

24 October 2025

The Chair  
Legislation Scrutiny Committee  
Northern Territory Legislative Assembly  
GPO Box 3721  
DARWIN NT 0801

**Submission by the Association of Independent Schools of the Northern Territory (AISNT) – Serial 41 Teacher Registration (Northern Territory) Legislation Amendment Bill 2025**

**Submitted by Cheryl Salter, Executive Director, Association of Independent Schools of the Northern Territory (AISNT)**

**INTRODUCTION**

The Association of Independent Schools of the Northern Territory (AISNT) welcomes the opportunity to contribute to the Legislative Assembly's inquiry into the Teacher Registration (Northern Territory) Legislation Amendment Bill 2025 (Serial 4). We support the Bill's intent to strengthen child safety, improve national consistency, and reduce administrative burden across the teacher registration system. However, we raise significant concerns regarding the governance structure of the regulatory authority and the independence of the Teacher Registration Board (TRB).

**CONCERN: INDEPENDENCE AND SCOPE OF THE REGULATORY AUTHORITY**

Clause 4 of the Bill defines the regulatory authority as the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of the Department of Education and Training. Clause 6 further clarifies that the Director of the TRB is a public sector employee within the Agency and subject to performance management by the CEO. While the Director is accountable to the Board for statutory functions, this dual reporting line creates ambiguity and potential conflict, particularly when regulatory decisions involve departmental employees or intersect with broader departmental interests.

This structure does not sufficiently separate the regulation of teachers from the operations of the Department. It risks compromising the transparency and impartiality of the TRB, especially in relation to Non-Government Schools.

We acknowledge that the broader consultation process is currently underway to review education regulation in the Northern Territory. This review is examining the governance and operations of the Northern Territory Teacher Registration Board (NTTRB), the Northern Territory Board of Studies (NTBOS), and Office of the Registrar of Non-Government Schools. AISNT supports this process and believes it presents a critical opportunity to establish a unified, independent, statutory regulatory model, similar to the NSW Education Standards Authority, that oversees teacher

registration, curriculum standards, school registration and compliance across both Government and Non-Government Schools Sectors.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

To address these concerns and strengthen the integrity of the education regulatory framework in the Northern Territory, AISNT makes the following recommendations:

### **Recommendation 1:**

Establish the Teacher Registration Board (TRB) as an independent statutory authority, structurally and operationally distinct from the Department of education and Training. This would ensure that the Board can exercise its regulatory functions free from departmental influence and with equal accountability to all sectors, Government and Non-Government alike.

### **Recommendation 2:**

Clarify the Director's reporting and accountability arrangements to ensure impartiality between the Board's statutory functions and departmental employment management. The Director should be appointed by, and accountable to, the Minister for Education, with employment conditions that reflect the independence of the role and safeguard against conflict of interests.

### **Recommendation 3:**

Support the development of a single, independent, statutory, education authority, similar to NESAs, that consolidates the functions of the TRB, NTBOS and the Office of the Registrar of Non-Government Schools. This body should operate at arm's length from the Department of Education and be empowered to oversee teacher registration, curriculum standards, school registration, and regulatory compliance across all sectors.

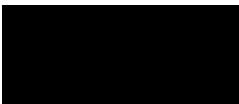
## **CONCLUSION**

The Teacher Registration (Northern Territory) Legislation Amendment Bill 2025 presents a timely opportunity to modernise and strengthen teacher regulation in the NT. However, without structural independence and clear governance boundaries, the reforms risk being undermined by perceived or actual conflicts of interest.

AISNT urges the Committee to consider amendments that establish a truly independent regulatory authority and reinforce the impartiality of the TRB's leadership. We also encourage alignment with the outcomes of the current education regulation review, which offers a pathway to a more transparent, consistent, and sector-wide governance model.

Thank you for considering this submission.

Yours sincerely,



**Cheryl Salter**

Executive Director

Association of Independent Schools Northern Territory (AISNT)