LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF THE NORTHERN TERRITORY

No. 284

WRITTEN QUESTION

J Davis to the Minister for Education and Training, Hon Jo-Anne Hersey MLA:

Education Funding Agreements

1. **Other than material already published, what outcomes has the Department committed to achieving under the Better and Fairer Schools Agreement by 2029?**

   a. **What are the current baseline figures?**

   b. **What improvement is expected in literacy, numeracy, attendance and Year 12 attainment?**

   c. **How is progress being measured?**

   All Northern Territory (NT) commitments, baseline figures and targets under the Better and Fairer Schools Agreement are published in the NT Bilateral Agreement. The Bilateral Agreement and Heads of Agreement are published on the NT Department of Education and Training website https://education.nt.gov.au/statistics-research-and-strategies/bfsa.

   The National Report on Schooling in Australia, published by the Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority (ACARA) on behalf of Australian education minister's reports on nationally agreed key performance measures for schooling.

   Further information is published in the Department of Education and Training Budget Paper No. 3 (https://budget.nt.gov.au/papers) and Annual Report including for enrolment and attendance, NT Certificate of Education and Training (NTCET) completions and National Assessment Program — Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN).

2. **Has the Commonwealth raised concerns about the Territory's performance against any targets or reform commitments?**

   a. **Has the Territory sought any exemptions, extensions or variations to its reporting obligations?**

The NT has not sought any exemptions, extensions or variations to its reporting obligations. As committed in the NT Bilateral Agreement, the NT's first Annual Implementation Report is due to the Australian Government by 30 November 2026 and will cover the 2025 calendar year.

3. **Has the gap in educational outcomes between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal students narrowed, widened or remained unchanged over the five years to 2025–26?**

   a. **What is the Government's target for closing that gap, and when does it expect the gap to be closed?**

   b. **Please provide the measured gap for each of literacy, numeracy, attendance and Year 12 attainment in each of the five years, and state in which dataset those figures are held.**

The NT Government remains committed to improving educational outcomes for all students.

The NT Bilateral Agreement to the Better and Fairer Schools Agreement (the Territory's primary education funding agreement) identifies targets for students including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students, for Year 12 attainment, NAPLAN and attendance https://education.nt.gov.au/statistics-research-and-strategies/bfsa.

The NT remains committed to reporting progress against targets and national Improvement Measures with the NT's first Annual Implementation Report due to the Australian Government by 30 November 2026 (for the 2025 calendar year).

Targets and national Improvement Measures align to national targets committed under the National Agreement on Closing the Gap. Information relating to targets, timeframes and overall performance are publicly available through the productivity commission https://www.pc.gov.au/closing-the-gap-data/dashboard/

Additional information and data relating to educational outcomes, including whether gaps have narrowed, widened or remain unchanged for Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal students is publicly available through:

- the National Report on Schooling in Australia, published by the Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority (ACARA) on behalf of Australian education minister's (https://www.acara.edu.au/reporting/national-report-on-schooling-in-australia).
- Department of Education and Training Budget Paper No. 3 (https://budget.nt.gov.au/papers).

- Department of Education and Training Annual Reports https://education.nt.gov.au/publications/annual-reports.

4. **Given education is a key social determinant of health, does the Department model the downstream effects of education underfunding on the health and wellbeing of Territorians five, ten or more years into the future?**

   The Better and Fairer Schools Agreement underpins the Australian and NT Governments' school funding commitments, which will see the NT Government school system funded at 100 percent of the Schooling Resource Standard from 2029.

   The department does not undertake modelling on the health and wellbeing of NT students post schooling.

5. **What is the total funding for school operations across the Territory public school system, and across how many schools is it spread?**

   As at 14 August 2026 there are 150 NT government schools.

   Over $1 billion is invested into government school education in 2026-27, as outlined in Budget Paper No. 3. A further breakdown is as follows:

Output	**$ 000**
Preschool Education	$ 52 147
Primary Education	$ 566 018
Secondary Education	$ 414 705
Total for the 2026-27 year	$1 032 870

   Further, NT government school funding rates are published by school on the department's website and include the annual resourcing allocation and the Student Needs-Based Funding Formula (SNBFF) per student rate (https://education.nt.gov.au/statistics-research-and-strategies/increasing-school-autonomy/school-funding).