



THE FUTURE OF EDUCATION

An ACT education strategy
for the next ten years

FIRST PHASE IMPLEMENTATION



The ACT Government acknowledges the **Ngunnawal Peoples** as the Traditional Custodians of the ACT and region upon which we live and work.

We pay respect to the United Ngunnawal Elders Council and to the Elders both past and present of the Ngunnawal Nation for they hold the hopes and dreams for the future of the ACT and surrounding region. We also acknowledge and pay respect to the Wreck Bay peoples as custodians of the land on which Jervis Bay School is located.



This artwork, *Welcome to Country – Ngunna Yerrabi Byangu*, was commissioned by the Directorate in 2017. The artist Lynnice Church (nee Keen) is a Ngunnawal, Wiradjuri and Kamilaroi woman. Lynnice describes the meaning of the artwork as:

“The painting represents Ngunnawal Country. At the centre of the painting is the symbol of a camp, acknowledging Canberra as a meeting place for many Nations over thousands of generations, for ceremony, marriage and trade. These Nations include the Ngarigo (to the south), Wiradjuri (inland), Gundungurra (to the north) and the Yuin (south coast). The painting shows the mountains surrounding the ACT. Some of the mountains show camps, indicating the neighbouring Nations and pathways connecting these Nations to Ngunnawal Country. The painting colours of blues, purples and greens are those seen in our beautiful Ngunnawal Country.

The painting symbolises the cultural protocol that when entering another Country you must have the permission and blessing of the Traditional Custodians. This is provided by Elders and often involves a smoking ceremony. This ensures cleansing of any spirits coming from another Country and then protection by the Spirits of the Country being entered.”

© Australian Capital Territory, Canberra 2019

This work is copyright. Apart from any use as permitted under the *Copyright Act 1968*, no part may be reproduced by any process without written permission from the Territory Records Office, GPO Box 158, Canberra City ACT 2601.

Produced by the ACT Education Directorate. Enquiries about this publication should be directed to Media and Communications.

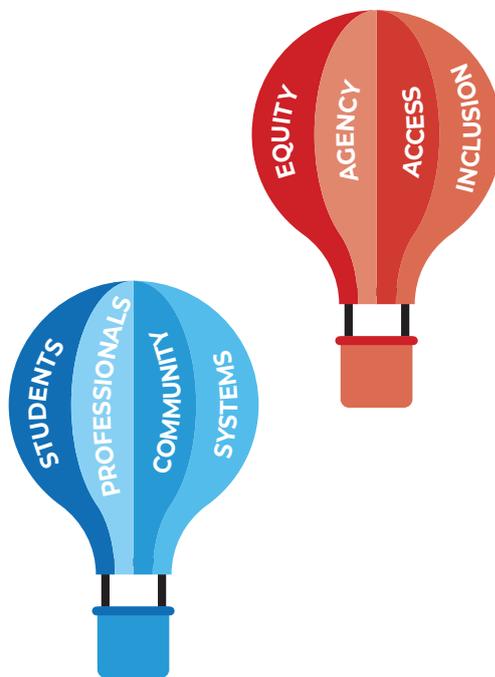
Telephone: 62059423
www.education.act.gov.au



THE FUTURE OF EDUCATION

An ACT education strategy
for the next ten years

FIRST PHASE IMPLEMENTATION





FOREWORD

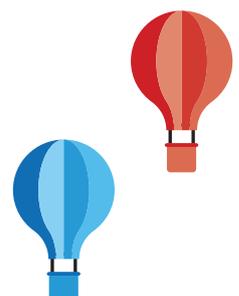
In August 2018, the ACT Government released the *Future of Education: An ACT education strategy for the next ten years (Future of Education Strategy)*, the product of a deep and meaningful conversation with the ACT community to inform how education in the ACT will be delivered to meet the needs of the next generation.

The *Future of Education Strategy* sets out the ACT Government's long-term vision through a roadmap that outlines how all students in all schools – government and non-government – will benefit from an improved education over the next decade. The roadmap is supported by rolling implementation plans that show a continuing focus and investment from a government committed to the very best future for the ACT's children. This implementation plan deals with the education sector at large and directs activity within the government sector. Non-government schools will engage in their own way, particularly through cross-sectoral activity expressed within this plan.

This first phase implementation plan presents a cohesive portfolio of work over the next 18 months. This first phase plan outlines clear, tangible actions and commitments that speak to the core themes as heard loud and clear from the ACT community. The plan is structured within the *Future of Education Strategy's* four foundations, through which the ACT Government will be placing students at the centre of their learning. The ACT Government will demonstrate its commitment to empowering teachers, school leaders and other professionals to thrive in a career of learning which meets the needs of all students. The ACT Government will build strong communities for learning by forging partnerships which are critical in providing better services and support for all children in the ACT and overall, ensure systems which support learning. The ACT Government's *Early Childhood Strategy* will also play a vital role within the *Future of Education*, where every child will be set up for success from birth.

The ACT Government's *Future of Education Strategy* will give children and young people the very best chance of a bright future. I look forward to sharing more about what the ACT Government is doing and most importantly, what our students have achieved over the coming years.

Yvette Berry MLA
Minister for Education and Early Childhood Development



INCLUSIVE SERVICE DELIVERY

The first phase implementation plan seeks to ensure that all students, regardless of background or vulnerability, feel welcome, respected, supported and valued in their school community and that supports and programs are in place to address individual student need, including personalised education and social and psychological wellbeing, as needs arise. This initiative builds upon targeted efforts to address enduring barriers to inclusive education as expressed through the development of the Strategy.

PLANNED ACTIVITIES

PEDAGOGY FOR INCLUSION

The first phase of implementation of the *Future of Education Strategy* will see the expansion of systemic support for schools to implement the *Positive Behaviour for Learning* (PBL) model. PBL is a whole-of-school approach to creating safe and supportive school environments through the identification of agreed values, behaviours and the application of consistent in-school and systemic responses. PBL is internationally renowned, research and evidence based, implementing a continuum of evidence-based interventions to achieve positive academic and behavioural outcomes for all students. Positive learning environments will also be supported by further scoping work for a complex student needs team (and access to external experts) to strengthen capacity to respond to students presenting with highly complex circumstances. Scoping work includes identifying opportunities to build expertise within the system including through places within a purposefully commissioned postgraduate program in areas such as behavioural science. This first phase of implementation will also see stronger engagement and collaboration with students, families, advocacy groups, peak bodies and relevant key stakeholder groups through the appointment of a parent engagement officer.

DIGITAL SOLUTIONS

The roadmap of digital solutions is focused on providing a more coherent picture of student needs to ensure the best possible support and services are in place for each and every child. This includes better data and visibility for teachers to monitor student progress and wellbeing, along with more modern digital tools for parents to interact with the school and receive information about their child quickly and easily.

RESOURCE ALLOCATION

The Student Resource Allocation (SRA) has been developed to reflect the ACT Government's commitment to implement a student needs-based school funding model for ACT public schools. In the first phase of the *Future of Education*, the SRA model will be finalised through the development of a resource loading for Students with a Disability. This reform will ensure all students with a disability, whether they attend a public, Catholic or independent school, will benefit from adjustments required to successfully participate in learning, funded consistently across every school informed by the Nationally Consistent Collection of Data (NCCD) on students with a disability.

OUTPUTS

- > Support four PBL experts and one school psychologist as well as further scoping work in relation to a complex student needs team leading to increased participation by young people with diverse learning needs (2019).
- > Funding for expert consultancy and Health Professional (2019).
- > Appointment of a parent/family engagement officer, building increased engagement with the community (2019).
- > Outputs associated with Digital Solutions (2020 and forward years).
- > Implementation of SRA model through a resource loading for Students with a Disability (2020 and forward years).

BENEFITS

- > Children and young people in the ACT, and their parents and carers, will be confident that there is a high quality education and care experience available to them.
- > They will know their children are safe in Canberra schools, and that they are receiving personal care and attention, regardless of their circumstances, or of the challenges they face.

PARTNERSHIP OPPORTUNITY

- > ACT Government agencies
- > ACT Council of P&C Associations
- > Community sector agencies
- > Multidisciplinary experts
- > Research sector

SAFETY AND CONFIDENCE TO INCLUDE

Schools are places that bring people together as a community and enable relationships to form between people and services. The *Future of Education Strategy* takes advantage of this to provide safe and strong communities, focused on learning. Having the safety and confidence to include requires collaboration between schools, students, families and the community sector and other government agencies for students to gain access to the right supports at the right time.

PLANNED ACTIVITIES

ENSURING SAFE ENVIRONMENTS

The ACT Government has designed, launched and will fully implement an Occupational Violence Policy and Management Plan. It will strengthen the implementation of risk assessments; review the Education Directorate's mandatory work health and safety training package and provide role-specific work health and safety training to learning support assistants and teachers.

BUILDING STRONG AND SAFE COMMUNITIES OF LEARNING

Taking a holistic view of students, recognising that teachers and school leaders work in partnership with families to build inclusive and engaging environments, the ACT Government has undertaken to work with the ACT Council of Parents and Citizens Associations to deliver a series of workshops that will contribute to the building of strong and safe communities for learning. The workshops will explore how schools can best partner with their communities, as well as agencies across Government to meet the diverse range of student academic and wellbeing needs, ensuring that safe environments underpin student and family engagement.

NETWORK STUDENT ENGAGEMENT TEAMS (NSET)

Network Student Engagement Teams are an important element of a suite of services to support student engagement in learning. NSETs help families, students and schools through a multi-disciplinary approach towards removing barriers that may prevent students from engaging in their learning. Each team consists of educational leaders, psychologists, social workers, disability education partners, speech pathologists, occupational therapists and engagement officers. The hearing and vision teams and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Family Support worker are also engaged by the NSET teams.

SHARING LEARNINGS, SHARING RESOURCES

To raise the profile of having the safety and confidence to include all young people in their learning, the ACT Government will share its learnings and resources with other Education jurisdictions (nationally and with other sectors locally) to build and maintain strong local and national partnerships. This will be achieved through hosting a forum on work health and safety in education settings. The ACT Government will also collaborate across sectors to review policy, service designs and explore opportunities to share resources (which includes multidisciplinary support).

OUTPUTS

- > Role-specific work health and safety training provided for school leaders, teachers and learning assistants (2019 and forward years).
- > Support for 50 learning support assistants within public schools to obtain a Certificate IV Education Support (2019 and forward years).
- > Two wellbeing expositions, open to all staff, focusing on health, safety and wellbeing (2019).
- > Three community workshops, designed and delivered in partnership with the ACT Council of Parents and Citizens Associations (2019).
- > Engagement of additional employees, as well as procurement of expert services, to advise on safe learning environments (2019).

BENEFITS

- > All employees, students and their families feel welcome and safe at school
- > Consistent approach towards work health and safety, including regular reporting, monitoring and targeted support
- > Increased engagement with learning through contemporary and inclusive environments

PARTNERSHIP OPPORTUNITY

- > ACT Government agencies
- > Australian Education Union
- > ACT Council of P&C Associations
- > Community sector agencies

PLACE-BASED INCLUSION

At the core of the *Future of Education Strategy* is an acknowledgement of diversity among students and a determination to strive towards equity by responding to the needs of each individual. The *Future of Education Strategy* creates the imperative to build inclusive learning environments through contemporary infrastructure and personalised learning programs, reflecting the expectations of the ACT community.

PLANNED ACTIVITIES

SENSORY LEARNING ENVIRONMENTS

In line with its commitment through the *Schools for All* program, the ACT Government will ensure that all schools can provide safe, calming/sensory spaces that are appropriate to meet the needs of students with complex needs. To date approximately \$5.3m has been spent to support the enhancement and development of sensory spaces into schools. Factsheets and professional learning for this initiative have been developed for schools to support creating sensory spaces within the school environment. Ongoing investment will be made in order to eliminate barriers to participation of all students.

CONTINUUM OF EDUCATION SUPPORT

The ACT Government has developed a coherent strategy for the provision of alternative education programs and/or other flexible learning options for students at risk of disengaging from secondary school. The Continuum of Education Support model in every high school responds to individual student needs through implementing adolescent centred practice, effective transitions and social and emotional wellbeing support at the universal level – that is, within every classroom. In selected instances, further initiatives in the form of extra wellbeing support and flexible learning programs are put in place for some students who are at risk of disengaging. An off-campus program, providing intensive and targeted support for a small number of students who have disengaged from learning has also been introduced. Evaluation in the first phase will draw on evidence to measure impact, identify learnings and adapt for ongoing success.

SCOPING OF ADDITIONAL SERVICES

During the first phase of implementation, the ACT Government will explore additional flexible learning programs, particularly to provide services for young people during school holiday time, as well as trialling targeted access to services across sectors. Furthermore, promotion and support of existing on-country learning opportunities will occur.

OUTPUTS

- > The Continuum of Education Support model introduced in all ACT Public Secondary Schools (2019).
- > Tailored learning programs introduced for up to 10 students who cannot engage with mainstream school (2019).
- > Evaluation of the Continuum of Education Support (2020).
- > Continued enhancement and development of sensory spaces in schools to support students (2019 and forward years).
- > Scoping work for additional programs i.e. services and opportunities offered during school holidays (2020).
- > Development of agreed protocols enabling service access across sectors (2020).

BENEFITS

- > All students and their families feel welcome and valued for who they are and what they can contribute
- > Through the Continuum of Education Support, students and families receive individualised programs and a consistent service across multiple agencies
- > Increased engagement with learning through contemporary and inclusive environments

PARTNERSHIP OPPORTUNITY

- > Community Services Directorate
- > Community sector agencies
- > Teacher representative bodies
- > Infrastructure and Capital Works agencies

CONNECTING YOUNG PEOPLE TO THEIR LEARNING

The *Future of Education Strategy* reaffirms the commitment to equity in our education systems. The strategy recognises students as individuals and emphasises the creation of learning environments with students at the centre. This initiative supports teachers to ensure that all students are appropriately engaged, challenged and extended by designing classroom activities to meet students' learning needs, levels of readiness, interests, aspirations and motivations.

PLANNED ACTIVITIES

PEDAGOGY & CURRICULUM

The Education Directorate will support each student's interests, aspirations and cultural backgrounds through personalised learning. The Directorate will ensure teachers enable and empower students to be life long learners through co-constructing learning opportunities where:

- > The pace of learning is adjusted
- > Learning is evidence informed
- > Objectives, approaches, content and tools are tailored and optimised for each learner
- > Learner interest drives the learning, which is (ideally) self-initiated
- > Learners are given choice in what, how, when and where they learn, and
- > Learning is strengthened with integrated technology.

Exploratory work will also be undertaken on personalised learning plans and digital solutions for each student to be more connected with their learning growth. Non-government sectors will continue to progress reforms under the ACT Bilateral Agreement, particularly in curriculum efforts relating to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander histories and cultures within Science, and reporting student achievement through the use of national learning progressions. The Education Directorate will review Languages programs to strengthen pathways and offerings for students.

CULTURALLY SAFE ENVIRONMENTS

The Education Directorate is creating dedicated learning environments in schools where Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures are nurtured, celebrated and shared with the broader community. This work is being done in consultation and collaboration with local Aboriginal people and businesses who are supporting the Directorate to deliver professional learning and create physical features within schools that reflect the diversity of the ACT Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community.

STRATEGIC INDICATOR FOR PERSONALISED LEARNING

The Education Directorate will be strengthening teaching practice to respond to diversity and build learner capabilities as well as content knowledge. To measure this, the Directorate will replace previous reporting on NAPLAN mean results with a more meaningful measure of student learning gain. Drawing on the concept of a year's learning for a year's teaching, the new strategic indicators measure the growth in learning of our students. Student learning gain will be measured by comparing student progress between Years 3 and 5; and Years 7 and 9 NAPLAN scores.

OUTPUTS

- > Revised strategic indicators relating to equity, learning gain and engagement (2019)
- > Cultural Integrity action plans between schools and their communities developed (2019 and forward years).
- > Cultural Integrity training programs designed and scheduled (2019 and forward years).
- > Review of language programs in government schools (2020).
- > All ACT Government schools adopting the ACARA Achievement Standards for reporting on individual student achievement (2020).

BENEFITS

- > Students experience personalised learning pathways that acknowledge developing interests, knowledge and skills
- > Data insights on student progress support and guide individualised learning pathways
- > Reporting of student achievement equally focused on individual growth and progress of capabilities as it is on content

PARTNERSHIP OPPORTUNITY

- > School families, P&C Associations and School Boards
- > Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander parents and community members
- > Teacher representative bodies
- > Universities

STUDENT AGENCY

This initiative sees our students involved as decision makers in their learning environment; student voice will allow a say about 'how things are done'; and every student who is educated in the ACT will be able to tread their own path based on their developing interests, knowledge and skills. They will experience personalised learning programs that reflect teachers' insights into each of their students.

PLANNED ACTIVITIES

STUDENT VOICE IN EDUCATION DECISIONS

More than 2,000 students provided input into the *Future of Education Strategy*. Consistent with seeking student voice regarding the environments they are a part of, the ACT Government will enhance student agency and voice through mechanisms such as the Minister's Student Congress, student membership on school boards, as well as on the boards of statutory authorities. In line with its commitment through the *Schools for All* program, the ACT Government has partnered with students and the Youth Coalition of the ACT to develop the 'Ask us... Student Voice in the ACT' resource kit. The kit provides information, strategies and ideas for improving student voice in schools across the ACT.

FUTURE SKILLS ACADEMY

The ACT Government has recently invested \$5.7 million dollars to establish an Academy of Future Skills (the Academy) to build Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) capacity across the ACT public school sector. The Academy operates from two hubs: one in Canberra's north at University of Canberra Lake Ginninderra Senior Secondary College, and one in the south at the Centre for Innovation and Learning, Caroline Chisholm School. The hubs improve the teaching of STEM by building capacity in staff. They also provide a portal for engaging with industry professionals and organisations, government agencies and tertiary education and training providers, and encourage all students to undertake STEM subjects.

PERSONALISED LEARNING PATHWAYS

The ACT Government will continue to evolve the RTO model to ensure streamlined VET offerings which are efficient, accessible and more personalised for students. In addition to VET, this includes exploring the feasibility of making more use of cross-institutional study across public colleges. A targeted implementation plan will strengthen accessible and personalised student learning that reflects the current and future needs of industry and business.

ACCELERATED PATH FOR GIFTED AND TALENTED STUDENTS

The ACT Government will investigate building an accelerated pathway for students through a partnership with the University of Canberra. Opportunities for the University to provide BSSS accredited courses for the completion of the ACT Senior Secondary Certificate, the calculation of an Australian Tertiary Admissions Rank (ATAR) score, as well as early entry to and credit for a Bachelor degree in the discipline will be explored. The aim of the UC program will be to provide extension learning options to eligible ACT College students over a two-year period (Years 11 and 12).

OUTPUTS

- > 'Ask us... Student Voice in the ACT' resource kit (2018).
- > Academy of Future Skills southside (2018) and northside (2019).
- > Scoping of University of Canberra Accelerated Program (2020).
- > An implementation plan that will strengthen accessible and personalised student learning in VET (2020).

BENEFITS

- > School and system decision making strengthened by student participation
- > Both students and teachers have increased opportunities to engage in contemporary STEM learning experiences
- > Senior secondary students will have more choice about vocational education pathways
- > Gifted and talented students will have increased opportunities for acceleration

PARTNERSHIP OPPORTUNITY

- > Students
- > Tertiary Education and Training providers
- > Industry professionals
- > ACT Board of Senior Secondary Studies

BEST START IN A CAREER OF LEARNING

The quality of ACT teaching workforce is key to effective implementation of reforms arising from the *Future of Education*. This initiative introduces a systematic induction program for new teachers that ensures consolidated, planned professional supports are in place the moment they arrive in the classroom, leading into a universal professional learning and support strategy that unfolds over all career stages and is replicable across numerous school sites.

PLANNED ACTIVITIES

AFFILIATED SCHOOLS PROGRAM

The Affiliated Schools Program builds upon the 2010 Collaboration Agreement between the ACT Government and the University of Canberra. The program will develop sustained workforce capability by creating more extensive collaborations between the schools and the University. Research conducted between UC and Affiliated Schools will be widely shared throughout the Education Directorate and made available to all sectors via professional learning, resources, evidence-based programs and other leading initiatives. Research schools will be important collaboration partners for annual Foundation Forums.

SCHOOL LEADER MENTOR TRAINING PROGRAM

Through the Affiliated Schools program, the Education Directorate has developed a comprehensive mentor training program. The program is based in instructional learning techniques, and includes a focus on effective mentoring techniques, communication and feedback, the National Teaching Standards, and mentor/mentee relationship building. Participants in the Masters of Education program complete up to two units from a choice of 'Leading Coaching and Mentoring in Education', 'Education for Inclusion', 'Leading and Sustaining Professional Learning Communities' and 'Issues and Challenges in School Improvement: International Perspectives'. Units have been designed to provide rich, rigorous learning opportunities to support the development of a regional community of practice.

SYSTEMATISED PRACTICUM PLACEMENTS THROUGH A PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE REGISTER

Initiatives within *the best start in a career of learning* introduce a systematised practicum experience for educators from their earliest years of their profession. The ACT Teacher Quality Institute will introduce a Pre-Service Teacher Professional Experience register to deliver an online platform and contact points where preservice teachers can be identified and supported through their teacher training and into the teaching profession. The ACT Government will invest in better induction for new educators within the public system as they begin their career in the classroom. Strengthened partnerships between the employer, schools, teachers and representative bodies will make that investment count.

OUTPUTS

- > Five schools signed up as Affiliated Schools for 2019, scaling up to 25 schools in five years.
- > Thirty Master of Education scholarship recipients, coming from a combination of early childhood, primary, high school, college, Education Support Office and specialist settings (2020 and forward years).
- > School-based pre-service teacher education clinics, run by UC, to enhance the professional experience component of initial teacher education (2019).
- > Pool of suitably qualified/trained school leaders to act as mentors for teachers across all career stages (2020).
- > Pre-Service Teacher Professional Experience register delivered (2020 and forward years).
- > Co-ordinated professional experience placements, for pre-service teachers in their first to fourth years at UC, and postgraduate students undertaking their Masters (2020 and forward years).

BENEFITS

- > Students who benefit from improved teacher practice
- > School leaders who increase their skills and confidence in mentoring teachers at all career stages
- > Teachers who are supported in both their practice and wellbeing
- > Schools that increase the impact of both their teachers and their leadership teams
- > The system, which increases retention rates of teachers

PARTNERSHIP OPPORTUNITY

- > University of Canberra
- > ACT Teacher Quality Institute
- > Principals' Associations
- > National and local professional bodies
- > Teacher representative bodies
- > Professional organisations
- > Academics with expertise in Early Career support

THRIVING IN A CAREER OF LEARNING

The ACT community recognises the important role of its workforce in providing progress in learning for every student, every day. The government is investing in strategies to support systematic continual professional learning, which in turn will lead to greater student learning outcomes.

PLANNED ACTIVITIES

HIGHLY ACCOMPLISHED AND LEAD TEACHERS

The ACT Government will work towards ensuring a Highly Accomplished or Lead teacher is in every public school. This commitment strengthens previous investment and aims to have a Highly Accomplished or Lead teacher in every ACT Government School by the mid point of the strategy's implementation. The community has expressed that our best teachers must be working with complex student need. Teachers and School Leaders, certified at the Highly Accomplished or Lead Teacher standard play a vital role in ensuring that every teacher in every school experiences high-quality professional support.

EMPOWERED LEARNING PROFESSIONALS LEADERSHIP PLAN

The *Empowered Learning Professionals Leadership Plan* (the Plan), launched for the Education Directorate in December 2018, outlines a multi-faceted approach to strengthening the leadership capabilities of all school leaders at the Principal, Deputy Principal and Executive Teacher (School Leader C) level and is based on a strengths-based model with Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) at the centre. Equity and inclusion are core to all elements of the program. The Plan aligns with the outcomes of the *Future of Education Strategy*, the Directorate's Strategic Plan, the Australian Institute of Teaching and School Leadership (AITSL) Principal Standard. This Plan also addresses the ACT Government's 2016 election and parliamentary agreement commitment regarding mentoring and pedagogical leaders.

SYSTEM WORKFORCE STRATEGY

There is a need for improved teacher workforce planning at the local and national level. The ACT Government will amend the *ACT Teacher Quality Institute Act (2010)* to allow the ACT to participate in national teacher workforce data initiatives in order to inform a whole-of-jurisdiction workforce strategy for the ACT. Accompanying workforce planning at the system level will specifically address the requirement to attract and retain a sufficient number of high-quality specialist teachers to support the delivery of specialised programs, including languages. The ACT Teacher Quality Institute will continue its work across all sectors to support improved local teacher workforce planning, systematise practicum experiences for initial teacher education students, and increase the numbers of ACT teachers certified at rigorous national standards.

OUTPUTS

- > Increase of 10 teachers certified at the Highly Accomplished or Lead Teacher standard by 2020.
- > Launch of the *Empowered Learning Professionals Leadership Plan* (2019).
- > Cascading sequence of professional learning strengthening the capability of school leaders to create the culture, structures, and conditions for everyone to understand their impact on student outcomes (2020 and forward years).
- > Whole-of-jurisdiction workforce strategy and accompanying Government system workforce plan (2020).

BENEFITS

- > Deepened pedagogical and curriculum expertise of leaders at all levels
- > Maximising the ACT's geographical advantage to build a collective capability uplift across all schools
- > More cohesive and systematic (less piecemeal) professional learning and capability development service offerings
- > Increase in coaching, mentoring and instructional leadership opportunities for teachers and school leaders

PARTNERSHIP OPPORTUNITY

- > ACT Teacher Quality Institute
- > National and local Principal Associations and professional bodies
- > Professional organisations
- > Universities



SUPPORTING LEADERS IN A CAREER OF LEARNING

The focus for school leaders, as with teachers, needs to be on their expertise as education specialists rather than administrative or other functions. This initiative proposes a multi-faceted approach to strengthen school leadership capabilities at a system scale, drawing on research and best practice. This includes a cohesive and integrated service offering of professional development, support and resources delivered from a strengths-based model that is centred around wellbeing.

PLANNED ACTIVITIES

PRINCIPAL CAREER PIPELINE

During the first phase of implementation of the *Future of Education Strategy*, principals of public schools will move to a revised principal career structure designed to facilitate enhanced career pathways and placement of skilled, experienced principals in school where they are most needed to drive improved student outcomes. Newly appointed and experienced principals must have meaningful and effective adult learning experiences that are linked to school improvement and student needs. The Education Directorate's *Empowered Learning Professionals Leadership Plan* provides for differentiated professional learning based on career stage and individual needs assessment. In addition, leadership collaboration between government and non-government sectors will continue to progress under the ACT Bilateral Agreement.

PRINCIPAL WELLBEING

The Education Directorate has partnered with the ACT Principals Association (ACTPA) to develop a Principal Health and Wellbeing Plan which will deliver on a range of immediate, short and long term initiatives to increase the focus on principal health and wellbeing. The plan will lay the foundations for best practice relating to physical and mental health, building on the practices that are working well and strengthening the areas which require work to meet the complexities principals face every day. Delivery of commitments made under the Plan will be overseen by a Principal Health and Wellbeing Governance Group, chaired by the Director-General and comprising of representatives from ACTPA and other key stakeholders from across the Directorate. The Education Directorate has also partnered with the Bastow Institute of Educational Leadership to pilot a Principal Health and Wellbeing course in 2019.

BUILDING A RESPONSIVE WORKFORCE

The ACT Government will continue scoping work to develop a complex student needs team (as well as access to external experts) to strengthen capacity to respond to students presenting highly complex circumstances. This service strengthens current multi-disciplinary support through a focus on expertise in autism, behaviour, psychology and disability. Access to expertise includes legal liaison for some families. The ACT Government is also offering financial assistance for Learning Support Assistants within public schools to upskill and gain a Certificate IV in Education Support through the Canberra Institute of Technology. The Certificate is being customised to meet the needs of our schools and build the capability that best supports our children and young people, particularly in complex needs and challenging behaviours.

OUTPUTS

- > Principal career and capability pipeline developed (2019).
- > Through the *Empowered Learning Professionals Leadership Plan*, strengthened leadership wellbeing through *Principal Health and Wellbeing: Mindsets for Effective Change* course (2019 and forward years).
- > Personal Efficacy Program (PEP) for principals as well as EAP Trauma support (2019 and forward years).
- > Sponsorship of Cert IV for Learning Support Assistants within public schools (2019 and forward years).
- > Scoping of Complex Case Management team to provide specialised support (specialist advice including paediatrics, psychology, behaviour, complex trauma support and legal liaison) (2020).
- > Provision of legal support for students experiencing vulnerability in partnership with Legal Aid (2020).

BENEFITS

- > Enhanced focus for school leaders on their expertise as practitioners, rather than on administrative and other functions
- > Principal employment framework that develops, attracts and retains high quality school leaders
- > Strengthened collaborative relationships with a range of professionals and support staff to effectively meet the needs of every student
- > School leader wellbeing underpins high-quality educational leadership, community engagement and complex decision making

PARTNERSHIP OPPORTUNITY

- > ACT Teacher Quality Institute
- > National and local Principal Associations and professional bodies
- > Bastow Institute
- > Community Services Directorate
- > Community sector agencies

FORGING INNOVATIVE PARTNERSHIPS

Research underpinning the *Future of Education Strategy* affirms education systems need to be viewed as an inter-related series of relationships through which a wide range of people and activities are co-ordinated to develop the whole student with collaboration being at the heart of achieving sustained improvement in student outcomes.

This initiative supports meaningful family and community engagement from the earliest years, as well as promotes integrated student supports in order to have a positive effect on student outcomes.

PLANNED ACTIVITIES

SCOPE A COMMUNITY SCHOOL

The government will identify, build upon and trial an effective community school model that partners with community agencies and businesses to ensure schools support student and family needs. This could include out-of-hours programs and partnerships with agencies to support young people and their families, particularly those who are marginalized or experiencing disadvantage. It could also include bringing other human services agencies into the school context to better to strengthen and broaden the use of school facilities in meeting the needs of families. Policy work and mapping to determine feasibility of the community school model will occur in the first phase of implementation, leading to the preparation of the business case for construction.

CONNECTING EARLY CHILDHOOD SERVICES

Through the development of a territory-wide *Early Childhood Strategy*, the ACT Government also commits to identify and develop models of partnerships between early childhood providers, community and government agencies, and primary schools to ensure that young children (0-8 year olds) have the strongest possible start to their education journey. The government will collaborate across sectors to review policy and service designs, shared personal development and accessing multidisciplinary support. The first phase of implementation of the *Future of Education Strategy* will see modernised partnership agreements with early childhood services co-located in Early Childhood schools.

INFRASTRUCTURE FOR COMMUNITY SCHOOLS

The Government is exploring the inclusion of early childhood infrastructure capacity in every new school, including early childhood service capacity for Long Day Care as well as Out of School Hours care.

OUTPUTS

- > Feasibility mapping and policy design work for a community school (2020).
- > The first stage of a coherent approach to early childhood, expressed as an integrated framework of education and care, schools and Health and Community Services (2020).
- > Design specifications and options analysis in relation to integrated early learning in ACT Public Schools (2020).
- > Modernised partnership agreements in place between education environments and early childhood services (2020)
- > A pilot program to provide after-hours care for ACT Government preschool students (2020).
- > Explore options for affiliated education and care service in new ACT public primary schools (2020 and forward years)

BENEFITS

- > Children’s neurological pathways develop most rapidly between the ages of 0–5 years. Enhancing children’s learning at this critical stage of development creates a foundation for lifelong learning, skill development and wellbeing
- > Young children will have access to a high-quality, integrated education and care service through their community school
- > The ACT Government’s *Early Childhood Strategy*, developed and delivered through the *Future of Education*, lays the foundation for long-term educational, economic and social improvements for the ACT population

PARTNERSHIP OPPORTUNITY

- > ACT Government’s Human Services Cluster
- > Community sector agencies
- > Teacher representative bodies
- > Infrastructure and Capital Works agencies

EARLY CHILDHOOD STRATEGY

High-quality education and care during the ages of 0 – 5 years develops children’s vocabulary, communication, social skills and problem solving abilities. It also creates a foundation for lifelong learning, skill development and wellbeing, whilst also supporting higher workforce participation rates. Through this initiative, the ACT Government will deliver long- term educational, economic and social improvements for the ACT population.

PLANNED ACTIVITIES

EARLY CHILDHOOD STRATEGY

The ACT Government will deliver a coherent strategy for the delivery of early childhood education and care across the ACT. Crucial will be more integrated services for children from birth to 8 years and their families. The government will improve collaboration between service providers and public schools as well as integrating an education and care service into every new government school. The government will co-design with the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community in the ACT and Wreck Bay the evolution of Koori Preschool that meets the community’s needs now and into the future. Programs such as ‘Prep for Pre’ will continue to engage families to be active partners in their children’s learning prior to them entering the education system.

FREE UNIVERSAL QUALITY EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION

On 31 July 2018, the ACT Government announced a goal of 15 hours per week, 600 hours per year of free, universal, quality early childhood education for three-year-old children as a key part of the ACT *Early Childhood Strategy*. The first phase of the *Future of Education* will see consideration given to the strategic opportunities for systemising the co- location and coordination of key services such as child and family health, early childhood education and care, schools, and community services in the ACT (including the potential of providing meals for busy families). Modelling and implementation planning is underway. Opportunities for strategic partnering between government and non- government, community-based entities around a long-term universal access program are underway.

NATIONAL QUALITY FRAMEWORK

The ACT Government has a strong focus on quality early childhood education and care environments. The Australian Standards for Early Childhood Services began to be integrated into all preschools and relevant early childhood services in 2012. Work will continue in the first phase of implementation of the *Future of Education Strategy* to support and encourage all early childhood education and care providers to move towards full proficiency under the NQF.

OUTPUTS

- > Access to 15 hours per week, 600 hours per year, of free, universal quality early childhood education for three-year- old children, commencing with targeted access to families that would most benefit (2020 and forward years).
- > Modelling and implementation planning associated with 3-year-old preschool (2020).
- > Expansion of the existing Koori Preschool program to 15 hours per week from 2020.
- > Phase One of a coherent approach to early childhood, expressed as an integrated framework of education and care, schools and Health and Community Services (2020).
- > A common early childhood evidence base that identifies children experiencing vulnerabilities or disadvantage and a connected delivery model to better identify the children and families to target and to meet their needs (2020).
- > Support for parents to be effective ‘first teachers’ and engage with children’s learning in early childhood (2020).

BENEFITS

- > This initiative lays the foundation for long-term educational, economic and social improvements for the ACT population
- > The *Early Childhood Strategy* will increase access to high quality early childhood education and care experiences, particularly for children experiencing disadvantage
- > More integrated services for children from birth to 8 years and their families across the ACT

PARTNERSHIP OPPORTUNITY

- > ACT Government’s Human Services Cluster
- > Community sector agencies
- > School leaders with expertise in Education, particularly in Early Years learning
- > Teacher representative bodies
- > Infrastructure and Capital Works agencies



TEACHERS AS RESEARCHERS

The 'Teachers as Researchers' initiative proposes a systematic approach to uplift teacher capability in the most crucial stages of our teachers' career to enhance practice and maximise learning impact for every child in the ACT.

The initiative will continue to grow the ACT Government's existing partnership with the University of Canberra to provide the enabling conditions required to scale teacher research, innovation and leading contemporary practice across the entire system.

PLANNED ACTIVITIES

POSTGRADUATE MASTERS SCHOLARSHIPS

The Education Directorate is providing scholarships to support teachers to undertake the Master of Education through the University of Canberra (UC). The Masters qualification is designed for experienced teachers to become 21st century educators and learn and practice strategies for effective teaching and leadership while exploring the research evidence supporting the use of these strategies.

INNOVATION FUND AND FOUNDATION FORUMS

The ACT Bilateral Agreement agreed under the National Schools Reform Agreement commits the ACT Government to establish a cross-sectoral reform forum to share progress and challenges. The Innovation Fund and Foundation Forums will target excellence and promote teacher professional learning across all sectors and all stages of education (from early childhood through to the college years). Forums will maintain critical momentum from schools in the public, catholic and independent sectors by showcasing innovative activity across each of the strategy's foundations as well as providing research grants to teachers and school leaders to build local, evidenced-informed solutions.

CLEARING HOUSE OF EXCELLENT PRACTICE

The ACT Government will scope the enhancement of the role of the ACT Teacher Quality Institute to share excellent practice and contemporary research evidence across the ACT. The scoping will include consideration of an administrative framework that enables TQI to provide the best and latest evidence on teaching and learning and spread success across all ACT schools. Connecting closely with the 'Teachers as Researchers' priority, TQI will help teachers and schools share their knowledge in order to make great practice become common practice across the Territory and seek to connect with the development of the National Evidence Institute currently under consideration.

OUTPUTS

- > Professional learning for in-service teachers, delivered by UC academics (2019).
- > A research framework to support school improvement initiatives (2020).
- > Scoping of requirements for TQI to become a clearing house of excellent practice (2020).
- > Scholarships for in-service teachers to undertake Masters-level study, co-funded by the Directorate and UC (2019).
- > A school-based coordinator, partially funded by the Education Directorate, to oversee the school's engagement with UC (2019).

BENEFITS

- > Improved research rigour and evidence-informed teaching practice
- > Better student outcomes and learning experiences from improved teacher practice
- > Strengthened links between tertiary education institutions (UC) and the ACT Education system
- > Increase in the number of teachers with a Master of Education qualification
- > Increased opportunities to scale research-led innovation across the system

PARTNERSHIP OPPORTUNITY

- > University of Canberra
- > ACT Teacher Quality Institute
- > Cross-sectoral partnerships
- > Teacher professional associations



SYSTEMS MODELLING LEARNING

Consultation for the *Future of Education* highlighted the importance of aligning legislation, resources, organisational structures, public accountability and reporting, teaching tools, along with data and IT with pursuing educational equity. The balance between school-based decision making and centralised support is key to achieving strong student outcomes. This initiative supports good service design and decision making about school improvement.

PLANNED ACTIVITIES

SCHOOL PERFORMANCE & SYSTEM IMPROVEMENT

The Education Directorate will strengthen and align the current School Review and Improvement process to develop cohesion between the Directorate's Strategic Planning, School Annual Action Planning, preschool quality improvement planning and Principal Performance Development Agreements. The Education Directorate will collect and present data from a range of sources to share and acknowledge school and Directorate progress towards targets. This will also include mechanisms to enable ongoing evolution of Directorate priorities into school improvement planning, including consideration of the right mix of school-led innovation, accountability and system support, and outcome reporting from school to Directorate level.

REVIEW OF LEGISLATION

The ACT Government, through the Education Directorate, has commenced a principles-based review of the *Education Act* (2004). The aim is to ensure that the ACT has legislation that reflects the principles of its education systems, as outlined in the *Future of Education Strategy*, and provides excellence and equity in education to all ACT children.

SYSTEM ACCOUNTABILITY

To help assess its progress towards greater equity in the system, the Education Directorate has developed, and will use, a strategic indicator representing the performance gap over time between the most disadvantaged group of students and the most advantaged. The Directorate will also replace previous reporting on NAPLAN mean results with a more meaningful measure of student learning gain. Recognising that quality peer relationships, and a sense of school belonging, positively impact the outcomes of students and of school staff, the Directorate will use a strategic indicator to measure the quality of these relationships within schools.

EVALUATION OF THIS STRATEGY

The Territory will develop and improve a focused evaluation framework for this Strategy. This will include evidence to measure success, ongoing monitoring and course correction through continuous learning.

OUTPUTS

- > Revised Legislation 'Child Safety in Schools' Omnibus Bill passed by the ACT Legislative Assembly (2019).
- > Ongoing review of *Education Act (2004)* in partnership with stakeholders (2019 and forward years).
- > *Future of Education Strategy* evaluation framework (2019).
- > Revised Education Directorate strategic performance indicators (2020).
- > Streamlined School Improvement and planning tools for schools. Includes the *School Data Summary*, *School Improvement Plan*, *Annual Action Plan* and *Annual Impact Report* (2020).
- > Review of the right mix of school-led innovation, system support and accountability to ensure quality learning and wellbeing for every student (2020).

BENEFITS

- > More equity driven system decisions, supported by a principles-based legislation review.
- > Increase in the consistency and quality of data to inform system and school performance and improvement.
- > Red tape reduction in school improvement processes to maximise impact on learning outcomes for students.
- > Reducing the time for data to be provided

PARTNERSHIP OPPORTUNITY

- > ACT Principals' Association
- > Teacher representative bodies
- > ACT Teacher Quality Institute
- > ACT Board of Senior Secondary Studies

FUTURE SCHOOLS FOR A GROWING CITY

Demand for public school enrolments has been growing in recent years at a high rate and is projected to continue to grow at around an average 3.5 per cent per annum over the next decade, adding the equivalent of about *one-two schools' worth* of new students to the system every year.

An imperative for the ACT Government throughout the first phase of implementation of the *Future of Education Strategy* will be to conduct the planning and delivery of additional school infrastructure and the workforce requirements to accommodate this growth.

PLANNED ACTIVITIES

STRATEGIC RESPONSE TO GROWTH

Future Schools for a Growing City is a multi-strand response to continued population growth across Canberra. This initiative creates a shift from an incremental, school-by-school approach, to looking at demand and the provision of school infrastructure in an integrated way – both at a broader regional level, and across a longer timeframe that takes account of suburb growth cycles and optimal asset size and location.

Research and data shows that the Gungahlin region is experiencing the fastest average growth rate in school enrolments, thus placing an emphasis on meeting school capacity needs of students in the north in the first phase of the strategy. Specifically, to expand capacity at Franklin Early Childhood School, Gold Creek High School and a proposal to deliver a new primary school for Gungahlin in Throsby.

PLANNING FUTURE SCHOOLS FOR FUTURE NEEDS

As student needs change over time, physical environments should be flexible to respond and adapt to the future needs of students, families and an evolving education system. The first phase of the *Future of Education Strategy* proposes a series of staged feasibility studies to provide clarity around the need for additional school sites and opportunities to expand and modernise existing learning environments across the ACT.

This first phase of comprehensive infrastructure planning will also take into account the design of schools as 'Community Schools', recognising our schools as hubs of the community and an integral part of a broader human services system which takes a holistic view of students and their needs, as well as the needs of their families in the local area.

OUTPUTS

- > Permanent expansion of Franklin Early Childhood School to a P-6 school (2019).
- > Expansion of Gold Creek High School (2020 and forward years).
- > Feasibility and design study for a further college facility (2020).
- > Feasibility studies to inform future planning for enrolment growth, service needs of communities and learning needs of students (2019 and forward years).

BENEFITS

- > Increased enrolment capacity in areas of continued growth through better use of existing infrastructure
- > Enhanced demographic modelling, taking a comprehensive regional, rather than school by school, approach
- > More sustainable, longer term certainty of infrastructure to meet future needs of students
- > Improved school enrolment experience for families

PARTNERSHIP OPPORTUNITY

- > ANU for ongoing research in population growth
- > Families of school aged children, P&C Associations and School Boards
- > Environment, Planning and Sustainable Development Directorate, City Renewal Authority, Transport Canberra and City Services Directorate, and Chief Minister, Treasury and Economic Development Directorate
- > Teachers and employee representatives (AEU, CPSU, Principals Association)
- > Community representatives (Community Councils and local residents' associations).



