

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF THE NORTHERN TERRITORY

WRITTEN QUESTION

Mr Guyula to the Minister for Education:

Retaining and encouraging Homeland Schools

1. In past times there have been up to 90 active Homeland schools in the Territory. Now there are only 32. What is the current policy for retaining and encouraging homeland schools? What is the pathway for opening Homeland schools?

The Northern Territory Government recognises the importance of providing educational services to homelands and enabling opportunities for successful learning for remote students.

The Department of Education prioritises local decision making in an effort to ensure that education is delivered in a contextually appropriate way.

Many remote communities in the Northern Territory are provided with education through Hub schools. Hub school principals actively listen to and work with their local community, with a view to providing appropriate learning sites and opportunities including Homelands Learning Centres.

The decision to activate or deactivate a Homelands Learning Centre currently rests with the relevant Hub school principal in the community. Their decision is based on a number of resourcing and logistical considerations, including patterns of mobility of homeland residents, staffing numbers and availability, the condition of facilities and infrastructure, and seasonal accessibility.

The Department has completed a review of education provision in homelands. The Homelands review considers the implications of the school resourcing model on the funding for Homeland Learning Centres. The Department review is also working to improve education service provision in Homeland Learning Centres. All aspects of the current delivery model of Homeland Learning Centres are being reviewed including professional development, support of Aboriginal staff, resourcing, and barriers to engagement of students. The recommendations of the review are under consideration by the Department and will form a submission to Government in the first half of 2021.