- ACT public school teachers' salary and conditions remain competitive with all Australian jurisdictions. ACT public school classroom teachers have:
  - The second highest salary behind Western Australia;
  - The lowest face to face teaching hours in secondary schools and the second lowest in primary schools;
  - The second lowest overall number of teaching days per year; and
  - The third highest employer superannuation contributions at 11.5 percent.
- In addition to these conditions, ACT public school teachers have access to a range of entitlements equal to or better than conditions in other jurisdictions, including 18 weeks paid maternity or primary care giver leave, ten days paid bonding leave, five days compassionate leave and unpaid parental and grandparental leave.

**Key Information**

- Salary
  - The *ACTPS Education and Training Directorate (Teaching Staff) Enterprise Agreement 2014-2018* (the Agreement) provides pay rises of three percent per annum for all teaching classifications, resulting in a cumulative increase of 12.6 percent over the life of the agreement (valued at \$159m). ACT public school teacher salaries will remain competitive into the foreseeable future.
  - The most recent pay rise was on 1 October 2017. In the ACT the top of the range classroom teachers salary p.a is \$100,317 just behind WA at \$103,049 and ahead of NT (\$100,104), NSW (\$100,299), VIC (\$98,047), TAS (\$95,846), SA (\$93,965) and QLD (\$93,032).
- Superannuation
  - ACT teachers enjoy better employer superannuation contributions than most other jurisdictions. Based on the standard five per cent employee contribution, the ACT employer contribution is 11.5 percent compared to 9.5 percent in NSW, VIC, WA, SA and NT. TAS pay 12.3 percent and QLD 12.75 percent cent.

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## QUESTION TIME BRIEF

- Teaching hours
  - Face-to-face teaching hours in ACT public primary schools is 21 hours 30 minutes per week . This is lower than other jurisdictions except WA (21h 20m). NSW primary schools teaching hours are 21 hours 45 minutes.
  - Face-to-face teaching hours in ACT public secondary schools is 19 hours per week and lower than any other jurisdiction. NSW teaching hours in secondary schools is 20 hours 40 minutes (including 120min. of sport) or 20 hours (no sport component).
  - Reduction of face-to-face teaching hours for ACT public school teachers in their first year of teaching experience was introduced in 2012. First year teachers teach a maximum of 20 hours per week in primary schools and 18 hours per week in secondary schools. This reduction facilitates enhanced coaching and mentoring support programs in schools.
- Teaching days
  - ACT school year is a maximum of 197 days. The teaching year is 196 days (days on which the school is open for student attendance). This is the second lowest overall (with NT at 194 days). SA has the most at 207 days per year.
- Student-teacher ratio
  - The last published ABS figures for student-teacher ratios across states and territories in 2017 show:
  - Primary schools: ACT (15.6 students per teacher) is equal to WA (15.6) and lower than NSW (15.8) and higher than all other jurisdictions NT (12.3), Vic (14.8), Tas (14.8), SA (14.6), and QLD (14.4). ACT is above the Australian average of 15.
  - Secondary schools: ACT (12.3 students per teacher) is lower than all other jurisdictions expect for Vic (12.3) where they are equal. The Australian average is 12.4. The NSW figure is 12.4.
- General conditions
  - The general conditions of service for ACT public school teachers is based on the ACT Public Service Common Terms and Conditions and, in most cases, match or better the conditions in any other jurisdiction. For example, ACT teachers can access 18 weeks paid maternity or primary care giver leave, ten days paid bonding leave, five days compassionate leave and unpaid parental and grandparental leave.
- Enterprise Bargaining
  - The Agreement nominally expires on 30 September 2018. In accordance with the Agreement bargaining for a new Agreement formally commenced on 31 January 2018.

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## Portfolio: Education &amp; Early Childhood Development

**ISSUE: FUNDING FOR CANBERRA PUBLIC SCHOOLS AND NON-GOVERNMENT SCHOOLS**
**Talking points:**

- The 2017-18 ACT Government Budget provides a 7 per cent increase in funding for ACT public schools with total funding of \$666.8 million.  
The 2017-18 ACT Government Budget provides a 3 per cent increase in funding for non-government schools with total funding of \$286.6 million.

**Key Information**

- Recurrent funding to ACT public schools in 2017-18 is budgeted to be \$666.8 million. This represents an increase of \$41.4 million or 7 per cent over the 2016-17 estimated outcome.
- Recurrent funding to ACT non-government schools in 2017-18 is budgeted to be \$286.6 million. This represents an increase of \$7.0 million or 3 per cent over the 2016-17 estimated outcome.
- The ACT Government Budget does not incorporate the potential funding impact of the Commonwealth 'Quality Schools' model (Gonski 2.0) as legislation has not yet been passed.

**Background Information**

- Recurrent funding for ACT public school education has increased by \$41.4 million from 2016-17 to 2017-18. This translates to a funding increase of 7 per cent.
- Over the same period, recurrent funding for non-government schools (ACT and Australian Government) has increased by around \$7.0 million. On a per capita basis the increase is 3 per cent.

The tables below provide details:

<b>Public School Education</b>	<b>2016-17 Est Out</b>	<b>2017-18 Budget</b>	<b>Increase</b>	<b>Increase</b>
	<b>\$000</b>	<b>\$000</b>	<b>\$000</b>	<b>Percent</b>
ACT Government <sup>1,2</sup>	529,231	560,979	31,748	6
Australian Government <sup>3</sup>	96,193	105,847	9,654	10
<b>Total</b>	<b>625,424</b>	<b>666,826</b>	<b>41,402</b>	<b>7</b>
Student Numbers <sup>4</sup>	44,831	46,557	1,726	4

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## QUESTION TIME BRIEF

	\$	\$	\$	Percent
<i>ACT Government Per Capita Funding</i>	11,805	12,049	244	2
<i>Australian Government Per Capita Funding</i>	2,146	2,273	128	6
<b>TOTAL Per Capita Funding</b>	13,951	14,322	371	3

**Notes:**

1. Includes preschool and early intervention funding.
2. The increase is primarily due to rollovers, indexation and initiatives.
3. Includes recurrent funding and funding for National Partnerships Programs. The increase is primarily due to enrolment increases.
4. Includes preschool students, as they are funded by government.

<b>Non-Government School Education</b>	<b>2016-17 Est Out</b>	<b>2017-18 Budget</b>	<b>Increase</b>	<b>Increase</b>
	<b>\$000</b>	<b>\$000</b>	<b>\$000</b>	<b>Percent</b>
ACT Government <sup>1</sup>	66,062	67,931	1,869	3
ACT Government Interest Subsidy Scheme <sup>2</sup>	1,566	259	(1,307)	(83)
Australian Government <sup>3</sup>	211,896	218,370	6,474	3
<b>Total</b>	<b>279,524</b>	<b>286,560</b>	<b>7,036</b>	<b>3</b>
Student Numbers <sup>4</sup>	27,265	27,259	(6)	0

	\$	\$	\$	Percent
<i>ACT Government Per Capita Funding<sup>5</sup></i>	2,423	2,492	69	3
<i>Australian Government Per Capita Funding</i>	7,772	8,011	239	3
<b>TOTAL Per Capita Funding</b>	10,195	10,503	308	3

**Notes:**

1. Includes ACT Government funding to the Complaints and Liaison Unit within the Directorate.
2. 2016-17 estimated outcome includes a rollover of \$1.339 million from 2015-16. A \$16b rollover of remaining funds into 2017-18 is expected.
3. Includes Australian Government grants provided to non-government schools through Controlled Recurrent Payments. The 2017-18 Commonwealth Budget estimates for 'Quality Schools' have not been included in the 2017-18 ACT Government Budget as the new funding proposal is yet to be passed by Federal Parliament.
4. Excludes preschool students as they are not funded by government. Non-government student enrolments are taken from the Commonwealth's August 2016 Census.
5. Numbers exclude funding for the Interest Subsidy Scheme.

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## Portfolio/s Education & Early Childhood Development

### ISSUE: **FAMILY DAY CARE FRAUD AND QUALITY**

#### Talking points:

- Unlawful FDC conduct continues to be part of national conversations through AESOC and Education Council.
- Jurisdictions including the ACT have applied enormous effort to remove the dodgy operators from the sector. New strategies and persistence is paying off with many bad operators being closed down and not re-emerging.
- There is still work to be done to tackle those remaining entities and to ensure that the national laws and systems are robust enough to prevent future fraud.
- The ACT continues to have a pro-active working relationship with the Commonwealth in a bid to prevent and remove dodgy operators.

#### Key Information

- Unlawful conduct in the family day care (FDC) sector is a national issue and is on the agenda of Education Council and AESOC. FDC services and providers represent a disproportionate number of compliance matters for Regulatory Authorities.
- State and Territory Regulatory Authorities, including the ACT, have expressed concerns regarding the steep increase in family day care provider and service applications and approvals. In an attempt to minimise the number of new providers in the sector the ACT Regulatory Authority has significantly tightened approval procedures for FDC applicants.
- The ACT has a positive and pro-active working relationship with Commonwealth, and State and Territory, colleagues on family day care cases.
- Education Council agreed to reforms to the National Law aimed to reduce non-compliance in the sector which came into effect with the amendments to the National Law on 1 October 2017. This includes improving the powers to check on educators and children operating from private homes, and the ability of regulatory authorities to apply Commonwealth non-compliance decisions to local services.
- At the beginning of January 2016 there were 28 family day care providers in the ACT (22 ACT providers and 6 interstate providers).

Cleared as complete and accurate: 05/03/2018

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Director

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Contact Officer Name:

Sean Moysey

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Lead Directorate:

Education

## QUESTION TIME BRIEF

- During 2016 and 2017 thirteen providers were cancelled. There are also four providers who have surrendered their approval. Fourteen applications for provider or service approval were refused at interview.
- As at 1 March 2018 there are 23 family day care providers in the ACT. This comprises of:
  - 9 providers that are CCB approved and are operating education and care services in the ACT;
  - 3 providers not operating any services as they await CCB approval from the Commonwealth;
  - 4 providers who hold an approval but are not exercising their option to operate a service or seek CCB approval; and
  - 7 providers who are not operational because their services are suspended or cancelled for compliance reasons.
- In 2016 and 2017 there were 19 applications for family day care provider approval. Of those eight were refused provider approval, one was found to be invalid and one surrendered their approval and one is currently being investigated for providing fraudulent documentation. Eight new ACT providers were approved by the regulatory authority; however three providers were refused service approvals.

### *Family Day Care (FDC) Quality*

- FDC services are assessed in accordance with the National Quality Standard.
- FDC services that demonstrate consistent non-compliance with the National Law and Regulations are not considered suitable to undergo the Assessment and Rating process.
- Ten FDC services have undergone the Assessment and Rating process, although Two FDC are no longer operational due to non-compliance issues.
- As of 1 January 2018 one FDC service is rated at Exceeding NQS, three FDC services are rated at Meeting NQS and three FDC services are rated at Working Towards NQS.

### **Background Information**

- The National Quality Framework is made up of the Education and Care Services National Law (National Law) and the Education and Care Services National Regulations (National Regulations). Each State and Territory is responsible for administering and monitoring compliance with the National Law and Regulations. The National Law is structured around safety and wellbeing of children and compliance measures to ensure children are safe and are positively learning.

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## QUESTION TIME BRIEF

- The Commonwealth Department of Education and Training has responsibility for administering, monitoring compliance and approving child care services with the Family Assistance Law (FAL).
- Approved child care services have Australian Government approval to pass on Child Care Benefit as a reduction in child care fees. This means parents have less out of pocket expenses. Approved care services include, long day care, family day care, outside school hours care, vacation care, in home care, and occasional care.

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## Portfolio/s Education & Early Childhood Development

### ISSUE: **KOORI PRESCHOOL PROGRAM**

#### Talking Points

- The Koori Preschool Program provides targeted early childhood education to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children, focussing on cultural integrity, parent engagement and transition to school.
- It provides children with rich, play-based learning experiences in a culturally safe environment that includes Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander perspectives across the curriculum.
- The Koori Preschool Program works closely with the ACT Child and Family Centres to develop strong partnerships and link families with other programs that strengthen community and cultural connections.
- Each Koori Preschool is staffed by a qualified early childhood teacher and a preschool assistant.

#### Key Information

- The Koori Preschool Program provides targeted early childhood education to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children aged from three to five years.
- Children from birth to three years can attend a Koori Preschool when accompanied by a parent or guardian.
- The Koori Preschool Program operates at the following five school sites:
  - Kingsford Smith School
  - Narrabundah Early Childhood School
  - Ngunnawal Primary School
  - Richardson Primary School
  - Wanniasa School
- Each Koori Preschool operates over two days, delivering nine hours of preschool education per week at Ngunnawal, Richardson, Wanniasa and Kingsford Smith, and 12 hours per week at Narrabundah.

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Lead Directorate: Education

## QUESTION TIME BRIEF

- The preschool assistant position is an Indigenous identified position. Currently three out of the five preschool assistant positions are held by Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander employees.
- In addition to enrolment in Koori Preschool, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children can concurrently enrol in their local preschool from Term 3 in the year prior to their preschool year. This supports access to 24-27 hours of free preschool education per week in the 18 month period prior to commencing kindergarten.
- The ACT Koori Preschool Network Initiative is partially funded through the Australian Government's Indigenous Advancement Strategy, Children and Schooling program.
- The initiative provides for the employment of an Early Years Engagement Officer based at Gungahlin Child and Family Centre. An additional Early Years Engagement Officer position is funded by the ACT Government and based at Tuggeranong Child and Family Centre. The officers are part of the Growing Healthy Families project team.
- Since December 2015, the Early Years Engagement Officers have worked closely with Koori Preschools to support participation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children (birth to five years) in education services, transition to school and family engagement.

### Background Information

- February 2018 Census enrolment figures show a total of 86 students enrolled in the Koori Preschool Program.

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Portfolio: Education &amp; Early Childhood Development

**ISSUE: COMMONWEALTH EDUCATION FUNDING**
**Talking points:**

- The ACT Government welcomes additional Commonwealth education funding to all schools in the ACT.
- The Commonwealth is a minor funding provider to ACT public schools, and the anticipated annual increases are relatively small.
- In order to ensure that Commonwealth Government funding flows to all ACT schools in 2018, in November 2017 on behalf of the ACT Government I signed an interim agreement around schools funding and reform principles.
- It is anticipated that Commonwealth education funding to the non-government sector will decrease over the next 10 years. As Minister for Education and Early Childhood Development, I have asserted to the Commonwealth the need for the Commonwealth to proceed with the socio-economic status (SES) review to ensure funding for ACT non-government schools reflects true need in the ACT's inclusive and diverse suburbs.
- The Commonwealth has commenced the SES review and it is expected to be completed by June 2018.

**Key Information**

- On 23 June 2017 the Commonwealth Government passed amendments to legislation on education funding arrangements (*Education Act 2013*). A key difference from previous arrangements is that the Commonwealth, States and Territories are each responsible for funding a determined portion of the Schooling Resource Standard (SRS) baseline.

	Commonwealth share of SRS	State/Territory share of SRS
Government schools	20 per cent	80 per cent
Non-Government schools	80 per cent	20 per cent

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## QUESTION TIME BRIEF

- Commonwealth funding will be tied to conditions, including States and Territories meeting their share of the SRS baseline and maintaining real per student funding levels.
- In 2017, the Commonwealth provided funding equivalent to 16 per cent of the SRS baseline for Canberra Public schools. Under the proposed bilateral agreement, the Commonwealth has committed to transition funding to Canberra Public Schools over 10 years to 20 per cent portion of the SRS baseline for government schools which would increase Commonwealth funding for this sector.
- The Commonwealth's funding for the majority of 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.
- As the Commonwealth currently provides funding in excess of 80 per cent of the SRS baseline for non-government schools, the proposed bilateral agreement would decrease Commonwealth funding for this sector over a transitional period of 10 years. To assist non-government schools during the transition period, the Commonwealth announced that transition funding of \$57.9 million over the initial first four years will be provided for ACT non-government schools.
- The reforms and policy platforms that will be part of the conditions of funding will be informed by The Review to Achieve Educational Excellence in Australian Schools (known as Gonski 2.0) which will be released on 29 March 2018.
- The National agreement will include goals, principles and national reforms while the bilateral agreements will include Territory financial contributions and local reforms.
- The conditions and sanctions arising from not meeting the agreed requirements will be reflected in the final tranche of amendments to the Australian Education Act Regulation, which will occur in parallel with the development of the national and bilateral agreements.
- The Commonwealth has announced a commitment to a sector blind, consistent and needs based funding model adding resources to deliver what students need.

### Background Information

- The Commonwealth announced its intention to target the government sector where need is greater.
- The Commonwealth announced that total funding for education will grow from around \$17.5 billion in 2017 to \$22.1 billion in 2021 and \$30.6 billion by 2027. This equates to an increase of 75% in Commonwealth funding over 10 years.
- At the end of the next 10 years the Commonwealth will transition to an even share of funding across States and Territories in each sector.

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Lead Directorate: Education



## QUESTION TIME BRIEF

- For non-government schools by 2027, the Commonwealth has committed to provide 80% of funding under the Schooling Resource Standard.
- The impact of a new Gonski 2.0 review of parts of the existing Schooling Resource Standard is anticipated to be completed by the middle of 2018. Such a review has the potential to significantly impact individual schools and systems.

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Portfolio: Education & Early Childhood Development

**ISSUE: ISLAMIC SCHOOL OF CANBERRA (ISC) AND COMMONWEALTH  
REGISTRATION FUNDING CONCERNS**

**Talking points:**

- The ISC is registered as a non-government school by the ACT Government until 31 December 2018.
- A change of proprietor for the ISC was approved by the ACT Government on 6 December 2017. The new proprietor is the Islamic Practice and Dawah Circle (IPDC).
- Commonwealth funding for the ISC ceased on 16 December 2017 following revocation of 'Approved Authority' status from the previous proprietor.
- The new proprietor of the school has sought approval from the Commonwealth to become an 'Approved Authority' (approved to operate a school). A decision from the Commonwealth is expected to be provided in the first half of 2018. If 'Approved Authority' status is provided this will mean the school will receive Commonwealth funding.

**Key Information**

- On 20 October 2017 the ISC wrote to the Registrar of Non-Government Schools within the Directorate to seek a change in the proprietor of the school from the Australian Federation of Islamic Council Schools of the ACT Limited (ASAL) to IPDC. The change of proprietorship took place from 16 December 2017. This request was approved on 6 December 2017.
- In November 2017 IPDC applied for 'Approved Authority' status from the Commonwealth. The Commonwealth wrote to IPDC on 18 January 2018 to seek further information regarding the application. IPDC had until 2 February 2018 to provide the information. IPDC provided the requested information by the due date and subsequent additional information, as requested by the Commonwealth.

**Key Information (not for public disclosure)**

- On 1 March 2018, the Commonwealth have advised the Directorate (in-confidence) that the IPDC have provided the information required and the Commonwealth are currently seeking legal advice to provide IPDC 'Approved Authority' status. This is likely to be advised to IPDC by mid-March 2018.

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- The 'Approved Authority' status will be subject to IPDC either securing the lease of the land that the school currently occupies from ACTPLA or secure the land via a rent arrangement with the Australian Federation of Islamic Councils (AFIC), who are the current owners of the land.
- Should the 'Approved Authority' status be signed off in March, the Commonwealth will look to provide a lump sum payment of 50% of 2018 Commonwealth funding in April (i.e. the IPDC would receive Commonwealth funding for the period 1 January to 30 June 2018).
- Going forward the Directorate will remain in close contact with the Commonwealth Government around the advice IPDC provide in regards to land arrangements. Should IPDC advise that AFIC will transfer/sell the land to IPDC, the Directorate will liaise with ACTPLA to ensure the transfer of land is expedited.

## Background Information

- On 21 April 2017, the Commonwealth issued a notice to revoke AFIC Schools (ACT) Limited (ASAL)'s approval as an "Approved Authority" under the *Education Act 2013* (Commonwealth). After additional information was provided in several instances, the Commonwealth advised the Education Directorate on 25 October 2017 that the internal review of the decision to remove 'Approved Authority' status from ASAL was complete and the original decision had been affirmed. On that basis Commonwealth funding for the ISC ceased on 16 December 2017 and a Commonwealth payment to the school in January 2018 was not provided.
- Commonwealth grants for the operation of the ISC are about 55 per cent of the school's revenue (\$1.1m per year).
- The ACT provides ISC with approximately \$0.4 million annually.
- The Directorate established a hotline (1800 240 584) for parents with any questions in relation to schooling options for students.
- The Directorate remains in close communication with the ISC, Association of Independent Schools ACT (AISACT) and the Commonwealth.

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## Portfolio/s Education &amp; Early Childhood Development

**ISSUE: GIFTED AND TALENTED EDUCATION****Talking points:**

- The Directorate's *Gifted and Talented Students* policy provides systemic advice to Canberra public schools on current leading evidence-based practice in gifted and talented education.
- All 87 Canberra public schools implement the policy. Each Canberra public school principal and school board determines the programs and approaches used at their school to support the needs of gifted and talented students.

**Key Information**

- The Directorate's *Gifted and Talented Students* policy provides systemic advice to Canberra public schools on contemporary evidence-based practice in gifted and talented education.
- All 87 Canberra public schools implement the policy. Each Canberra public school principal and school board determines the programs and approaches used at their school to support the needs of gifted and talented students.
- Under the policy, principals must provide information on their school website, and appoint a liaison officer to provide a point of contact between the school, gifted and talented students and their families.
- The policy is currently undergoing a scheduled review. The Directorate has engaged specialist consultant, Gateways Education to review the current policy and provide recommendations based on contemporary research, leading practice and stakeholder consultation.
- In December 2017, Gateways Education consulted with Directorate and external stakeholders over two days, and also received written feedback.
- Gateways Education's recommendations are expected to be delivered to the Directorate during Term 1, 2018, with the policy to be updated thereafter.
- During Terms 1 and 2, Gateways Education will also deliver four foundational professional learning workshops for teachers in Canberra public and non-government schools.
- Since 2015, Gateways Education has been engaged to support the implementation of the current Policy and has delivered:

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## QUESTION TIME BRIEF

- a series of 12 professional learning workshops for school leaders, liaison officers and classroom teachers on gifted and talented education;
  - research papers on gifted and talented education theory and practice, nationally and internationally; and
  - written articles on gifted and talented education targeted at parents and the community that can be included in school newsletters.
- The Catholic and independent sectors are invited to participate in the professional learning workshops.
  - The professional learning workshop materials, research articles for teachers and newsletter articles for parents are regularly uploaded on the Directorate's intranet to be accessed by school-based staff. By providing these resources, the Directorate aims to build the capacity of all teachers in Canberra public schools in gifted and talented education.

### Background Information

- The current Policy was launched in 2014, along with a suite of parent fact sheets to assist parents and carers to understand the Policy and the role of Canberra public schools in supporting gifted and talented students.
- During 2015-2017, hundreds of school leaders, liaison officers and classroom teachers from all sectors have attended professional learning workshops delivered by Gateways Education focusing on:
  - differentiated curriculum for gifted learners;
  - assessment approaches with gifted learners;
  - twice exceptional and underachieving gifted students;
  - developing learning activities using Bloom's Taxonomy and other learning models; and
  - action research workshops.

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Portfolio/s Education &amp; Early Childhood Development

**ISSUE:       SUSPENSIONS IN CANBERRA PUBLIC SCHOOLS****Talking points:**

- In 2017 the overall suspension rate for ACT public school K-12 population was 2.5 percent. an increase of 0.1 percentage points from 2016.
- In 2017, the suspension rate for ACT public highschools was 5.9 percent compared to 5.2 percent in 2016, an increase of 0.7 percentage points.
- Overall the 2017 rates of students suspended, suspension incidents and suspension days is very similar to 2016.
- The Education Directorate is currently reviewing the Directorate's Suspension, Exclusion and Transfer Policy and support documents which will update guidance to school on suspensions including strategies to reduce the suspension rate.
- This process has included a review of national and international literature and practice in this area and initial consultation with key stakeholders. During Term 1, 2018 a community consultation will occur to seek feedback on the draft reviewed policy documents.
- The revised policy includes a focus on a prevention and early intervention approach to reduce the incidence of behaviours that potentially lead to suspension, exclusion and transfer. The revised policy outlines the school's role in setting up responsive environments with whole school approaches to positive behaviour.
- The Directorate continues to implement a targeted support response in each school network to supports students who have been suspended. The response entails a Network Student Engagement (NSET) multi-disciplinary team working with the student, family and school to address the underlying issues that contribute to suspension.
- The NSET response is tailored to the needs of the individual student and may include a social worker, senior psychologist, speech pathologist, occupational therapist, and specialist teachers in behaviour support, disability education or engagement. The particular staff involved will

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depend on the issues impacting on the child or young person's engagement in learning.

- The Continuum of Education Support (CES) model is a coherent strategy that focuses on the provision of alternative education programs and/or other flexible learning options for students at risk of disengaging from secondary school and will be implemented in all Canberra public high schools throughout the 2018 school year.

**Key Information**

- There has been a steady increase in enrolments for ACT Public schools across the reporting period. Considering data relative to enrolment numbers provides a comprehensive picture, allowing data to be compared across years.
- In 2017, 2.5 percent of the K-12 public school student population was suspended at least once; an increase of 0.2 percentage points from 2016.
- In 2017, there was a total of 5 suspension incidents per 100 students, which was the same rate as 2016.
- In 2017, there was a total of 10 suspension days per 100 students which shows an increase of one day per 100 students compared to 2016.
- Overall the rate of students suspended, suspension incidents and suspension days was similar to 2016.

**Suspension Data**

- Each year, the Directorate records and analyses suspension data to assist with planning and improvement.

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# QUESTION TIME BRIEF

Year		Primary Schools	High Schools	Colleges
2014	<b>Total Enrolments</b>	<b>21,429</b>	<b>9,841</b>	<b>6,258</b>
	<b>Suspension Incidents</b>	<b>808</b>	<b>915</b>	<b>38</b>
	<b><i>Incidents per 100 Students</i></b>	<b>4</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>1</b>
	<b>Suspension Days</b>	<b>1398</b>	<b>2103</b>	<b>104</b>
	<b><i>Days per 100 Students</i></b>	<b>7</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>2</b>
	<b>Students Suspended</b>	<b>317</b>	<b>487</b>	<b>33</b>
	<b><i>Suspension Rate</i></b>	<b>1.5 percent</b>	<b>4.9 percent</b>	<b>0.5 percent</b>
2015	<b>Total Enrolments</b>	<b>22,442</b>	<b>9,947</b>	<b>6,446</b>
	<b>Suspension Incidents</b>	<b>723</b>	<b>1,079</b>	<b>36</b>
	<b><i>Incidents per 100 Students</i></b>	<b>3</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>1</b>
	<b>Suspension Days</b>	<b>1312</b>	<b>2192</b>	<b>87</b>
	<b><i>Days per 100 Students</i></b>	<b>6</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>1</b>
	<b>Students Suspended</b>	<b>318</b>	<b>560</b>	<b>32</b>
	<b><i>Suspension Rate</i></b>	<b>1.4 percent</b>	<b>5.6 percent</b>	<b>0.5 percent</b>
2016	<b>Total Enrolments</b>	<b>23,630</b>	<b>10,258</b>	<b>6,487</b>
	<b>Suspension Incidents</b>	<b>819</b>	<b>1,111</b>	<b>63</b>
	<b><i>Incidents per 100 Students</i></b>	<b>3</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>1</b>
	<b>Suspension Days</b>	<b>1,460</b>	<b>2,106</b>	<b>144</b>
	<b><i>Days per 100 Students</i></b>	<b>6</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>2</b>
	<b>Students Suspended</b>	<b>343</b>	<b>535</b>	<b>55</b>
	<b><i>Suspension Rate</i></b>	<b>1.5 percent</b>	<b>5.2 percent</b>	<b>0.8 percent</b>
2017	<b>Total Enrolments</b>	<b>24,739</b>	<b>10,571</b>	<b>6,680</b>
	<b>Suspension Incidents</b>	<b>886</b>	<b>1,229</b>	<b>55</b>
	<b><i>Incidents per 100 Students</i></b>	<b>4</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>1</b>

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## QUESTION TIME BRIEF

<b>Suspension Days</b>	<b>1,652</b>	<b>2,464</b>	<b>150</b>
<b><i>Days per 100 Students</i></b>	<b>7</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Students Suspended</b>	<b>384</b>	<b>621</b>	<b>48</b>
<b><i>Suspension Rate</i></b>	<b>1.6 percent</b>	<b>5.9 percent</b>	<b>0.7 percent</b>

Suspension Data Source: Planning and Analytics Branch, ACT Education Directorate 2017

### Legislative basis for suspension

The *Education Act 2004* was amended on 23 February 2010 to delegate authority to principals to suspend students from ACT government schools for up to 15 continuous days.

Directorate policy and supporting documentation were subsequently reviewed and include:

- procedures for principals suspending students for up to 15 days;
- notification procedures if suspending a student with a diagnosed disability;
- notification procedures if suspending students in out of home care.

### Use of Suspension, Transfer or Exclusion in Canberra Public Schools

- While Principals may suspend students from ACT Public Schools for up to 15 continuous days, the Director-General may approve a suspension for up to 20 days, following a recommendation from a school Principal or Director School Improvement.
- If a student is suspended for seven or more days in a school term the Principal must provide reasonable access to counselling.
- A re-entry meeting must be convened by the principal on return to school.
- Reasonable attempts must be made to inform parents/ carers of the decision and their right to appeal.
- The principal may recommend to the Director-General that a student be *transferred* to another government school. A transfer is used when:
  - repeated attempts with comprehensive support to engage the student in effective participation in school are unsuccessful; or
  - an incident of misbehaviour is so severe that re-entry to the school concerned would be unreasonable for all stakeholders; and
  - It is in the best interest of the student; and
  - The parent/carer is not acting on the advice of the Directorate to voluntarily move their child.
- Principals may also recommend to the Director-General that a student be *excluded* from all ACT Public Schools.
- There have been no recommendations to exclude in the time period 2008 to present.

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**Support for students who have been suspended.**

- The Directorate has implemented a process to facilitate a targeted support response in each school network. The response entails a Network Student Engagement (NSET) multi-disciplinary team working with the student, family and school to address the underlying issues that contribute to suspension. The NSET team assigned to the response is tailored to the needs of the individual student and may include a social worker, senior psychologist, speech pathologist, occupational therapist, specialist teacher in behaviour support, disability education or engagement. The particular staff involved will depend on the issues impacting on the child or young person's engagement in learning.
- The Student Wellbeing Support Assembly Brief provides additional strategies and resources available to support students who are struggling to engage at school.
- A review of the Directorate's Suspension, Exclusion and Transfer Policy commenced in February 2017. This process has included a review of national and international literature and practice in this area and initial consultation with key stakeholders. During Term 1, 2018 a community consultation will occur to seek feedback on the draft reviewed policy documents.
- The revised policy includes a focus on a *prevention and early intervention approach* to reduce the incidence of behaviours that potentially lead to suspension, exclusion and transfer. The revised policy outlines the school's role in setting up responsive environments with whole school approaches to positive behaviour.
- The draft of the reviewed policy recognises the government's agreement to Recommendation 11.5 of *Schools for All* report which makes reference to alternative options to out-of-school suspensions. One of the objectives of the policy review is to support schools consider other options to suspension where appropriate.
- The ACT Government also agreed in principle to Recommendation 11.6 of the *Schools for All* report that: ETD monitor and publicly report the proportion of suspensions, transfers and exclusions that are applied to students with a disability and to students in out of home care. The Education Directorate agreed to examine options for high level reporting of proportions of suspensions, transfers and exclusions.
- It is anticipated that information about Canberra Public Schools suspension data will be published on the Directorate's website during term 1, 2018.

**Background Information**

- Suspensions in Canberra public schools continue to create community and media interest.
- Sometimes suspension from school is necessary and is used in accordance with Section 36 of the *Education Act (2004)*. This may include situations where the principal decides action is required to address a situation where a student threatens the safety and wellbeing of another student attending the school, a member of the staff of the school or another member of the school community.

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**ISSUE: RESPECTFUL RELATIONSHIPS EDUCATION IN ACT PUBLIC SCHOOLS****Talking points:**

- The prominence of *Respectful Relationships Education* programs have increased in recent years, with the link between this curriculum area and primary prevention of gender based violence becoming more widely understood. In all Australian jurisdictions, Education departments are working on developing resources and implementing curriculum in this area.
- A primary prevention approach aims to effect long term cultural change, through educating children and young people to build attitudes, norms and behaviour that do not accept violence, to understand the drivers of violence and to be equipped with skills that assist in forming healthy and respectful relationships
- A focus on respectful relationships is important because gender inequality and gender-based violence continue to have a profound effect on outcomes for Australians.
- The Directorate continues to develop and grow work to promote evidence based Respectful Relationships curriculum resources to Canberra Public schools to progress the primary prevention agenda. This work is anticipated to grow in line with the launch of the Australian Government digital platform.
- In March, the ACT Government engaged Our Watch to workshop the area of Respectful Relationships Education. Representatives from across the Education Support Office attended
- Respectful Relationships Education is most effective when used as part of a whole school approach, which involves providing students with multiple exposure to key messages across the curriculum and in different areas of the school and community. This should involve the whole school community, including students, staff and the wider school community in the process of cultural change.
- The Directorate has promoted the White Ribbon Australia, Breaking the Silence Schools Program to Canberra Public Schools. 20 ACT schools have engaged with this respectful relationships program which takes a whole school approach. 16 have finished the program, 6 finishing in 2018.

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Planning is currently occurring to commence another cohort of schools in the training in August, 2018.

### **Key Information**

- The YWCA Canberra has, on a number of occasions spoken out in public forums and in the media that they think Education needs to do more in the area of Respectful Relationships Education.
- On 7 March, 2018 YWCA launched their **Leading the Change: The Pathway to Gender Equality** report card, which assesses the ACT Government's progress on gender equality since gender parity was achieved in the Legislative Assembly in 2016. YWCA report card suggests no progress has been achieved to support respectful relationships training for staff and students.
- The YWCA recommended the ACT government introduce a long-term strategy for primary prevention for violence against women, including funding a mandatory roll-out of respectful relationships education from kindergarten to year 12, to drive attitudinal change.
- Despite this assessment Education has progressed in this area. .

### **Education are working in the following way:**

In addition to academic skills, schools engage in teaching and modelling of positive social attitudes, personal resilience and wellbeing. Curriculum in Canberra Public Schools contributes to primary prevention through the development of skills and attitudes necessary to develop positive and respectful relationships.

The Australian Curriculum's *Personal and Social Capability* provides direction to schools about the focus of lessons to enhance student social emotional skills.

The Directorate's *Safe and Supportive Schools Policy* (2016) requires all Canberra public schools to deliver Social and Emotional Learning programs. During the 2015 and 2016 the Directorate made Social and Emotional Learning grants available to schools (up to \$5000/school), 51 schools applied for a grant to assist implementation of SEL approaches in their school.

### **Social Emotional Learning (SEL)**

Social and Emotional Learning (SEL) forms a strong foundation for teaching about positive gender relationships. SEL programs provide a logical starting point from which to engage in more explicit work with students around gender norms, gender identity and respectful relationships.

Social Emotional Learning (SEL) is the process through which students acquire and effectively apply the knowledge, attitudes, and skills necessary to:

- understand and manage their emotions
- understand and show empathy for others
- establish and maintain positive respectful relationships

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- set and achieve positive goals
- make responsible decisions.

A review of the research literature<sup>1</sup> indicates that students receiving a multiyear, integrated effort in quality SEL instruction demonstrated:

- a reduction in interpersonal violence
- better academic performance: achievement scores an average of 11 percentile points higher than students who did not receive SEL instruction
- improved attitudes and behaviours: greater motivation to learn, deeper commitment to school, increased time devoted to schoolwork, and better classroom behaviour
- fewer negative behaviours: decreased disruptive class behaviour, noncompliance, aggression, delinquent acts, and disciplinary referrals
- reduced emotional distress: fewer reports of student depression, anxiety, stress, and social withdrawal
- reduced drug and alcohol use and school dropout.

#### Respectful Relationships Programs, Resources and providers

The Australian Government is working to develop online respectful relationships education resources for senior secondary students and to develop a digital platform. The digital platform is expected to be used to disseminate a range of resources to school communities to support respectful relationships education.

The ACT Education Directorate contributes to an Australian Government led working group in this area and also is a member of the *Our WATCh* National Expert Working Group. The Directorate attended workshops provided by Our Watch on 5 and 6 March.

Tasmania, NSW and Victoria have recently published curriculum resources which are freely available online. The ACT has also negotiated with Queensland Education and Training Department to provide online access for Canberra Public Schools to Queensland respectful relationship lessons and curriculum support materials.

Schools are able to choose programs and resources that suit their particular context and school community.

The Directorate has promoted the *White Ribbon Australia, Breaking the Silence Schools Program* to Canberra Public Schools. 20 ACT schools have engaged with the program and 16

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<sup>1</sup> Durlak, J. A., Weissberg, R. P., Dymnicki, A. B., Taylor, R. D. & Schellinger, K. B.. 2011. The Impact of Enhancing Students' Social and Emotional Learning: A Meta-Analysis of School-Based Universal Interventions. *Child Development*, Vol 82, No 1, pg 405-432)

Zins, J.E., & Elias, M.J. (2006). Social and emotional learning. In G.G. Bear & K.M. Minke (Eds.), *Children's needs III: Development, prevention, and intervention* (pp. 1-13). Bethesda, MD: National Association of School Psychologists. [http://www.nasponline.org/educators/elias\\_zins.pdf](http://www.nasponline.org/educators/elias_zins.pdf) (accessed 22/7/15)

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have finished the program, 6 finishing in 2018. Another cohort of schools is anticipated to commence training in August.

In the ACT some non-government organisations, such as the YWCA and PCYC who offer training to schools in this area. The YWCA's program involves a cost to schools which covers a license to train other school staff and a resource kit. There are also a range of commercial programs available to schools.

### **Background Information**

The ACT Education Directorate's (EDU) response to Family Violence aligns with both Australian and ACT government priorities and recognises the important role the education system plays as a setting for *primary prevention*.

Continuing social and emotional learning programs in schools to enhance the skills of children and young people to engage in respectful relationships forms part of the current Parliamentary Agreement between ACT Labor and ACT Greens.

The Directorate prioritises the following work in the area of Domestic and Family Violence:

- Policy and resource development, including curriculum resources
- Training and development for teachers and school staff
- Specific school programs designed to address the needs of students who have experienced trauma
- Work on communications in line with the whole of government approaches.
- A Family Violence Response Plan to coordinate activity across all areas of the Directorate.
- The Directorate contributes to commitments made as part of the ACT Government Response to Family Violence and the ACT Women's Plan.

Women and girls continue to experience inequality and discrimination in many aspects of their lives, which can limit the choices and opportunities available to them which can impact on their life outcomes.

Additionally LGBTIQ people often face disproportionate discrimination, bullying and violence, with negative implications for their health and wellbeing.

Young people benefit from education programs which assist them to recognise and question gender norms, and to critically examine the potentially negative or limiting impacts they may have. Research indicates that education programs that work on building positive gender relationships must commence from an early age, as children are well aware of gender norms and make efforts to fit within gendered expectations by the time they are in kindergarten.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> Victorian Department of Education and Training (2016). Resilience, Rights & Respectful Relationships: Teaching For Social and Emotional Learning and Respectful Relationships. Melbourne. Available at [www.education.vic.gov.au/respectrel](http://www.education.vic.gov.au/respectrel)

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## QUESTION TIME BRIEF

The Directorate's Safe and Supportive Schools Policy (2016) guides schools in this area:

"All Directorate staff will develop an awareness that a primary prevention approach including building students' skills to develop respectful relationships can have far reaching effects. For example, promoting gender equality and respect can assist to prevent gender based violence"

*and*

"All Directorate staff will model behaviour and contribute to intentionally developing student's critical thinking skills to promote a culture of equality. For example, challenging stereotypes, not tolerating discrimination and understanding the impact language can have in building or impeding respectful relationships".

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Portfolio: Education & Early Childhood Development

**ISSUE: OCCUPATIONAL VIOLENCE****Talking points:**

- In July 2017 the Education Directorate released its Occupational Violence Policy and Occupational Violence Management Plan. These documents set out how the Directorate will manage the Hazard of Occupational Violence. A program of work is currently being rolled out across all schools in order to build a common understanding for the management of Occupational Violence.
- The priority areas of work for 2018 in addressing Occupational Violence in schools includes the roll out of an Occupational Violence Induction to all school staff and to train relevant staff in a newly developed Occupational Violence Risk Management Kit.
- The Directorate continues to work closely with WorkSafe ACT and the Australian Education Union as implementation action continues to achieve system wide, effective management of this risk.

**Key Information**

- The Education Directorate was issued with an Improvement Notice from WorkSafe ACT on Friday 10 March 2017 relating to “ongoing incidents of occupational violence”.
- WorkSafe ACT outlined action required to address this notice as:
  - Development and Maintenance of Work Health and Safety specific risk assessment in response to incidents of Occupational Violence.
  - Retrospectively applying this system and management strategies to any previous incident of Occupational Violence.
- On 16 May 2017, WorkSafe ACT advised the Directorate they were satisfied with the comprehensive work being implemented and other work planned to address the risk. WorkSafe ACT advised that the Improvement Notice requirements had been met and it was no longer in effect.
- Risk management had been directed at applying:
  - student based approaches with short term exclusions from school;
  - student behavioural management plans; and
  - support provided by the Network Student Engagement Team (NSET).

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## QUESTION TIME BRIEF

- The Directorate commissioned reviews in February 2017 and April 2017 as recommended by the NSET risk assessment process and be more closely aligned with the Health Safety and Wellbeing Team risk assessment for staff safety. Risk assessments now cover staff, student safety and well-being.
- An interim stand-alone risk assessment tool to complement the existing risk assessment process has been developed and piloted in response to the reports and Improvement Notice. A further review of the tool will occur with NSET, school based staff, Shared Services ICT and relevant unions to deliver the outcome of a web enabled smart form that is responsive to risk type and level.
- On 16-17 May 2017, the Director-General's consultation on Occupational Violence risk was undertaken with teachers and Learning Support Assistants. This consultation was facilitated by Mark McCabe, former ACT WorkSafe Commissioner with 138 participants attending from across all ACT schools.
- The Education Directorate's *Managing Occupational Violence Policy* and supporting *Occupational Violence Management Plan (Plan)* were launched on 26 July 2017. These documents were jointly developed with the Australian Education Union (AEU) to outline a clear and streamlined process for Occupational Violence risk assessment for staff safety.
- The recommendations of the *Independent Review of the Safety Management System for Occupational Violence (April 2017)* were:
  1. Improved training for staff who work with students with special needs;
  2. A Work Health Safety compliant risk assessment process;
  3. Ensuring pre-service and early educators are provided placements and support to teach students with complex needs; and
  4. Review incident reporting tools.
- During the latter part of 2017, consultation took place to identify training requirements and to develop training material. The focus for early 2018 is to roll out an Occupational Violence Induction to all school staff and to train relevant staff in a newly developed Occupational Violence Risk Management Kit.
- Training is one part of a broader review of staff support. Other areas include staff induction, pre-service capability, mentoring and coaching and post-incident support.
- The Directorate plans to approach the Director-General, Workplace Safety and Industrial Relations to co-sponsor a symposium with other Directorates in Human Services to discuss the complexity of this issue. This symposium will assist to inform the cross government policy position for management of this risk. The symposium is scheduled to take place in 2018.
- The Directorate continues to work closely with WorkSafe ACT and the AEU as implementation action continues to achieve system wide, effective management of this risk.

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## Portfolio/s Education &amp; Early Childhood Development

**ISSUE: ABORIGINAL AND TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAMS****Talking Points:**

- There are currently eight Secondary Scholarship holders including the six new scholarships awarded for 2018 – four health and four teaching.
- In 2017, Tertiary Scholarship recipients attended the University of Canberra and the Australian Catholic University - five teaching and one health.
- The 2018 Tertiary Scholarship application process has just concluded, with the recipients to be announced shortly.

**Key Information:**

- The Education Directorate administers two scholarship programs for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students in ACT public schools, totalling \$155,000.
  - The Secondary Scholarship Program for years 11 and 12 students interested in a career in teaching or the health field; and
  - The Tertiary Scholarship Program for students enrolled in teaching or an approved health course at a local ACT university.

**Background Information**

- A 2013-2014 ACT Government Budget commitment provided \$25,000 to extend the Secondary Scholarships to include five health scholarships.
- In 2017, the value of the Secondary Scholarships was reduced from \$5,000 to \$4,000 in order to expand the program to include scholarships for students wishing to pursue a Vocational Education and Training pathway.
- Ongoing eligibility for each scholarship is based on academic achievement and attendance.
- From 2009 to 2018 inclusive, fifty seven Senior Secondary students have been awarded Secondary Scholarships, forty two for teaching, fourteen for health and one for Vocational Education.
- From 2009 to 2017 inclusive, 26 Tertiary Scholarships have been awarded, 22 for students undertaking teaching degrees and four for students studying an approved health degree.
- Due to the scholarships involving a merit selection process, and depending on the number of applicants, the full quota of scholarships is not always awarded.

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- The 2018 Tertiary scholarships opened on 5 February 2018 and closed 5 March 2018, with an awards ceremony scheduled for April 2018.
- The Secondary Scholarships Ceremony for the six new recipients took place on 5 March 2018.

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Portfolio/s Education & Early Childhood Development

**ISSUE: ABORIGINAL AND TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER EDUCATION PROGRAMS**

**Talking Points:**

- The Student Aspirations Program promotes participation in leadership opportunities and supports the retention and attainment of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students, focusing on pathways and transitions.
- A visit to the ACT Supreme Court for students in years 9-12 is scheduled for 17 May 2018. This event is being developed in partnership with the University of Canberra and the ACT Supreme Court.
- In November 2017, thirty-two students from 15 schools attended the Student Aspirations Years 5 and 6 Leadership Day held at Birrigai Outdoor School.
- The Mura Awards initiative recognises student achievement and provides an opportunity for schools to acknowledge the consistent effort of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students and to engage with families and the local community. The small bursaries attached to the Mura Awards encourages participation in education by providing some financial assistance for educational expenses such as excursions and uniforms.
- Fifty-six Mura Awards were awarded late in 2017 with each student receiving a \$400 bursary for the 2018 school year.
- The Education Directorate also employs 10 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education Officers (IEOs) who work across 11 ACT public schools. From 2018 IEOs will support schools to build their Cultural Integrity by:
  - Supporting schools to engage with families and community.
  - Supporting teachers to embed Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander perspectives across the curriculum.

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- Providing advice and leadership to schools on celebrating significant events and milestones for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples
- Supporting schools to grow a culture of high expectations for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students
- Facilitating successful student transitions between year levels, between schools and to post school study or work.
- School-based initiatives include:
  - The Warrumbul Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Centre for Excellence at Campbell High School works with students to develop their leadership skills and supports them to access pathways to further education and employment after school. Learning includes yarning circles, outdoor activities learning about the local area, hands-on and art-based activities as well as intensive literacy and numeracy practice.
  - Ganbra at Wanniasa School provides a space where Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students are able to learn more about their culture, complete extra study and receive tutoring.
  - Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and non-Indigenous students from Melba Copland Secondary School and feeder primary schools learn about different Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander histories and cultures through the Cultural Awareness Program.
  - Melba Copland Secondary School's is the Mentoring/Reading program which pairs Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students from the school and students from feeder primary schools who may have low literacy or are at risk of disengaging.

**The Indigenous Studies Centre – Big Picture Academy at Melrose High School is a program for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students in years 9 and 10. Students study in a subject area that they are passionate about, and learn what it is like to work in the industry they are interested in through an internship in a professional working environment. The program connects students to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander mentors already working in the local community in the same field.**

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**Key Information:**

- At the August 2017 ACT School Census there were 1,850 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students enrolled in ACT public schools.
- From 2018, the Education Directorate is taking a new approach to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education that is strengths-based with a focus on the cultural integrity of ACT public schools.
- Cultural Integrity describes the environment a school creates to engage all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students, to meet their needs and aspirations and to welcome their families and communities.
- This approach is firmly rooted in current leading practice, academic literature and consultation with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.
- The evidence strongly suggests that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students enjoy greater success in schools that are welcoming, reflective of their culture and community, and in which relationships support high expectations for all students.
- Students who feel welcome in the school environment and are able to see Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander perspectives represented through all parts of the school community are more likely to engage with education.
- Supplementary to school-based initiatives and programs, the Education Directorate provides several system wide programs for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students in ACT public schools.

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## Portfolio/s Education &amp; Early Childhood Development

**ISSUE: CLOSING THE GAP IN EDUCATION – LITERACY AND NUMERACY****Talking Points:**

- In 2017, 90 Indigenous students were enrolled in Year 9 in ACT public schools and 53 Indigenous students (59 percent) participated in NAPLAN. Of the 53 who participated in NAPLAN in 2017, only 38 students also had participated in year 7. This illustrates the difficulty in using NAPLAN data to track the progress to a cohort of students.
- The Directorate acknowledges that the reasons behind withdrawals and absences of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students from NAPLAN testing can be personal and historical.
- It is important to note that caution should be exercised in the interpretation of NAPLAN data due to the relatively small population of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students.
- Withdrawal is generally the highest contributor to non-participation by ACT Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students in years 3 and 5 in NAPLAN tests. Rates of withdrawal in 2017 remained consistent with 2016.

**Key Information:**

- In 2017, the ACT consistently had a higher proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students across public and non-government schools achieving at or above the national minimum standard for both reading and numeracy across the years of testing than was the case nationally. This was particularly the case in years 5, 7 and 9 reading, with a difference of higher than 10 percentage points.
- In 2017, 87.5 percent of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander year 7 students in the ACT performed at or above the national minimum standard for reading which is significantly above the national figure for Indigenous students of 74.4 percent. In comparison 96.4 percent of non-Indigenous students in the ACT performed at or above the national minimum standard compared to the national figure of 95.2 percent. The results are similar for year 7 numeracy.

**Background Information**

- A target of the National Indigenous Reform Agreement is to halve the gap for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students in reading, writing and numeracy by 2018.

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## Portfolio/s Education &amp; Early Childhood Development

**ISSUE: CLOSING THE GAP IN EDUCATION - ATTENDANCE****Talking Points:**

- From 2018, the Education Directorate is taking a new approach to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education that is strengths-based with a focus on the cultural integrity of ACT public schools.
- Cultural Integrity describes the environment a school creates to support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students, and to welcome and engage their families and communities.
- This approach is firmly rooted in current leading practice, academic literature and consultation with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.
- The evidence strongly suggests that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students enjoy greater success in schools that are welcoming, reflective of their culture and community, and in which relationships support high expectations for all students.

**Key Information:**

- At the February 2017 ACT School Census, there were 1,844 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students enrolled in ACT public schools. At the August 2017 ACT School Census there were 1,850 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students enrolled in ACT public schools.
- The National Indigenous Reform Agreement frames the intergovernmental reforms, targets and performance benchmarks to close the gap in Indigenous disadvantage.

**Background Information**

- In 2017, the ACT attendance rate for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students was 83.8 percent, slightly higher than the national rate (83.4%) and a minor decrease from 85.4 percent in 2016.
- Eighty percent of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students in the ACT attend public schools.
- Attendance is a school-based matter and maximising student attendance is the responsibility of school principals. In addition to school-based strategies, the Directorate's multidisciplinary Network Student Engagement Teams supports schools, students and their families to address attendance issues.

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## Portfolio/s Education & Early Childhood Development

### ISSUE: INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS – FEE EXEMPTIONS

#### Talking points:

- Dependants of temporary residents are charged international student tuition fees unless they fall into a fee exempt category. Temporary residents may include but are not limited to:
  - temporary business visa holders
  - international students studying at tertiary institutions
  - visiting overseas scholars and academics
  - refugees or applicants seeking asylum
  - applicants seeking permanent residency and awaiting visa approval.

#### Key Information

- Section 26 of the *Education Act 2004* (ACT) provides for fees to be charged to people who hold a temporary visa under section 30(2) of the *Migration Act 1958* (Commonwealth).
- As temporary residents apply for a visa, they are required to make a declaration to the Department of Immigration and Border Protection (DIBP) that they have the financial means to support any dependants during their stay in Australia. This includes health and education costs.
- Under the Education Directorate's *Enrolment of the Dependants of Temporary Residents* policy, temporary residents are eligible for fee exemption for their children to attend an ACT public school if they are:
  - in identified Commonwealth or ACT Government programs
  - diplomats
  - Australian government scholarship holders
  - Commonwealth assisted students or dependants of students whose tuition fees are fully paid by a publicly funded Australian higher education provider
  - professional academics visiting Australia to observe or participate in established research projects or employment at the invitation of an Australian tertiary institution or research organisation operating in the ACT
  - officers involved in government-to-government exchanges or reciprocities

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## QUESTION TIME BRIEF

- exchange students
- refugees and holders of an humanitarian or protection visa.
- In 2016, 478 dependants of temporary residents were granted fee exemption at a cost of over \$4.6 million to the ACT Government. As of 22 May 2017, 267 dependants of temporary residents have been granted fee exemption this year.
- During the last five years, approximately 2100 dependants of temporary residents were granted fee exemption and were enrolled in ACT public schools. These numbers do not include the dependants of diplomats as they are enrolled directly through schools.

### Background Information

- The charging of international student tuition fees for the dependants of temporary residents is a contentious issue that often attracts media attention.

<b>Current fees:</b>	
Primary	\$10,400 per annum
High School	\$13,600 per annum
College	\$15,200 per annum

- The Chief Minister agreed that from 2016, the Directorate will exempt the tuition fees for the dependents of students studying at an ACT university on a 500 (Postgraduate Research Sector) Visa Subclass. In 2016, there were a total of 63 dependents of temporary residents on a visa subclass 500 (Postgraduate Research Sector) that have received fee exemption and currently enrolled in an ACT public school.
- In 2017, there have been a further 29 dependents of temporary residents on a visa subclass 500 (Postgraduate Research Sector) that have received fee exemption and have enrolled into an ACT public school.

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## Portfolio/s Education & Early Childhood Development

### ISSUE: INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS – FULL FEE PAYING

#### Talking points:

- The International Education Unit is responsible for coordinating the marketing of ACT public schools to international parents interested in having their child attend school in Canberra.
- The International Education Unit provides for the welfare and support of overseas fee paying students on a 500 visa. Staff focus on ensuring students' have a positive experience and achieve excellent educational outcomes while they undertake study in an ACT public school.

#### Key Information

- As of 22 May 2017, there are currently 706 full fee paying international students enrolled in ACT public schools. At the same period in 2016, there were 561 students.
- Of this cohort, approximately 429 are from China, 57 from Vietnam, 42 from South Korea, 17 from Cambodia, 12 from Thailand, 12 from Hong Kong, 11 from India, five from Indonesia, seven from Taiwan and three from Japan . Smaller numbers of students come from Europe, United Kingdom, United States of America, Philippines, Sri Lanka, Pakistan, Africa, Canada and Laos.
- International students on a 500 visa are protected by the *Education Services for Overseas Students Act 2000* (ESOS Act) and the *National Code of Practice for Registration Authorities and Providers of Education and Training to Overseas Students 2007* (The National Code 2007).
- Under the ESOS Act, the welfare accountability for students under the age of 18 is the responsibility of the registered education provider. The Directorate is registered on the **Commonwealth Register of Institutions and Courses for Overseas Students (CRICOS Register)**.
- The Director, Learning and Teaching is nominated on the register as the Principal Officer for the Directorate. Currently the ACT Government has responsibility for the welfare of approximately 500 students.
- The ACT Government Education Directorate assumes welfare responsibility for international students whose parents are offshore; however, parents continue to have parental authority for their children.

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## QUESTION TIME BRIEF

- International Education Unit Staff are available out of hours where required. Officers from the International Education Unit conduct face to face interviews with international student parents in their home country on an annual basis.

### Current Fees for International Students

- Private fee paying students are students who come to study in ACT public schools on a 500 student visa subclass. These students are assisted by the International Education Unit to apply, enrol and study in the ACT. These students are not eligible to apply for fee exemption. (For further information see International Education Exemption Fact Sheet). Fees are based on cost recovery.

Primary	\$10,400 per annum
High School	\$13,600 per annum
College	\$15,200 per annum

- Short stay visits are \$385 per week and are for a minimum of five weeks and a maximum of 10 weeks.

### **Background Information**

- International fee paying students have been enrolled in ACT Public Schools since 1990. Attracting international students to study in Canberra is beneficial to the ACT economy and in 2015 -16, contributed \$508 million to the ACT economy.
- As an international education provider, the Directorate is committed to providing a high quality experience for international students. International students are provided with information around Australian lifestyle, culture and values to assist with their transition to life in Canberra.
- International students studying in ACT public schools bring great diversity to the wider Canberra community through their involvement in volunteer work, local clubs and community events such as the Multicultural Festival and the Nara Candle Festival.
- The contributions and benefits that international students bring to ACT public schools are many and varied. International student cohorts enable the broadening and strengthening of curriculum offerings in schools. All students in the school community benefit through the creation and maintenance of small or specialist classes, particularly in areas such as Specialist Mathematics and languages. Most importantly, international students strengthen cultural understanding and students' appreciation of the diversity and the richness of other cultures through their interactions in the classroom.
- The Directorate also works closely with the higher education providers in Canberra to encourage students to explore future pathways in the ACT.

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## Portfolio/s Education &amp; Early Childhood Development

**ISSUE: SUPPORT FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES****Talking points:**

- All ACT public schools provide reasonable adjustments to meet the need of individual students.
- In ACT public schools students who meet the ACT Disability Criteria can access the inclusion support program (ISP) in mainstream classes, support in specialist classes (Learning Support Units, Learning Support Centres and Learning Support Units Autism) and through access to specialist schools.
- A new policy framework and resourcing model to support the needs of students with disability is being developed as part of the Student Resource Allocation (SRA) Program.

**Key Information**

- The August 2017 school census shows 2313 students in ACT public schools accessing disability education programs and services.
- Across the system, schools are provided with additional resources, including staff, professional learning and expert guidance to make reasonable adjustments for access and participation for students with disability.
- The ACT Government has invested in a number of training courses to build the capability of teachers in ACT public schools to enable them to better support students with disability.
- With a mix of face-to-face and online learning opportunities, teachers and other school staff can access quality professional learning when they need it and at times that suit them. There are a number of high quality face to face professional learning opportunities for staff including wellbeing workshops and trauma training.

**Students with Autism**

- Data informing the August 2017 school census identified 733 students with a diagnosis of Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) across Kindergarten to Year 12 in ACT public schools. Students with autism are enrolled in a range of programs and ACT public schools:
  - 343 students participate in mainstream classes with support through the Directorate's Inclusion Support Program resourcing

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## QUESTION TIME BRIEF

- 270 students participate in Learning Support Centres and Learning Support Units within mainstream settings, which provide smaller group sizes and increased teacher to student ratios.
- 120 students are enrolled in one of four ACT Specialist Schools.
- Placement in education programs is based on the need of the individual student and decisions about placement are made in consultation with parents, carers, families and schools. Students participating in these programs have an Individual Learning Plan (ILP), developed collaboratively by parents, carers, the school, and the student themselves when appropriate.
- From 2015, early intervention services for children with autism are delivered by non-government organisations as part of the NDIS. Autism is a lifelong developmental condition that impacts on the way individuals relate to their environment and how they interact with people. This includes social communication, restricted and repetitive behaviours, unusual sensory sensitivities and intellectual impairment or learning difficulties.
- Autism is described as a spectrum because the degree of impact on individuals varies from person to person. For example, some students require specialised programs and school placements such as small class size (Learning Support Unit – Autism) to support their participation at school. In contrast, other students are able to attend a mainstream classroom with the support of teaching staff and the use of autism specific strategies to support their participation at school.

### Disability Standards for Education e-learning

- Since 2017 the online training course for Disability Standards for Education 2005 (DSE) has been mandated for all school-based employees and targeted areas with the Education Support Office. The objective of the training is to ensure all staff are aware of their obligations under the *Disability Discrimination Act 1992* and the DSE.
- The course provides training specific to a wide range of settings including preschools, primary schools, high schools, senior secondary colleges and Education Support Office . This training is now part of the Directorate’s mandatory online induction program.

### Targeted courses

- The Directorate offers online targeted courses, based on international expertise and adapted to local needs to build the capacity of teachers and leadership teams in ACT public schools. The courses assist teachers to offer individualised support for students with disability.
- The courses that are accredited with the ACT Teacher Quality Institute, and can count towards teacher registration include:

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Lead Directorate: Education

## QUESTION TIME BRIEF

- Autism Spectrum Disorder
- Dyslexia and Significant Reading Difficulties
- Speech, Language and Communication Needs
- Motor Coordination Difficulties
- Understanding Hearing Loss
- Understanding and Managing Behaviours.

### Network Student Engagement Teams (NSET)

- NSETs are multidisciplinary teams within the Student Engagement Branch that provide additional support for students with disability and also support teachers access to evidence based quality professional learning opportunities.

### Disability Education Coordinator (DECO)

- Each school has a designated DECO who is responsible for coordinating supports for students with disability and also support teachers access to evidence based quality professional learning opportunities.

### Targeted Preschool Support (SAP)

- The SAP team works with the school executive and preschool teams to support the inclusion of children with developmental delay and disability in ACT public preschools.

### Needs Based Funding

- A new policy framework and resourcing model to support the needs of students with disability is in progress as part of the Student Resource Allocation (SRA) Program.

### **Background Information**

- As part of the response to the Schools for All report, allied health professionals were recruited in 2016 to support the multidisciplinary work of the Network Student Engagement Teams.
- The National Partnership: More Support for Students with Disabilities enabled the ACT Government to support school leadership teams to improve outcomes for students with disability with four million dollars over four years to 2015. A number of additional supports were developed through this funding, these included:
  - The development of the national e-Learning professional development on the DSE – developed by the University of Canberra in collaboration with States and Territories. The e-Learning package has been pivotal in increasing school staff knowledge of obligations under the *Disability Discrimination Act 1992* and the DSE.
  - The development of specific online training packages for teachers.
  - The establishment of DECOs in school executive teams.

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Lead Directorate: Education

## QUESTION TIME BRIEF

- A new policy framework and resourcing model to support the needs of students with disability will be developed in 2017 as part of the Student Resource Allocation (SRA) Program.

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TRIM Ref:



Portfolio/s Education &amp; Early Childhood Development

**ISSUE: WITHDRAWAL SPACES IN SCHOOLS TO SUPPORT STUDENTS WITH CHALLENGING BEHAVIOURS****Talking points**

- ACT Education Directorate is committed to creating safe and supportive learning environments for all students.
- The ACT Education Directorate is committed to the ongoing training and development of staff to assist them to support students with complex and challenging behaviour and to provide safe and supportive learning environments for all students.
- Information and guidance is provided to schools through the ‘Safe and Supportive Schools’ policy and procedures to ensure the reduction in the use of restrictive practices and difference between “withdrawal spaces” and “seclusion”
- The ACT Government has provided \$5.6 million over the forward estimates to support the enhancement and development of sensory spaces into schools where students are able to manage their own sensory needs.
- In 2015 the Education Directorate carried out an audit of existing withdrawal spaces. The audit found that schools are using a variety of quiet spaces including tents, teepees, rooms adjacent to classrooms and outdoor spaces to support students to help manage their behaviour
- The Education Directorate has developed factsheets and professional learning for schools to support them in creating sensory spaces within the school environment

**Key Information**

- Withdrawal spaces may assist students to manage their sensory needs and safely withdraw if they require time away from busy school environments, which can form part of a behaviour support strategy. Withdrawal spaces may be indoor or outdoor areas that are safe and supervised.

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## QUESTION TIME BRIEF

- Withdrawal” is defined in the Directorate’s Safe and Supportive Schools Policy as “time away from classroom activity in a calming area where doors are not locked and a student is not prevented from leaving”.
- The 2015 audit found that public schools have various types of spaces available to students requiring a quiet space to help manage their behaviour. These spaces include: tents, tepees and soft furnishing in corners of classrooms; rooms adjacent to classrooms where line of sight can be maintained by the classroom teacher; and fenced courtyards adjacent to classrooms providing children with safe access to an outdoor space during class time.
- Withdrawal spaces may assist students to manage their sensory needs and safely withdraw if they require time away from busy school environments, which can form part of a behaviour support strategy. Withdrawal spaces may be indoor or outdoor areas that are safe and supervised.
- The Directorate sought expert advice to inform the design of a range of appropriate learning areas within new schools to support students with complex needs and challenging behaviour. This advice has supported the Directorate in planning any changes to school infrastructure.
- The ACT Government continues to target upgrades to safe, sensory learning spaces in public schools through an Expression of Interest process. This process requires schools to work with occupational therapists in Network Student Engagement Teams to develop their proposals.
- A professional learning workshop , ‘Designing Positive Classroom Environments and Safe Sensory Spaces’, has been developed and will be run by an Occupational Therapist from Education’s Network Student Engagement Teams. The workshop links changes to environment with existing frameworks utilised by schools including the *National School Improvement Tool* and *Great Teaching by Design*.

### Restrictive Practice - Guidance for Schools

- It is important to differentiate “withdrawal spaces” with “seclusion”, a form of restrictive practice. Information for schools about this difference is provided in the Safe and Supportive Schools policy and procedures, published in March 2016 and reviewed in October 2016.
- The policy and procedures also provide information and direction to schools about the use of restrictive practice, such as physical restraint; as an emergency response when school staff need to act to prevent or reduce the risk of harm to an individual or group of people.

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## QUESTION TIME BRIEF

- Materials to support the policy have been developed for Principals and school staff and include fact sheets, FAQs, checklists and planning tools. They are available through the Education Intranet.
- Education has also contributed to the Restrictive Practices Oversight Steering Group (RPOSG), a time-limited, group of executive leaders representing government directorates and independent statutory bodies, established to consider issues relating to restrictive practices in the ACT. This group, co-chaired by Education Directorate and the Community Services Directorate (CSD) will continue to oversight ongoing work related to the safeguarding against the unreasonable and unnecessary use of restrictive practices, including a legislation review and the development of policy. Their work so far has included:
  - Developing the Restrictive Practices Overarching Principles for the reduction and elimination of restrictive practice in the ACT. They were endorsed by the Strategic Board on 2 November 2016. These Principles are now able to be shared broadly and used across Government.
  - Contributing to Community Services Directorate's project and consultation process to develop an Office of the Senior Practitioner.

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## Portfolio/s Education &amp; Early Childhood Development

**ISSUE: LEARN ANYWHERE STUDENTS USE OF ICT IN SCHOOLS****Talking points:**

- The Education Directorate is committed to providing ACT Public school students with ICT that is fit for the needs of learners today.
- In determining these needs the directorate consulted with schools through a technology advisory group to determine the key areas required to enable effective use of ICT.
  - Access real world learning platforms that are easy to use and familiar to them.
  - Connection to reliable high speed internet
  - Use of own personal device of choice allowing personalised learning.

**Key Information**

- The Digital Backpack is a simple entry point for students and teachers that provides access to online tools to support learning anytime anywhere the internet is available (at school, at home or through public Wi-Fi).
- Cloud services continue to be available in the Digital Backpack from the start of the 2015 school year, including Google G Suite and Microsoft Office 365.
- The online services provided enable schools in partnership with parents, to support our young people to be safe and productive online. This is achieved by providing students with the technology and learning platforms they want to use, set up in a way that is safe and secure.
- Parents are provided with the Privacy Information sheet on the recommendations from the independent Privacy Impact Assessment, the Directorate commissioned relating to Google G suite and Microsoft services. Prior to a student's account being created and enabling the service parents must provide consent. If consent is not provided alternate options are provided.
- To enable students to successfully operate as digital citizens they are required to read, understand and sign the Acceptable use of ICT Policy.
- The Australian Curriculum sets out clear expectations for the use of ICT as a general capability to be implemented across the curriculum, this includes digital citizenship and safe behaviours in the use of technology.

Cleared as complete and accurate: 08/03/2018

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Education

## QUESTION TIME BRIEF

- Canberra Public schools' implementation of the Australian Curriculum ensures that students develop these vital skills in the use of ICT, which is embedded both within the classroom and brokered through the schools ongoing partnership with the parent community.

### Online Tools and what they are:

- *Google G Suite* - A cloud-based education platform offering online productivity tools for learning and classroom collaboration. G Suite provides students and teachers with unlimited cloud storage in Google Drive, Docs, Sheets and Slides. Google Apps also provides student email and other modern online learning tools like Google Classroom.
- *Microsoft 365* - A Microsoft office suite that is online (cloud based) including online storage. All students and teachers are also able to download the latest version of Office 365 on up to five personal devices.
- *eBooks (Overdrive)* - Online library with access to over 6088 eBooks and 686 audio books from their own personal device at school, home, and publically available Wi-Fi.
- *Scoutle* - Australian digital curriculum content library with over 15000 resources for teachers.
- *Cyber Safety Button* - provides internet users, particularly children and young people, with easy online access to cyber safety information and assistance available in Australia. It offers counselling, reporting and educational resources to assist young people deal with online risks including cyberbullying, unwanted contact, scams and fraud, and *offensive or inappropriate material*.
- *Clickview* - Online video management tool (available at selected schools who have opted into the subscription for the service).

### Teacher Professional Learning Opportunities

- Due to the high uptake and successful adoption of Google G Suite for Education in our Canberra Public Schools, The Directorate hosts a range of training and development sessions based around Google G Suite each term. These sessions have been running successfully since 2015.
- Annual Canberra Google Summits have been hosted by the Directorate since 2015. Over 350 teachers attended to the most recent 2017 Summit which was held at Erindale College on the 10<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup> of April 2017. The 2018 Summit will be held on 16 and 17 April 2018 at Gungahlin College.

### Wireless Access

- The wireless access in all Canberra Public Schools has been enhanced. There are now approximately 5000 wireless access points in primary and secondary schools and this has resulted in ACT schools being the best connected in the country.

Cleared as complete and accurate: 08/03/2018  
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## QUESTION TIME BRIEF

### Wireless – Health & Safety

- During the planning and implementation of the Wi-Fi in ACT Government Schools, the Directorate has utilised equipment that has been designed and manufactured to comply with the Australian Standards on Human Exposure to Radio Frequencies to ensure the safety of staff and children. ACT Government deployments of wireless access points within schools also exceed the minimum separation distance recommended.
- To align with the Australian curriculum the ACT Government will continue to provide our schools with digital capabilities fit for the modern learner, including access to wireless technologies which operate within the *Radiation Protection Standard for Maximum Exposure Levels to Radiofrequency Fields - 3 kHz to 300 GHz (2002)*.

### Devices for Students

- The Personal Electronic Devices (Bring Your Own Device) Policy has been adopted by the Education Directorate. Following consultation with the parent community a school can now allow students to bring their own device to school and connect to our secure ACT Government fibre “SchoolsNET” network. A Student using their own device provides a platform that they already understand for them to learn, create, communicate and collaborate from anywhere.
- Schools share in \$1.5million budget per annum to supply devices for student use at school.
- The ACT Government has initiated the Technology Enabled Learning Program which supplied over 14,500 ACER Spin 11 Chromebooks to all Year 7 to 11 students over the first three weeks of Term 1 2018.

### **Background Information**

- The Directorate is committed to providing students with ICT that is fit for the needs of learners today. To ensure ACT students develop the skills required for their further success in work and as engaged digital citizens. In determining these needs the directorate consulted with schools through a technology advisory group to determine the key areas required to enable effective use of ICT.
  - Access real world learning platforms that are easy to use and familiar to them.
  - Connection to reliable high speed internet
  - Use of own personal device of choice allowing personalised learning.

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Portfolio: Education & Early Childhood Development

**ISSUE: HEALTH AND SAFETY REQUIREMENTS**

**Talking points:**

- Under the *Work Health and Safety Act 2011* all workers have a duty of care to themselves and others in the workplace. These changes took effect in 2011 and cover all staff in the ACT Education Directorate.
- In order to meet its obligations under the *Work Health and Safety Act 2011*, the Directorate has provided additional training to staff, developed a Health Safety and Wellbeing Program of Work and implemented initiatives targeted at reducing injuries.
- During 2016-17 the Directorate has experienced an increase in Comcare claims related to musculoskeletal disorders, psychological injury and secondary psychological injury.

**Key Information**

- The *Work Health and Safety Act 2011* and *Work Health and Safety Regulations 2011* provide the legislative framework for workplace health and safety in the Territory. The legislation has removed crown immunity and treats both public and private sector workers in the same way.
- Under the legislation, individuals with significant influence over health and safety, including the allocation of resources, are referred to as 'Officers'. Officers have a particular responsibility to exercise due diligence to take reasonable steps to ensure appropriate resources, policies, and health and safety practices are in place to manage risk.
- The Directorate takes the position that safety is everyone's responsibility, and that every worker has significant obligations under the laws to act with due diligence to health and safety matters and that workers have a duty of care to themselves, other workers, and to other persons including students, to maintain a safe work environment.
- The Directorate has made considerable effort to assist its workers to fulfil their safety obligations through:
  - Targeted training for principals on work health and safety risk management and due-diligence obligations;
  - Promotion of accident / incident reporting;

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## QUESTION TIME BRIEF

- Supporting development of workplace health and safety risk registers;
  - Mandatory training of target groups including Building Services Officers (BSO), Business Managers, Learning Support Staff, School Assistants and Directorate Leaders including; asbestos awareness, confined spaces, height safety, sharps safety, chemical handling, manual handling and respectful workplaces;
  - Training for Health and Safety Representatives (HSR);
  - Development of a Health and Wellbeing Program;
  - Development of targeted policy and guidelines to address safety risk in schools;
  - Development and publication of the Directorate Safety Management System to assist workers with guidance and tools to assist manage safety risk;
  - Implementing initiatives to reduce the numbers of musculoskeletal and slips, trips and falls injuries; and
  - Supporting networking opportunities for BSO and HSRs.
- This sustained effort to raise safety awareness in schools and the Education Support Office has improved incident reporting with a significant increase in reports in 2016-17. The Directorate also experienced an increased number of claims for musculoskeletal disorders, psychological injury and secondary psychological injury over previous years. While this increase is also reflected in an increase in claims in the broader ACT Public Service further investigation will be undertaken to redress the cause of these claims.

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## QUESTION TIME BRIEF

Portfolio/s Education & Early Childhood Development

### ISSUE: AUDITOR-GENERAL'S AUDIT ON ACCOUNTABILITY AND STRATEGIC INDICATORS

#### Talking points:

- The Auditor-General in her overall conclusion has made an observation that not all strategic indicators are relevant and appropriate for measuring ACT Government progress towards key strategic policies. She states in the report, 'in contrast, Territory entities' accountability indicators are effective in measuring performance. While this is the case, it may be appropriate to have fewer accountability indicators given the very large number that are used, and there may also be better indicators'.
- The Auditor-General's Office (AGO) makes five recommendations in her report. Recommendations specifically relevant to the Education Directorate includes amending strategic indicators so they meet the clarity criterion. The Education Directorate's result was 97%.
- The Whole of Government response to the audit is currently being coordinated by CMTEDD and will be tabled in the Assembly in the coming months.

#### Key Information

- The ACT Auditor-General's Report on the ACT Government's Strategic and Accountability Indicators was a cross agency audit and included examination of 27 Territory entities. The Education Directorate was a selected entity.
- The audit period examined was the 2015-16 and 2016-17 financial years. The AGO examined 994 accountability indicators and 282 strategic indicators totalling 1,276 performance indicators over the two year period.
- The AGO examined the indicators using evaluation criteria from the ACT Government's *Guide to the Performance Management Framework (2012)*. There are seven criteria used to assess **strategic indicators**.
- The AGO also examined the ACT Government's Performance and Accountability Framework and supporting documentation.

Cleared as complete and accurate:	09/03/2018	
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## QUESTION TIME BRIEF

- The Education Directorate was assessed against its **strategic indicators** under each criterion as follows:
  - Representative – 100%
  - Responsive – 100%
  - Clarity – 100%
  - Quantifiable – 100%
  - Comparable – 88% (the majority of indicators were met)
  - Longer term focus – 100%
- Sustainable – 94% (the majority of indicators were met)
- The Education Directorate was assessed against its **accountability indicators** under each criterion as follows:
  - Representative – 100%
  - Relevant – 100%
  - Quantifiable – 100%
  - Verifiable – 100%
  - Clarity – 97%
  - External Focus – 100%
  - Comparable – 77%
  - Timeliness – 100%
  - Focus – 100%
  - Sustainable – 73%
  - Impartiality – 97%

### Background Information

On 1 February 2018, the Auditor-General released the ACT Government strategic and accountability indicators audit report.

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# QUESTION TIME BRIEF

Portfolio/s Education & Early Childhood Development

## **ISSUE: AUDITOR-GENERAL'S AUDIT ON PERFORMANCE INFORMATION IN ACT PUBLIC SCHOOLS**

### **Talking points:**

- The Government is implementing a range of initiatives to improve the use of performance information in ACT public schools. This includes implementation of the seven recommendations made by the Auditor-General's Audit on the use of Performance Information in ACT Public Schools.
- In conjunction with The Future of Education policy work and ongoing strategic planning, the implementation of these recommendations will build on existing governance arrangements and school improvement initiatives that the Auditor found to be sound and support improved outcomes for students in ACT public schools.

### **Key Information**

- The ACT has historically been a national leader in school education. As gains in the ACT have become harder to achieve our performance growth in some measures has levelled out and improvements in other Australian school systems have brought them in line with or ahead of the ACT.
- The ACT's relative performance in these measures is most obvious in relation to disadvantaged students.
- In addition to the Future of Education policy work the Education Directorate, with the assistance of the Australian Curriculum Assessment and Reporting Authority (ACARA), is refining indicators for public reporting that will demonstrate the growth in learning achieved by students in ACT public schools. These strategic indicators will also be included in the Directorate's 2018-2020 strategic planning cycle. The indicators will also provide guidance on how performance is measured as well as any quantitative targets associated with performance.
- These measures are likely to include a longitudinal measure that compares the growth between NAPLAN assessment points of ACT public students, such as between years 3 and 5 and years 7 and 9, compared with the growth achieved by students in other jurisdictions.

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## QUESTION TIME BRIEF

- The Directorate is implementing an initiative titled ‘Enabling Evidence Based Improvement in Canberra Public Schools – Valuing Data as Evidence to Inform Great Teaching’. The initiative is designed to:
  - a) align school level data used by teachers, and whole of ACT system data, to align planning and accountability for our students from top to bottom;
  - b) refine a set of strategic indicators based on performance data over time. These indicators will include other domains, such as school climate and student engagement and wellbeing indicators, as well as the more traditional educational outcome measures;
  - c) ensure that the data sets used throughout the education system here in the ACT are fit for purpose meet, and meet the specific needs of teachers, school leaders and the Education Support Office;
  - d) increase the capacity across the whole system for our teachers, school leaders and administrators to use and obtain the greatest value from performance information.
  - e) During term 1 2018 Evidence Based Improvement professional learning will target school leaders in 19 schools that undertook School Reviews in 2017. This half day session will be reviewed and followed later in term 1 with sessions open to all school leaders.
- All schools have transitioned to a new Annual Action Plan approach which is substantially supported by consultation and guidance from the Education Support Office to ensure the efficacy of performance planning for each school.

### Background Information

- On Wednesday 31 May 2017, the Auditor-General released the *Performance Information in ACT Public Schools* report. The Auditor-General’s Report finds that “ACT public schools are performing below similar schools in other jurisdictions despite expenditure on a per student basis for public schools being one of the highest in the country. Since 2014 reviews of ACT public schools have consistently identified shortcomings in their analysis of student performance information and their use of data to inform educational practice. These shortcomings indicate a systemic problem”. The Auditor-General made seven recommendations in the Report.

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## Portfolio/s Education &amp; Early Childhood Development

**ISSUE: CLOSING THE GAP IN EDUCATION – YEAR 12 ATTAINMENT****Talking Points:**

- In 2017, 70 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students achieved an ACT Senior Secondary Certificate, representing a year 12 completion rate of 57 percent. This is a decrease from the 2016 rate of 73 percent and the 2015 rate of 70 percent.
- Of the 70 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students who completed year 12 in 2017, seventeen received a Tertiary Entrance Statement compared with twenty in 2016 and seventeen students in 2015.
- The proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people participating in employment and/or study six months after leaving school has been monitored for the last four years (2014-2017). This proportion has varied between 78 percent and 93 percent for year 12 graduates, and 72 percent and 77 percent for school leavers.
- Whilst the proportion has varied, particularly for year 12 graduates, the differences between years were not statistically significant due to the small number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people who completed the survey each year.
- In general, these results were similar to the overall ACT results which have been consistently above 90 percent for year 12 graduates and above 70 percent for school leavers for the last four years.

**Key Information:**Year 12 Attainment

- At the February 2017 school census there were 116 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students enrolled in a year 12 program in the ACT public system compared with 109 enrolments in 2016, 102 enrolments in 2015, and 83 enrolments in 2014.

School Leaver Data

- In May each year the Education Directorate conducts a survey of ACT year 12 graduates and school leavers who left school in the preceding year to find out what they are doing in terms of study and employment. The results provide important information that informs planning, development and provision of education and training choices for the young people of the ACT.

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# QUESTION TIME BRIEF

- **Note:** Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people typically make up less than two percent of the year 12 graduate survey population and less than six percent of the school leaver survey population.

## Background Information

- One target of the National Indigenous Reform Agreement (NIRA) is halving the gap for Indigenous people aged 20-24 in year 12 or equivalent (Certificate II or higher) attainment rates by 2020.
- Longitudinal analysis of the 2003 to 2016 cohort showed that school retention of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students between years 10 and 12 fell from approximately 60 percent of the original cohort, to just over 45 percent by year 12. This is approximately 10 percentage points below the retention rate of non-Indigenous students.

Proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people employed and/or studying in the year after leaving school		
Year left school	Year 12 Graduates (95% Confidence interval)	School leavers (95% Confidence interval)
2013	93% (95% CI=83%-100%)	77% (95% CI=51%-100%)
2014	78% (95% CI=62%-93%)	73% (95% CI=50%-97%)
2015	89% (95% CI=79%-99%)	74% (95% CI=50%-99%)
2016	92% (95%CI=83-100)	72% (95% CI=46-98)

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**Portfolio/s Education & Early Childhood Development****ISSUE: SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY, ENGINEERING AND MATHS (STEM)****Talking Points**

- The ACT Government has endorsed the *National STEM School Education Strategy 2016-2026* and is currently aligning jurisdiction-specific initiatives to the Strategy. These include progressing the election commitment for an Academy of Coding and Cyber Skills (EC LAB094).
- The ACT Government recognises that Canberra public school students will increasingly require science, technology, engineering and maths (STEM) skills, including trans-disciplinary skills such as problem solving, creativity and collaboration, as they progress through their schooling to further education, training and work.
- A range of STEM and futures-focussed learning initiatives are therefore underway in Canberra public schools to provide quality learning opportunities in innovative learning environments e.g. the Centre for Innovation and Learning Caroline Chisholm School, which commenced operation in term one 2018. Students and teachers from the Tuggeranong network have already had the opportunity to engage in STEM learning activities at the Centre.
- Canberra public school students can also access a number of high quality STEM related learning opportunities through collaboration with national institutions, tertiary education providers and industry.

**Background**National STEM School Education Strategy 2016-2026

- The Australian Government has identified a focus on STEM as a strategic priority for Australia's economic growth and competitiveness.
- In December 2015, Education Council endorsed the *National STEM School Education Strategy 2016-2026* (the Strategy). The purpose of the Strategy is to build on a range of significant activity already underway; to better coordinate and target effort, and to sharpen the focus on key areas where collaborative activity will deliver improvements in STEM education.
- Two goals are articulated in the Strategy:

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- to ensure all students finish school with a strong foundational knowledge in STEM and related skills
  - to ensure that students are inspired to take on more challenging STEM subjects.
- Five areas for national action are identified:
  - increasing student STEM ability, engagement, participation and aspiration
  - increasing teacher capacity and STEM teaching quality
  - supporting STEM education opportunities within school systems
  - facilitating effective partnerships with tertiary education providers, business and industry
  - building a strong evidence base.
- The Australian Government has led the establishment of a National STEM Partnerships Forum (the Forum), chaired by the Chief Scientist, to bring together leaders from industry and the education sector (schools, higher education and VET) to facilitate a strategic approach to student engagement and achievement in STEM. Ms Meg Brighton, Deputy Director-General, represents the ACT on the Forum.
- The Forum has identified three areas of initial focus: career awareness; teacher professional learning; and impact and outcomes of STEM programs.
- The Forum met in Canberra on 15 May 2017 and 17 October 2017. An interim report, setting out 11 provisional recommendations was developed in December 2017 so that it could be considered by key stakeholders across all jurisdictions. The Chief Scientist met with you and other ACT stakeholders on 8 February 2018 as part of the consultation process.
- The Forum recommendations will be tabled at the Australian Education Senior Officials Committee (AESOC) on 27 March 2018, and considered by Education Council on 13 April 2018.
- Forum priorities align with work the Directorate is currently progressing, in particular the following election commitments: the Academy of Coding and Cyber Skills (EC LAB094), the rollout of Chromebook devices to all years 7 to 11 Canberra public school students (EC LAB 028), which commenced in February 2018, and teacher scholarships for STEM and languages (EC LAB 034).

## STEM in ACT Schools

- The Directorate is currently developing an ACT STEM implementation plan aligned with the National STEM School Education Strategy, which will provide a framework for future STEM-related initiatives in Canberra public schools. To support the delivery of STEM education initiatives in schools, Canberra public schools engage with a range of national science institutions and industry and research organisations to deliver STEM education programs, including:
  - The CSIRO Scientists and Mathematicians in Schools program, which involves partnerships between schools and scientists, mathematicians and ICT professionals to share expertise and knowledge to enhance learning opportunities in STEM areas.

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## QUESTION TIME BRIEF

- The CSIRO Creativity in Science and Technology (CREST) program, aimed at supporting students to carry out open-ended science and technology investigations.
- The ANU School Enrichment program, designed to provide students in Years 7-11 with flexible opportunities to experience the ANU, and offering a wide range of workshops in subjects including artificial intelligence, earth climate science, genetics, fractal geometry, planetary geochemistry and molecular parasitology.
- Questacon's Ian Potter Foundation Technology Centre, offering workshops that support STEM education and aim to develop students' lateral thinking and problem solving skills, including the Engineering is Elementary Program.
- The curriculum-linked STELR Project teacher resources developed by the Australian Academy of Technological Sciences and Engineering (ATSE).
- The STEM Education Research Centre (SERC) at the University of Canberra, to promote participation in the Early Learning STEM Australia (ELSA) pilot - a play-based digital learning program for children in preschool to explore Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM).
- Events organised by the Science Educators Association of the Australian Capital Territory (SEA\*ACT), including the National Youth Science Forum; the Canberra Maths Association; and Information Technology Educators ACT (InTEACT).
- The Directorate also delivers professional learning and a number of programs, resources and events to support quality STEM education in Canberra public schools, including:
  - the Computer Science Education Research (CSER) group at the University of Adelaide, to support teachers to engage with professional learning through a Digital Technologies MMOC (massive open online course)
  - Google Summits: where communities of like-minded teachers share innovative practices, ideas and resources
  - the curriculum linked teacher resources provided by the Digital Technologies Hub (developed by Education Services Australia for the Australian Government Department of Education and Training)
  - specialised STEM subjects developed by expert teachers such as the Senior Secondary Mechatronics and Flight programs incorporating mechanical, electrical, computer and software engineering
  - STEM extension programs including opportunities for high achieving students to undertake targeted Year 11 subjects while enrolled in Year 10, and tertiary subjects while enrolled in Year 12
  - the Department of Human Services Chief Information Officer Group work experience pilot
  - school-based STEM events such as annual STEM festivals and workshops that utilise parent and community expertise
  - opportunities for students to gather scientific data for real-world purposes through initiatives like Waterwatch and the ANU's Seisometers in Schools program
  - the Principals as Numeracy Leaders (PANL) program designed to enhance school leaders' efficacy in instructional leadership, enhance school leaders' knowledge of

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essential numeracy content, and assist in the design of whole-school planning for numeracy improvement. PANL round three will be delivered to 16 schools in 2018.

- reSolve: Mathematics by Inquiry; a national program that provides resources and professional learning to assist students to learn mathematics using inquiry - reSolve is managed by the Australian Academy of Science in collaboration with the Association of Mathematics Teachers
  - STEM in early childhood professional learning is offered to Canberra public preschool educators in 2018
  - the ACE Science mentors program allows participants from industry, government and tertiary education and training providers to mentor and support students from years 8-12, as well as to provide practical experience for years 9-10 and 11-12 students
  - 30 Scholarships will be funded to allow selected female students from year 7 to year 9 from Canberra public schools to access the STEM Sells program (a series of workshops dedicated to inspire young women into pursuing their interests in Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths delivered in partnership with the Canberra Innovation Network and The Creative Element).
- **In February 2018, the \$5.896 million Centre for Innovation and Learning at Caroline Chisholm School was opened. The establishment of the Centre serves as a focal point for the ACT Government's commitment to innovation and its engagement with the national agenda, with high quality programs and pedagogy provided through the Centre increasing the number of students engaging with STEM subjects in the ACT.** The STEM Partnerships Forum's report noted that Australia's relative performance in international measures of mathematical and science literacy has declined in recent years, along with student participation in 'science' subjects.
  - The Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study (TIMSS) report, released on 30 November 2016, found that the ACT has 70-85% of students at above the TIMSS proficient standard for Australia. The ACT also has a higher percentage of 'Advanced' and 'High International Benchmark' than the national percentage at this level.
  - The ACT results in National Assessment – Science Literacy (NAP-SL) testing 2015 were similar to those of 2006, 2009 and 2012. ACT results were statistically similar to most other jurisdictions. In 2015, 60.5% of ACT students attained the 'proficient' standard, compared with the national result of 55%. The trends in NAP-SL results were similar to those observed in the Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study (TIMSS).
  - From 2010 to 2015, NAPLAN numeracy mean scores placed the ACT first or equal first in years 3, 5, 7, and 9. In 2016, the ACT's mean score was placed first for Year 9 and second for years 3, 5 and 7.

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Portfolio: Education & Early Childhood Development

**ISSUE: HEATING AND COOLING IN ACT PUBLIC SCHOOLS**

**Talking points:**

- All schools have an extreme temperature management plan.
- A program of works to increase the level of cooling in selected classrooms has commenced.
- \$3.35 million is being spent in 2017-18 addressing cooling issues in schools.
- The ACT Education Directorate policy for Managing Extreme Temperatures in ACT public schools requires schools to have a management plan to keep students and staff comfortable.
- ACT schools have a site specific management plans for extreme temperatures. Activities to manage high temperatures include:
  - Optimising natural ventilation, air movement and shade;
  - Using additional fans or coolers;
  - Easy access to water and increased use of water play;
  - Rotating classes through cooler areas on site;
  - Adjusting educational programs and access to certain areas of the school to minimise potential for heat stress;
  - Adjusting uniforms, if required; and
  - Limiting playground access to shaded areas in addition to ensuring all students playing outside have hats, sunscreen and a water bottle.

**Key Information**

In the 2016 Election, ACT Labor committed to fund \$85m in ACT public school capital upgrades over the next 4 years. This program was intended to include upgrades to heating and cooling systems and build on the recent artificial cooling of all school libraries and administration areas.

- The Heat Mitigation in ACT Public Schools Program was initiated in early 2017 in response to the high temperatures experienced in some parts of ACT public schools in previous years.

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- The Infrastructure and Capital Works (ICW) Branch has selected interventions that are able to be delivered in the required time frame and with the least impact on the school in relation to disruption and long term energy consumption. The scope of works developed for each school will support the *Procedures for Managing Extreme Temperatures in ACT Public Schools* with a focus on the student spaces.
- More than 700 high priority spaces have been identified by the schools in this program. Due to the magnitude of issues, a phased approach over a number of years is being taken. This approach prioritises schools according to a risk matrix.
- An additional \$1.8m has been allocated in the 2017-18 ICW programs to address priority areas in consultation with the schools. This remediation is being delivered through a rolling program that includes passive solutions such as external shading, building insulation and glazing treatments. Where passive solutions are not suitable, installation of air cooling systems will be considered.

### *2017-18 Heating, Ventilation and Air Conditioning (HVAC) Program*

To the end of January 2018, there have been 973 maintenance calls to repair or replace existing HVAC assets, with 83% of the HVAC maintenance budget committed to date. The budget for HVAC specific works, which includes works requested by schools, is 86% committed.

### **Background Information**

The former Minister for Education and Training made a statement in the Legislative Assembly in June 2015, about the ACT Government's position on heating and cooling in schools. This affirmed:

- Preference for natural ventilation – consistent with the ACT Government's carbon neutral strategies to reduce energy consumption;
- Employment of extreme temperature management plans; and
- Installation of artificial cooling in priority areas of schools – specialist education facilities, libraries and administration area to allow students to circulate to cooler areas.

There is a direct scientific correlation between the temperature of a learning space and the concentration levels of students. Studies identified that both low (<20° C) and high (>27° C) temperatures have negative effects on performance.

On the occasions where existing management activities are no longer effective, the Principal will consult with the Directorate's Health, Safety and Wellbeing Team and the Delegated Official who will determine whether a school should be closed.

The Directorate maintains engineering controls for thermal comfort throughout the year:

- Currently the majority of heating and cooling plants across the Directorate are working to acceptable standards; and
- As faults are identified, maintenance providers attend the affected specific schools.

In 2015, a program commenced to ensure all schools had air conditioning or evaporative cooling in both library and administration areas. Across schools 11 libraries and 15 administration areas did not

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have a cooling mechanism. This program is now complete with a total cost of \$0.75million from 2015 to 2017.

In addition, under the schools repairs and maintenance program, \$3.6 million is spent each year on heating and cooling maintenance.

In 2016, the Directorate sought tenders for new contractors to provide heating, ventilation and air conditioning (HVAC) maintenance services to schools. This contract is now performance-based and focuses on the thermal comfort of spaces within schools.

The Directorate is also looking to replace aged building management systems at schools. This is expected to improve the management of thermal comfort in schools as well as reduce energy consumption.

Loan funding for the first school – Erindale College – was secured from the Carbon Neutral Government Fund \$0.758million.

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## Portfolio: Education & Early Childhood Development

### ISSUE: **CLEANING CONTRACTORS IN SCHOOLS**

#### Talking points:

- A priority of government in delivering cleaning services to ACT public schools is the continuous improvement in the standards of cleaning performance and compliance, ethical employment and protection of the Industrial Relations and Employment (IRE) conditions of the cleaning staff.
- The Territory takes very seriously its commitment to the protection of workers' rights in the cleaning industry and has been instrumental in providing training on employment rights and conditions to ensure a level of compliance transparency by contract employers.

#### Key Information

- An open tender process was undertaken in 2017 valued at \$48 million over 4 years to replace a cleaning panel arrangement which had been in place since 2011 and due to expire 30 June 2017. The Directorate undertook broad industry stakeholder consultation throughout the process on which the tender requirements were based, including United Voice, the Building Services Contractors Association of Australia (BSCAA) and an independent cleaning consultant.
- As a result of the tender process financial and administrative efficiencies were achieved with the reduction of 88 individual panel Service Agreements plus another 23 Deed contracts based on school size, to just four (4) new Agreements across eight (8) contract school packages covering 87 schools and the Hedley Beare Centre for Teaching and Learning. Contract engagements are with:
  - ACT Commercial Cleaning Service Pty Ltd
  - Dimeo Cleaning Services Pty Ltd
  - Menzies International (Aust.) Pty Ltd
  - Vivid Property Services Pty Ltd.
- Contract Agreements to commence 1 July 2017 were executed on Tuesday 27 June 2017 and Wednesday 28 June 2017. Unsuccessful tenderers were notified of the outcome on Wednesday 28 June 2017 and agreements were made publicly available on the ACT Contracts Register on Monday 3 July 2017.
- Approximately 290 existing cleaning staff who were employed under previous cleaning arrangements were re-engaged by the new cleaning contractors.

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- The production rate and Personal Pay Rate (PPR) payable under the Agreements was set by the Territory, the PPR being at a rate above the Cleaning Services Award 2010.
- Another initiative by the Territory is recently becoming a member of the Cleaning Accountability Framework (CAF) as a further demonstration of its commitment to improving outcomes in the cleaning sector, contractor reporting and accountability mechanisms leading to auditing and certification of ACT public schools to the CAF three star standard.

The focus on continuous improvement to provide high quality cleaning services in ACT public schools addresses:

- Compliance
  - Industrial relations and employment performance
  - Maintenance of police checks
  - Safety systems
- Quality
  - Performance management
  - Audits/inspections
  - Regular meetings
- Administrative efficiency
  - Fewer transactions
- Communication and cooperative contracting
- Value for money

## **Background Information**

### Act of Grace payments to eligible ACT public school cleaners

- To alleviate the effect of transition on the school cleaners, a direct payment equivalent to two weeks annual leave is being made by Government to eligible school cleaners who transferred to new cleaning companies, by way of Act of Grace payments.
- Time constraints to finalise procurement of school cleaning services prior to commencing the new contracts on 1 July 2017 led to a very limited time for workers to transition to the new cleaning providers.
- Due to the short transition timeframe between cleaning contracts, the majority of cleaners did not transfer on the commencement of the new contracts (1 July 2017) and were without employment for approximately 2 weeks.
- In addition, school cleaners will not have been able to accrue enough annual leave to be paid over the Christmas period. Generally, school cleaners have 4 weeks annual leave over the Christmas holidays.

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- School cleaners are often vulnerable members of our community, from non-english speaking and low-socioeconomic backgrounds and are the least able to respond to periods without pay.
- There is a moral issue of addressing the financial impact of a short transition to new cleaning contractors on a vulnerable workforce.
- As there was not a legal requirement to make this payment, approval was sought and granted, from the Treasurer for Act of Grace payments under section 130 of the *Financial Management Act 1996*.
- All Act of Grace payments will be disclosed in the Directorate's financial statements, and includes details on each payment, the amounts and grounds for the payment, as required under this section of the Act.

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## Portfolio: Education &amp; Early Childhood Development

**ISSUE: ALUMINIUM COMPOSITE PANELS IN ACT SCHOOLS****Talking points:**

- 46 ACT Public Schools contain aluminium composite panels (ACP) in some form.
- A risk-based assessment has indicated two schools that require further investigation due to the location of the ACP.

Education is engage with other areas of the ACT Government to share knowledge and learnings.

**Key Information**

- Our key priority is the safety of all our students and staff in all schools.
- The Education Directorate has completed a desk top assessment of all public schools in the ACT.
- The Directorate is also participating in the whole of government working group to provide assurance to the ACT community.
- Our fire detection systems (smoke and thermal detectors and fire indicator panels) in all ACT public schools are routinely inspected in accordance with the regulations.
- All public schools have fully compliant fire evacuation plans in alignment with the Australian New Zealand Standard 3745:2010 – Planning for Emergencies in Facilities.
- Schools undertake evacuation exercises each semester to test fire and other emergency incident preparedness.
- The Education Directorate has commenced discussions with the Association of Independent Schools and the Catholic Education Office about similar materials which may have been used on their school buildings.

**ACT Public Schools**

- This desk top assessment (not site inspections) has identified 46 schools with external metal sheeting which will need to be further investigated. This represents 50 per cent of all public school sites (91 school sites).
- The summary of the 46 schools with external metal sheeting are:

College	7
Early Childhood Schools	1
High School	6

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K-10	4
P-2	0
Primary	27
Special	1

### Next Steps

- Infrastructure and Capital Works (ICW) have carried out the inspections and the schools sites that were identified through a desk top analysis as having factors that may increase the risk profile of the ACPs at the site.
- There have not been any sites identified where the ACPs are presenting a risk that is not manageable under current school emergency management practices.
- ICW has identified two sites as a priority for further investigation following the desk top assessment and site inspections. These investigations will take approximately 12 weeks.
- ICW has engaged an external consultant to undertake investigations at these two sites. These investigations will consider:
  - the location and extent of ACP panelling;
  - the type of panel core;
  - proximity to ignition sources;
  - the building construction methodology;
  - relationship to the building fire egress points;
  - the potential of the panels to promote the spread of fire; and
  - the level of fire compartmentalisation that is present.
- The investigation process will also develop a decision making framework for assessing other Education sites with ACP's.
- The framework will be developed in consultation with Internal Audit and Risk Management and ACT Fire and Rescue.
- In instances where it is determined that the ACPs need to be addressed mitigations works will be determined and carried out.

### Background Information

#### *Aluminum Composite Panels*

The ACT Government has been aware of the issues posed by Aluminum Composite Panels (ACPs) since 2010. Under the National Construction Code (NCC), combustible materials (including ACPs) cannot be located near or directly above a required exit so as to make the exit unusable in a fire, and cannot constitute an undue risk of fire spread via the facade of the building.

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## Portfolio/s Education &amp; Early Childhood Development

**ISSUE: FUTURE OF EDUCATION**
**Talking points:**

- Since February 2017 we have been talking to the community about what you want for the future of schools and education in the ACT.
- We have heard from over 4,500 individuals - from school communities, parents and carers, teachers, students, community organisations and the broader community.
- We're now focusing on testing the feedback with the community and using all the feedback to develop the basis for a strategy for the Future of Education.
- We will be working further with key stakeholders and representatives through a series of workshops over the coming months to help shape up the strategy.

The final strategy is expected to be released mid-year.

**Key Information:**

- Release of the Future of Education themes document in August 2017 made visible initial community input, providing clearer focus and more targeted input.

Transitions	Learning for the future	Real life skills	Consistency between schools	Individualised learning
Inclusion	Collaboration	Measurement & Evaluation	Pathways	Valuing Educators

- Four focus areas are emerging that could provide the foundations for the strategy and would provide for a long term vision of educational improvement that is evidence based and underpinned by concrete and targeted actions.
  - Students as people in schools where young people love to learn; including a culture of high expectations, family engagement, curriculum based on a necessary life skills such as critical thinking, collaboration, and creativity and values such as well-being, resilience, empathy and citizenship.

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Community input has particularly outlined the importance of wellbeing, positive relationships and a sense of belonging for our young people across all educational environments.

- Building the teaching profession; including collaboration across and within the system, recruitment and retention and support strategies.

Community input speaks to the importance of quality teaching and teachers and of providing system support to enable teachers to meet the needs of all students, particularly disadvantaged young people.

- Schools 'in' communities: - building stronger bonds with and across all sectors to effectively collaborate and provide holistic supports for learners. This foundation reflects strong feedback from the ACT community regarding 'Schools as a Hub' projects, integrating multi-agency outreach services on site.
- Systems which focus on equity and quality; including ensuring schools are networked, offer smooth transitions within and across schools, have good access to data and evaluation and good welfare supports.

Community input outlined the importance of your focus on equity (as integral to quality) and of offering a range of pathways and flexible delivery options for students, and of having coherent centralised supports for schools.

- A fifth foundation acknowledges the essential role of high quality early childhood education and care and will act as a key enabler for the strategy. This foundation acknowledges my commitment to equity extends to improving access to quality Early Childhood education.
  - Investing early: Understanding that young people come to formal schooling with a range of experiences and backgrounds and that quality early childhood education is a critical foundation for successful learning in schooling and life.
- Key stakeholder groups are currently engaging in workshops to help us move from from 'hearing' to 'doing'.

## Background Information

- In February 2017, the ACT Deputy Chief Minister and Minister for Education and Early Childhood, Yvette Berry, made a statement in the ACT Legislative Assembly emphasising the core value of equity in the ACT school and early childhood education and care systems and the benefits that accrue when equity is achieved.
- We are consulting broadly and deeply with the ACT Community throughout 2017 and 2018 to answer the central question "What do we want and expect from our school and early childhood education systems, are they providing it and what might need to change?"

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## QUESTION TIME BRIEF

- A partnership approach underpins the consultation, with a small group of community partners advising the Minister throughout all stages of the Future of Education conversation. Community partners are representative of the Early Childhood, Community, Government and Education sectors.

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## QUESTION TIME BRIEF

Portfolio/s Education & Early Childhood Development

### ISSUE: NATIONAL ASSESSMENT PROGRAM – LITERACY AND NUMERACY RESULTS AND PARTICIPATION

#### Talking points:

- The 2017 NAPLAN National Report release shows that Canberra school students maintained their overall high performance, with ACT mean scores reported as the highest or equal highest in the nation in 19 of the 20 areas tested.
- A number of other jurisdictions, such as Western Australia and Queensland have seen significant improvement in recent years and, therefore, the ACT is no longer as far in front as in previous years.
- NAPLAN is only one piece of the puzzle when it comes to tracking our students' ability in literacy and numeracy. Schools use lots of methods to assess and support students. We do this to make sure that we track and record meaningful data for all children.
- With this in mind, we are shifting our focus from achievement to progress. We want to see that we are making progress year on year. Because we come from a high base, we are more interested in the progress we are making as we are already maintaining high levels of achievement.

#### Key Information

- The 2017 National Report showed all ACT mean scores in 2017 were very similar to results of previous years and statistically similar to the 2016 results. The 2017 NAPLAN results were not significantly lower than the 2016 results.
- The mean performance of ACT students in years 3 and 5 reading, language conventions and numeracy have remained relatively stable since 2012 while the performance of students in other jurisdictions has been improving. As a result the gap between the ACT performance and the national performance has been decreasing.
- There has been little variation in ACT years 7 and 9 results in any domain since NAPLAN testing began in 2008. Variations in ACT results have to a large extent mirrored changes in national results.

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## QUESTION TIME BRIEF

- The 2017 results show:
  - ACT mean scores were the highest or equal highest in the nation in 19 of the 20 areas tested, compared with 18 of 20 in 2016.
  - Ninety percent of all Canberra school students performed at or above the national minimum standard across all year groups and assessment domains with the exception of year 9 writing where 85% of students were at or above the national minimum standard.
  - In the ACT, and across Australia, the mean scores for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students were significantly lower than the mean scores for non-Indigenous students across all year levels and all domains. For ACT Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students by year 7, this difference equates to approximately two years of schooling.
  - Outcomes for students whose parents have a degree and/or higher professional occupation are on average lower in the ACT than outcomes for students of similar background in NSW and Victoria.
- The following test administration incidents occurred during 2017 testing:
  - School A (non-government school) – unauthorised access to calculator
  - School B (public school) –unauthorised materials in test environment
- The Directorate investigated each incident and the schools involved have been reminded of the need to follow the testing protocols in the future. There was no evidence of any data or results being compromised by these incidents.

### Background Information

- National Assessment Program – Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN) participation includes students who:
  - sat the assessment, or
  - were classified as exempt.
- Non-participation includes students who were:
  - absent (those who were absent from school on test day); or
  - withdrawn (those who were withdrawn from the testing process through formal application by a parent or carer).
- Participation rates nationally, and in the ACT, have been decreasing since NAPLAN was introduced in 2008.
- Participation rates (based on the reading domain) for ACT students in 2017 were below the national rates for all year levels:

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## QUESTION TIME BRIEF

	Year 3	Year 5	Year 7	Year 9
	%	%	%	%
ACT	93.8	94.4	95.3	89.9
Australia	94.9	95.4	94.4	91.3

- A breakdown of the 2017 ACT participation data shows:

Year	Tested	Exempt	Absent	Withdrawn
	%	%	%	%
3	92.0	1.8	2.2	4.0
5	92.5	1.9	2.2	3.4
7	93.8	1.5	2.6	2.1
9	87.8	2.1	5.7	4.4

- Withdrawal rates in all years were similar to the 2016 rates. Participation rates for the ACT in 2017 were similar to the rates in 2016 for all year levels.
- The Government and Directorate place a high priority on ensuring that all students engage in NAPLAN testing, and will continue to work with schools to increase NAPLAN participation rates.
- Principals and the school system regularly monitor and reflect upon ways to improve both attendance and participation. At the system level, the Directorate monitors participation patterns and provides this information back to schools for appropriate action.
- Regular communication reinforces that:
  - Principals are required to ensure that parents/carers of students are fully informed about the assessment program
  - All students in years 3, 5, 7, and 9 are expected to participate in NAPLAN tests
  - Students may be withdrawn from the testing program by their parent/carer. This is a matter for consideration by individual parents/carers in consultation with their child's school. Withdrawals are intended to address issues such as religious beliefs and philosophical objections to testing
- Adjustments are permitted for students with disability to support their access to the tests and facilitate maximum participation. Support is provided to schools to provide test materials in an alternative format for those students who meet the criteria.

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## Portfolio/s Education & Early Childhood Development

### ISSUE: **NAPLAN ONLINE**

#### Talking points:

- The ACT is well placed to transition to NAPLAN Online on 15 May this year.
- NAPLAN provides information for our schools and can support teachers and parents to guide learning for our students.
- The value of this information can be improved through NAPLAN Online which will provide timely and more targeted assessment, more precise results and faster turnaround of information for parents, students and teachers.
- The ACT Education Directorate has worked closely with all ACT schools in preparing to move to NAPLAN Online, with schools and teachers investing valuable effort into ensuring their schools are ready.

#### Key Information

- It is expected that all ACT Public Schools, Catholic systemic schools and approximately half of Independent schools will transition in 2018.
- Significant local and national testing of the NAPLAN Online platform in 2017 has improved our confidence that schools will have a robust platform to use for online testing in 2018. A coordinated practice test and load event will be held on 22 March 2018. The goal of this event is to support student familiarisation and replicate the load on the NAPLAN platform anticipated for the first session of NAPLAN Online 2018.
- We will continue testing of the required technical systems to make sure these are fully ready before schools move to online testing.
- NAPLAN Online occurs between 15 and 25 May 2018.

#### Background Information

- ACT students across public and non-government schools participated in pencil and paper National Assessment Program Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN) testing in 2017 (consistent with previous years).
- In 2017, no school transitioned to NAPLAN Online, as the ACT determined that the national technical systems required for NAPLAN Online were not ready and there was too great a risk that problems could arise during the testing week.

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- The ACT postponed the transition to NAPLAN Online to ensure that the administration of NAPLAN assessments occurs in a way that enables learning to continue productively and without creating unnecessary stress for children, while providing the most value.
- Across Australia, states and territories have been working to move to NAPLAN Online by 2019. In the ACT, Canberra public, independent and catholic schools had been working closely together, to implement NAPLAN Online.
- The use of ‘tailored testing’, available through NAPLAN Online, will challenge students with questions more suited to their ability, resulting in more targeted assessment and precise results.
- The ACT has achieved several important milestones in assessing school and system readiness through participation in a number of trials across ACT schools. The trials provided the opportunity for schools to prepare to go online, and their students to engage with the online assessments, gain familiarity with the online platform, the new test administration processes and practice classroom procedures.
- Consistent with the approach taken by the ACT, no other Australian jurisdiction transitioned to NAPLAN Online in 2017.

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## Portfolio/s Education &amp; Early Childhood Development

**ISSUE: PERFORMANCE OF THE ACT EDUCATION SYSTEM****Talking points:**

- ACT schools have regularly been either the top, or amongst the top, academic performers nationally, based on NAPLAN and other testing results.
- Much of this success has been due to socio-economic factors particular to the ACT and, in recent times, the advantage held by the ACT has been eroded by improved results elsewhere.
- 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. We have completed the first stage of a system-wide process of consultation and policy development to map out the school education system we want for the future. Equity is at the core of this conversation and I am pleased to say that our community shares this view.

**Key Information**

- The National Assessment Program – Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN) is the main Australian mechanism of comparing educational outcomes between jurisdictions and between schools. The ACT has performed well in national comparisons, achieving the highest, or equal highest, national ranking in most of the twenty domains since 2008. The relative performance 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, grammar and punctuation and numeracy.
- Results from the 2015 rounds of the *Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study* (TIMSS) and *Programme for International Student Assessment* (PISA) were published recently. Both assessments showed that the ACT as the highest or equal highest performing jurisdiction nationally.
- However, there has been no significant change in ACT year 4 or year 8 TIMSS results since 2015, and ACT performance relative to international results has slipped during

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this period. The performance of ACT students has declined significantly in all domains over the cycles on PISA.

- Between PISA 2006 and 2015, when scientific literacy was the major domain, ACT performance declined by 22 points, reading literacy declined by 37 points between 2000 and 2015, and performance in mathematical literacy declined by 42 points between 2003 and 2015 (equivalent to almost one-and-a-half years of schooling).
- The Government's focus in education is squarely on teacher quality. We have high expectations of teachers and reward them accordingly. We have great teachers in ACT public schools and our student results show this.
- The Directorate has a deliberate strategy to recruit, develop and retain great teachers in ACT public schools. As part of this strategy, we are ensuring teacher recruits have high quality literacy and numeracy skills.
- We are offering 100 scholarships to train teachers in science, technology, engineering and mathematics.
- Principals implement strategies to improve students' literacy and numeracy performance. These guide teacher practice and school decisions about the allocation of resources to improve outcomes. School strategies focus on supporting improved literacy and numeracy outcomes using individual, small group and whole class approaches. Schools continually monitor student progress and inform future actions.
- ACT schools use NAPLAN data to support decision making and determine strategies at the school level to improve student learning outcomes. However, it is only one tool used by schools to gather information about student performance, and when used in combination with classroom teachers' professional judgement and school based assessment, it can provide a detailed and useful representation of the whole student.

### **Background Information**

- While not determinative, the impact of a low socio-educational background for a child is demonstrated early in the child's educational experience, and remains with the child throughout their school experience.

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## Portfolio/s Education &amp; Early Childhood Development

**ISSUE: PRIORITY ENROLMENT AREAS****Talking points:**

- The *Education Act 2004* requires that the Director General of Education make arrangements to give ‘priority to the enrolment of children in the government school in their neighbourhood’. This is achieved through the establishment of priority enrolment areas.
- Priority Enrolment Areas are reviewed regularly to ensure that they continue to meet the changing circumstances of a school and of the families in its neighbourhood. Changes are published by the Directorate on the Directorate website.
- A new PEA has been established for enrolments at the new public school in the suburb of Taylor starting in term 1 of 2019.
- The new PEA includes the suburbs of Taylor, Moncrieff and part of Jacka, all currently within the Amaroo School PEA, and the suburb of Casey, currently within the Gold Creek School PEA. Casey will be a shared zone for the new school and the Gold Creek School pending a review for 2022.
- Each year, without fail, we find a place for every child who wants a place in their neighbourhood school. We expect that to continue this year.

**Key Information**

- Most public schools in the ACT have a defined priority enrolment area. Priority enrolment areas are how the Director General ensures that the obligation in the *Education Act 2004* to give ‘priority to the enrolment of children in the government school in their neighbourhood’ is met. Students who reside in that area have priority for enrolment at that school. The priority enrolment area takes into account geographical boundaries, school capacity, and the actual and projected student numbers. Each school is required to enrol students who live within its priority enrolment area.
- There are a small number of schools with special circumstances that do not have a priority enrolment area but have specific criteria for entry to the school. These include specialist language schools such as Telopea Park School (for entry to primary school), specialist education schools (which provide education for students with a disability), Allen Main Memorial Preschool (Duntroon) and the five early childhood schools.

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- Schools must maintain available capacity to accommodate current and future students from within their priority enrolment area before they accept out-of-area students. When projections identify emerging capacity pressures schools may be directed not to accept out-of-area enrolments.
- While most school priority enrolment areas remain unchanged from year to year, some require adjustment in response to demographic changes, school openings or closures, or changes in enrolment capacity.
- The PEA changes allow for the management of enrolment growth facing schools under pressure, particularly schools in north Gungahlin.
- A new P-6 school in the suburb of Taylor with 600 K-6 places and 88 preschoolers is due to open in term 1 of 2019. The school requires a PEA to enable it to take online applications when enrolments for 2019 opens in week beginning 30 April 2018.
- In an effort to ensure that priority enrolment area arrangements are easily understood by both families and schools, the Directorate continues to develop simplified processes for updating priority enrolment areas, improved communication practices and, where possible, the reduction or elimination of shared areas or divided suburbs.

## Background Information

Schools and School Network Leaders participate in the process associated with changing priority enrolment areas. Decisions on changing priority enrolment areas are made two years in advance and a communication strategy is used to ensure the information is disseminated to schools and their communities.

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## Portfolio/s Education &amp; Early Childhood Development

**ISSUE: SCHOOL PLANNING****Talking points:**

- The government is committed to deliver new school capacity in growing locations of the ACT.
- Public school enrolments across the ACT are projected to grow at an average 3.4 per cent per annum over the period 2018-27. The distribution of the growth varies across the act, with growth fronts in the north and northwest of Canberra.
- New public schools are due to open in Taylor in 2019 and in Denman Prospect in the following years.
- Planning is underway for new public schools in Gungahlin and in West Belconnen, plus expansions to the Franklin Early Childhood School and the Gold Creek School.

**Key Information**

- A program of school infrastructure planning is in place to address current and future needs for public school education in the ACT. The Education Directorate works with the Environment, Planning and Sustainable Development Directorate to ensure the availability of suitable land for new schools.
- The Directorate undertakes student enrolment projection modelling using information from land release data, sales data, birth data, dwelling occupation forecasts, school census and school capacities data.
- Planning for a new public school requires approximately five years from emerging evidence of the need for a new school to opening. The Directorate is assessing a number of potential new school sites, the majority in Gungahlin and in Molonglo.
- A number of areas in the ACT are subject to urban infill, placing demand on existing public school infrastructure. Evidence of school enrolment pressure is analysed to determine likely trends and solutions are explored including:
  - reducing out-of-area enrolments
  - adjusting the priority placement area boundary
  - planning for a temporary capacity increase (transportable buildings)
  - planning for medium term capacity increase (modular design buildings)
  - planning for a permanent capacity increase (school expansion)

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- changing the structure of the school.
- Requests for new non-government schools are referred to the Directorate for advice on their viability and impact on public schools. Non-government schools arrange their own site planning and construction through the Environment, Planning and Sustainable Development Directorate.
- The Directorate is working closely with the Environment, Planning and Sustainable Development Directorate to streamline processes associated with the release of land to the non-government school sector.
- Potential sites for non-government schools have been identified by the Environment, Planning and Sustainable Development Directorate in Molonglo and West Belconnen.
- Further information on non-government school registrations is available in the fact sheet Non-government School Registration Summary.

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Attachment A

<b>Potential new public school locations</b>	<b>School type</b>	<b>Estimated opening</b>
Taylor (Gungahlin)	Preschool to year 10	2019
Denman Prospect (Molonglo 2)	Preschool to year 6	2021
East Gungahlin	Preschool to year 10	2022
Denman Prospect (Molonglo 2)	Year 6 to year 10	2024 - 2025
Group Centre (Molonglo 2)	To be advised	To be advised
Molonglo 3	To be advised	To be advised
Riverview (West Belconnen)	To be advised	To be advised

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## Portfolio/s Education & Early Childhood Development

### ISSUE: **LAND RELEASE FOR NON-GOVERNMENT SCHOOLS**

#### Talking points:

- The government continues to support non-government schools in the ACT through the registration of non-government schools and the release of land in growth areas of the ACT.
- Education officials are working closely with officials in the Environment, Planning and Sustainable Development Directorate to finalise the land release process for potential non government schools in Molonglo and West Belconnen, in accordance with the 2017-18 indicative land release program.
- Information on the land release process will be publicised widely via government websites.

#### Key Information

- The allocation of land for community purposes is primarily the responsibility of the Minister for Planning and Land Management, while the approval to operate a non-government school is my responsibility. Further information on non-government school registrations is available in the fact sheet Non-government School Registration Summary.
- The ACT Government Indicative Land Release Program for 2017-18 to 2020-21 identifies land for non-government school sites in West Belconnen in 2019-20 and North Wright for 2018-19.
- The Environment, Planning and Sustainable Development Directorate is finalising information on the sites and the land release process for non-government schools.

#### New land release process

- The new Expression of Interest (EOI) process which is currently being finalised by the Environment, Planning and Sustainable Development Directorate and my Directorate will implement the Government's commitment under the Indicative Land Release Program. The EOI process will address the present legislative anomaly between the Planning and Development Act 2007 (the Planning Act), the Planning and Development Regulation 2008 and Education Act 2004 (the Education Act) which has resulted in non-government schools being unable to obtain registration or acquire land under the direct sales process without already being registered to operate a school.

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## QUESTION TIME BRIEF

- The existing direct sale process operates on a 'first come, first served' basis with no comparative assessment of proponents, and the Education Act requires non-government education institutions to be registered before land can be sold via direct sale.
- Consequently, only established non-government education providers are able to operate in the ACT market by claiming that the “new” school site is an additional campus, rather than an entirely new establishment. This has resulted in a lack of diversity within the Territory’s non-government school sector.
- Land zoned for a non-government school is not a finite resource. The establishment of the EOI process for non-government school sites as they are released, will enable Government to identify the organisation best able to develop and deliver a non-government school and associated facilities. The aim is to ensure the successful proponent most efficiently and effectively utilises the land and provides ongoing benefit to the broader community.
- Once finalised, the new process for releasing a non-government school site will ensure there is greater equity, transparency and accountability of process. Moreover, the EOI process will provide opportunities for proponents to present their proposals and encourage market diversity, while not placing disproportionate costs and administrative burdens on the non-government school sector.
- The EOI process will ensure that proponents continue to meet my statutory responsibilities as the Minister for Education, and the legislative requirements set out by the Minister for Planning and Land Management under the Planning Act. The Government is in the process of finalising the EOI process to achieve these outcomes, and some legislative changes may be required. We are aware that there is interest in establishing non-government schools in growth areas within the ACT.

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## Portfolio/s Education &amp; Early Childhood Development

**ISSUE: NSW ENROLMENTS****Talking points:**

- The ACT is providing specific pathways for NSW students seeking to attend Canberra public schools commencing with 2018 enrolments and being progressively implemented over future years.
- The ACT Government has worked with the NSW Government to ensure the new arrangements provide a number of viable quality options for NSW families seeking schooling in the ACT.
- Selected schools in Tuggeranong and Belconnen have been identified to meet the needs of NSW resident students seeking to enrol in ACT public schools.
- The selection of these schools addresses multiple needs, including the need for NSW families to know as early as possible their schooling options and also for the ACT to better manage school capacity and the distribution of students.

**Key Information**

- NSW students are being directed towards schools in two zones, a southern zone, centred on Tuggeranong, and a northern zone, centred on Belconnen. Within each of these zones, NSW resident students are offered their choice from a defined set of primary schools, high schools, and colleges.
- NSW students currently enrolled in an ACT school are able complete their schooling in the school they currently attend.
- New enrolments of NSW students in ACT public schools will be accepted in identified pathway schools only. Parents from NSW seeking enrolment in ACT schools in 2019 can find advice on the new arrangements on the Education Directorate website, and further guidance will be available when enrolments for 2019 open in April 2018.

**Background Information**

- The ACT welcomes around 1,800 NSW students into our 87 public schools each year.
- Previously, NSW families wishing to enrol their child were required to apply to attend a Canberra public school and applications were considered on a case by case basis. This meant some families may not have received confirmation of their child's enrolment until close to the start of Term 1, once all ACT enrolments had been considered.

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## QUESTION TIME BRIEF

- NSW Government has no plans to increase public school capacity in the ACT region over the next five or more years. Residential and other developments on the NSW side of the border, and the cost of non-government education rising faster than CPI increases, creates the likelihood of steadily increasing enrolments in ACT public schools by NSW residents.
- Eligibility for NSW residing students for each of the zones would be determined by the address of the applicant. Towns and suburbs such as Bywong, Geary's Gap, Gundaroo, Gunning, Murrumbateman, Sutton, Uriarra, Wamboin, and Yass, are all in the northern zone.
- The enrolment pathway for students from the Northern Zone includes Charnwood-Dunlop, Evatt and Florey primary schools, Melba Copeland and University of Canberra Kaleen high schools and Melba Copeland and Lake Ginninderra colleges.
- Towns and suburbs such as Bungendore, Burra, Googong, Jerrabomberra, Michelago and Queanbeyan are all be in the southern zone.
- The enrolment pathway for students from the southern zone includes Gilmore, Wanniasa, Richardson and Calwell primary schools, Caroline Chisholm, Wanniasa and Calwell high schools, and Lake Tuggeranong and Erindale Colleges.

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