

## LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF THE NORTHERN TERRITORY

### WRITTEN QUESTION

#### Primary School Teachers

#### Mr Mills to Minister for Education and Training

1. What primary schools have used part of their staffing allocation to employ specialist teachers (for example physical education teachers or librarians); and of these schools, what is the teacher/student ratio.
  2. What was the budget allocation for each primary school for relief teacher wages in 2007; and when was this allocation paid.
  3. Are there any primary schools that are still awaiting their relief teacher wages allocation for 2006.
  4. What primary schools in greater Darwin, Palmerston and rural areas have less teachers than in 2007.
  5. For each primary school that has less teachers as advised in question 4, what are the enrolment figures respectively for each of these schools for 2007 and the current enrolment for 2008.
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#### ANSWER:

1. Schools are provided with staff in accordance with the Staff Allocation Model. Schools have the discretion within this allocation to allocate staff to specialist areas according to the school's needs. Attachment A has been compiled from an email survey of the relevant schools and provides details of the specialist teachers employed by primary schools in greater Darwin, Palmerston and rural area. The attachment also identifies whether the position has been established from the core teacher or non-contact time allocations under the Staff Allocation Model.

All primary schools are staffed at the ratio of 1 teacher to 22 students.

2. Attachment B provides the relief teacher 2007 budget allocation for each primary school with the date that payment was processed by the Department of Corporate and Information Services, now known as the Department of Business and Employment.
3. All the 2006 relief teacher funding allocations via the Devolution grants were paid to schools within the 2006 calendar year.

Up to 30 June 2007 and subject to budget capacity and approval, schools could apply for reimbursement where relief teacher expenditure exceeded the

allocation provided in Devolution grants. Relief teacher reimbursement claims for 2006 calendar year needed to be submitted by 31 March 2007. Reviews of the claims identified that a large number of schools had submitted claims which did not include all the 2006 relief teacher funding allocations when calculating the over-expenditure amount. These claims were reduced accordingly. Reimbursement of relief teacher over-expenditure for 2006 and for the period ended April 2007 was made in June 2007.

It was subsequently identified that 2006 reimbursement claims for four schools were omitted or incorrectly adjusted during processing. All of these claims have since been paid.

4. There are 29 primary schools in the greater Darwin, Palmerston and rural areas. Of these 29 schools, 27 experienced a reduction in student numbers in 2008 from 2007. This primarily arose from the implementation of middle years in 2008 which resulted in all primary schools within greater Darwin, Palmerston and rural areas losing their year 7 cohort. A reduction in student numbers has a direct effect on the number of staff allocated to a school.

Attachment C provides comparative information for Semester 2, 2007 and Semester 1, 2008 on enrolment data, Calculated Core Teacher numbers and adjusted enrolment numbers used to calculate staffing levels.

5. Attachment C refers.