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# Schools for All Program Fortnightly Update 1 – 16 February 2016

## Background to the Schools for All Program

In April 2015, an Expert Panel was commissioned by Minister Joy Burch MLA to undertake a review of policy and practice in ACT schools for supporting and teaching students with complex needs and challenging behaviour. The Expert Panel comprised Emeritus Professor Anthony Shaddock (chair), Community Paediatrician Dr Sue Packer and ACT Children and Young People Commissioner Mr Alasdair Roy.

The Expert Panel undertook extensive community consultation with teachers, school leaders, other school staff, parents and carers, students, support organisations, education and care experts and community members. The Expert Panel conducted focus groups involving more than 200 students, received 156 submissions, collected information through 30 student interviews, and had more than 1200 surveys completed.

The *Schools for All Children and Young People – Report of the Expert Panel on Students with Complex Needs and Challenging Behaviour* (the Expert Panel Report) was released on 18 November 2015. The Government Response to the Report was released simultaneously.

The Expert Panel Report recognised that while the ACT has excellent school systems and achieves outstanding results on many measures, there are challenges for schools in supporting students with complex needs and challenging behaviours. This is a challenge that is faced by schools across Australia.

The Expert Panel Report contains fifty recommendations. All fifty recommendations have been accepted in the ACT Government Response, which was produced collaboratively by the ACT Education Directorate (the Directorate), Catholic Education (CEO) and Association of Independent Schools of the ACT (AIS).

The Directorate has begun a three year program of cultural change, requiring major policy and program reform. The *Schools for All Program* not only aims to implement the fifty recommendations of the Expert Panel Report, but most importantly to embark on an ambitious, evidence based, and single-minded, ‘whatever it takes’ student-centred vision that gives priority to each student’s needs in education policy and practice in our schools.

## Schools for All Program Implementation

A Directorate *Schools for All Program* Implementation Team has been set up to progress actions against the recommendations. The Implementation Team will work collaboratively across the Directorate and in partnership with schools, Directorate Central Office, Community Services Directorate, ACT Health, Catholic Education Office, and the Association of Independent Schools ACT, to ensure we deliver on the recommendations of the Expert Panel. This team comprises:

Joanne Garrisson, Deputy Director-General, Education Strategy – Program Sponsor

Jacinta Evans, Director, Student Engagement – Program Director

Catriona Meere and Shilo Preston-Stanley – Program Managers

## Program Governance

Two governance bodies have been established for the program:

An independent **Oversight Group** has been established by the Minister to oversee the implementation of the recommendations until December 2016.

A **Program Board** has been established to oversee progress of the implementation of the fifty recommendations and to provide direction and feedback to the Implementation Team. The Program Board will review and endorse quarterly progress reports to the Oversight Group and Minister.

## Communication with Schools

To ensure schools and school communities are kept updated on the *Schools for All Program*, we will be providing fortnightly updates on progress via the Schools Bulletin. These updates will include: important information; invitations to provide feedback or seek information; frequently asked questions and guidance to enable schools to keep school communities informed.

### Principal Advisory Group

The Principal Advisory Group will be provided with regular updates and opportunities to provide feedback to the Program Board on the Program and the impact of the deliverables on schools.

### School Network Meetings

Representatives from the *Schools for All Program* Implementation Team will visit School Network meetings over the year. This will give schools the opportunity to be better informed about the Schools for All Program and to raise any questions or concerns.

### Parents Forums

Four Parent Forums will be held over the year at two locations on each date: UC Kaleen and HBCTL.

**Forum 1 Wednesday 16 March 2016 (Term 1, Week 7)**

9:30am-10:30am UC High School Kaleen, Baldwin Drive, Kaleen (Library)

5:30pm-6:30pm Hedley Beare Centre for Teaching and Learning, Fremantle Drive, Stirling

**Forum 2 Wednesday 15 June 2016 *(Term 2, Week 8)***

9:30-10:30 Hedley Beare Centre for Teaching and Learning, Fremantle Drive, Stirling

5:30pm- 6:30pm UC High School Kaleen, Baldwin Drive, Kaleen (Library)

**Forum 3 Thursday 15 September 2016 *(Term 3, Week 9)***

9:30am-10:30am UC High School Kaleen, Baldwin Drive, Kaleen (Library)

5:30pm-6:30pm Hedley Beare Centre for Teaching and Learning, Fremantle Drive, Stirling

**Forum 4 Thursday 10 November 2016 *(Term 4, Week 5)***

9:30-10:30 Hedley Beare Centre for Teaching and Learning, Fremantle Drive, Stirling

5:30pm- 6:30pmUC High School Kaleen, Baldwin Drive, Kaleen (Library)

## All things Schools for All

We expect you will want to come back to this information again, so from today information about the Schools for All Program will be available on the Directorate website: <http://www.det.act.gov.au/school_education/schools-for-all>

### Quick links

Schools for All Children and Young People – Report on the Expert Panel on Students with Complex Needs and Challenging Behaviours <http://www.det.act.gov.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0009/795186/62074-Expert-Panel-Report-Web.pdf>

*ACT Government Response* – Expert Panel on Students with Complex Needs and Challenging Behaviour *Access to Real Learning: the impact of Policy, Funding and Culture on Students with Disability,* The Senate Education and Employment References Committee Report. <http://www.det.act.gov.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0010/793981/Expert-Panel-Response-final.pdf>

## Keep in touch

If you have any questions, comments or feedback associated with the Schools for All Program please contact The Schools for All Program Implementation Team on SchoolsForAll@act.gov.au or on 6207 6606.

This is an exciting reform for the ACT public school system and we hope and anticipate you will have many questions. It provides an opportunity to strengthen the capability of educational organisations, schools, teachers and support staff to build on existing good practice and respond to students effectively.