

Chair, before we begin I would like to introduce officials from the Department of Education who are with me here today:

- Chief Executive — Vicki Baylis
  - Deputy Chief Executive, School Education — Marion Guppy
  - Executive Director, Corporate Services — Jasmin Aldenhoven
  - Chief Financial Officer — Brett Roach
  - Acting Executive Director, School Support Services — Maree Garrigan
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- Acting Executive Director, Education Partnerships — Debra Liddiard
  - Acting Senior Director, Planning and Infrastructure — Adam Walding
  - General Manager, Strategic Services — Anna King
  - General Manager, Indigenous Education Review Implementation — Tony Considine
  - General Manager, Human Resources — Leanne Cull
  - Acting General Manager, Early Childhood Education and Care — Tricia Wake
  - Chief Information Officer - Elise Vervetjes.

This government has been placing children at the heart of our decisions and working hard to ensure every child in the Northern Territory has the best start in life and, through early learning and school education, gains a bright future.

For the coming financial year, the total investment in education will be a record \$1.144 billion, including \$135.8 million for improving infrastructure across government and non-government schools.

This investment supports 152 government schools, including 45 homeland learning centres, and 37 non-government schools to provide education services for over 45 000 students across the Territory.

Our school students are supported by a workforce of over 4200 full-time equivalent staff. Government school-based employees make up 87 per cent of the workforce and include over 2500 teaching staff.

In 2018, \$506 million is allocated to meet the direct costs of operating Northern Territory Government schools.

The Northern Territory Budget for non-government schools in 2018-19 provides a total investment of \$244.5 million, which includes \$185.7 million of Commonwealth Government Quality Schools funding.

As minister for all schools in the Territory, I remain committed to having government schools that set a high standard and supporting the non-government schooling sector to ensure parents have choice in accessing education.

We are enhancing the way we resource government schools, providing fairer and more transparent funding. We completed an independent review of school resourcing and we are implementing the recommendations through our action plan.

Our action plan is focused on building a new school resourcing model that will enable government schools to tailor their resources to better meet student need, have budget certainty, flexibility and improved support through targeted investment.

As part of the introduction of the new model, a one off injection of \$4 million was added to school budgets in 2018 to recognise legacy issues from 2015 and 2016.



To increase transparency and build awareness of how schools are funded, final budgets of every school were published on the department's public website for the first time in early May 2018.

Improving educational outcomes for Aboriginal students continues to be a significant priority. We have allocated \$48.4 million to the Indigenous Education Strategy. The Community-led schools initiative will be a critical part of the next stage of the Strategy from 2018-2020, and I am pleased that this initiative will support our government's broader local-decision making agenda.

The government's 10-year Early Childhood Development Plan aims to strengthen families, build vibrant resilient communities and improve the health, wellbeing and educational outcomes of children and young people. I am proud of the strong contribution that the Department of Education will play in supporting this whole-of-government commitment.

In 2017, the Families as First Teachers program was expanded to 11 new sites to make a total of 38 sites with over 1900 children participating in this evidence-based, quality early learning and family support program.



In 2018-19, we are investing \$11.2 million as part of the Early Childhood Development Plan to deliver the Families as First Teachers program and expand the program to an additional 7 new sites. This investment will continue to grow in 2019-20 with a further 7 more sites, bringing the total to 52 sites across the Territory.

\$2.2 million is also budgeted to continue to engage children and their families in quality integrated early years programs and services through child and family centres with plans to expand these centres over the next five years.

We are also allocating \$6 million to continue to provide the early childhood services subsidy for long day care, three-year old kindergarten and family day care services to assist families with child care costs. Improving the quality of early childhood education and care services across the Territory remains a priority for the department with 62 per cent of all education and care services rated as meeting or exceeding the National Quality Standard at the end of March 2018.

There are promising signs for our schools too in the latest NAPLAN results.

Four-year cohort gains for the NT have been strong with Year 7 and 9 student cohorts achieving stronger gains than nationally.

There were also significant achievement increases in the 2017 NAPLAN results compared to the previous year for Year 5 Aboriginal students in reading and spelling and Year 9 Aboriginal students for numeracy.

We are continuing to invest in quality programs and initiatives that we know are making a positive difference, including targeted professional learning and a focus on improved teaching and learning strategies based on effective data analysis.

To provide students with the skills and knowledge to prosper in the future, \$300,000 is being provided to expand enterprise education and innovation programs within schools and \$100,000 to engage students in coding and digital technologies, with 98 school teams across the Territory competing in the 2017 Robo Cup competition. A further \$400,000 is allocated to upskill teachers in digital literacy and introduce computer coding training into primary and secondary schools.

We are also investing \$4 million to upgrade local area network cabling in schools across the Territory to improve digital capability; and \$2.3 million to develop interactive data and analytics dashboards for schools to support data informed decision making to improve student outcomes.

To assist schools to build safe and supportive environments that support student learning and wellbeing, NT schools have been trialing the NT Social and Emotional Learning curriculum with the program planned to be fully implemented in government schools by the end of this year.

To support students to be successful in their education journey, we are continuing to invest an additional \$10 million to better support and educate children and young people with challenging behaviours and additional needs.

This funding has also extended the flexible learning pathways for secondary-aged students through the expansion of the Malak Re-engagement Centre to Palmerston last year and the establishment of alternative education programs for disengaged youth in the Barkly and Katherine regions through the Healthy Life, Creative Life commitment.



We continued to provide secondary options in 2017, with 949 students from government schools completing the Northern Territory Certificate of Education and Training, representing the largest cohort to date, and 675 students completed a VET qualification.

The Government's Economic Development Framework focuses on improving economic opportunities for all Territorians. I am pleased that we are investing \$6.5 million in vocational education and training in schools and \$4.2 million to enable students to complete the NTCET to provide skills and knowledge for future career paths.

We are also extending secondary education options in remote communities through the Indigenous Education Strategy's Transition Support Unit, post-primary and Employment Pathways programs with an estimated \$5.3 million allocated.

We continued to enhance learning environments for students through a \$153.3 million program of new and improved school infrastructure and supported the economic growth of the NT by providing local jobs through a continuous stream of projects.

For example I recently opened the \$2.5 million new preschool at **Alpurulam School** and late last year I opened the \$2.5 million new preschool at **Amplatwatja**.

Last year also saw the commencement of our Building Better Schools program which is providing \$300 000 for every NT school over a four-year period for refurbishments and upgrades to school facilities. This is a great opportunity for schools to be able to address infrastructure needs, right across the Territory.

Through the 2017-18 Minor New Works Program we have seen:

- Repairs or replacements to air conditioning, chillers or other cooling infrastructure at Maningrida School, Waruwi School, Casuarina Street Primary, Katherine High School, Girraween Primary School, Mamaruni School, Alawa Primary, Nganmarriyanga School, Larrakeyah Primary, Taminmin College and Woolianna School.
- New or upgraded outdoor spaces or classroom learning areas at Sadadeen Primary School, Larrakeyah Primary, Moulden Primary, Gray Primary, Durack Primary (Aqua Culture shed), Clyde Fenton Primary, Ngukurr Child and

Family Centre, Nightcliff Primary, Leanyer Primary, Jingili Primary, Dripstone Middle School, Alawa Primary, Yuendumu School, Gan Gan Homeland Learning Centre and basketball courts and bubblers at Shepherdson College.

- Upgraded toilet facilities at Gillen Primary School, Nyirripi School, Alawa Primary, Millner Primary, Wagaman Primary School, Gray Primary, Katherine South Primary, Nganmarriyanga School and Taminmin College.

And these are just some of the many projects that have been delivering improved learning environments for students across the Territory.

Since becoming Education Minister I have visited around 127 schools across government and non-government sectors (there are around 62 I haven't gotten to yet) and I can tell you **infrastructure investment is very much appreciated** – there are always enhancements schools would like to make.



That's why, looking ahead the 2018-19 budget also provides substantial investment in education infrastructure totaling \$135.8 million which includes:

- \$103 million for capital and minor new works for government schools, which includes Round 2 of Building Better Schools projects and \$1.5 million for the roof top solar in schools program;
- \$30.1 million for repairs and maintenance, including \$1 million for repairs to homeland learning centres; and
- \$2.7 million in capital grants to non-government schools for Building Better Schools projects.

New infrastructure projects include:

- \$15.9 million for the Darwin Middle School multipurpose hall as part of stage two of the Bullocky Point Education Precinct projects; and
- An additional \$6 million for stage two of the new Zuccoli government primary school, which builds on the \$9 million announced in last years budget.

Projects in progress that will be completed over the next 12-months include:

- \$6.3 million for upgrades, including new classrooms at Acacia Hill School
- \$6 million for a new integrated child and family center at Tennant Creek
- completion of the multi-purpose hall at Ramingining School and the new preschool at Angurugu School; and
- a \$1.1 million project to invest in infrastructure to support the teaching and learning of eye health and prevention of trachoma in primary school children in remote schools.

These investments will not only lead to improved educational facilities for students, but also provide more local jobs across the Northern Territory.

The Government's response to the findings and recommendations of the Royal Commission into the Protection and Detention of Children in the Territory supports a coordinated effort to make effective, meaningful and generational change to our youth justice and child protection systems.

This includes our investment of \$2.1 million to improve educational services to young people in detention to enhance their engagement.

We are continuing to deliver an education system that is fair and equitable for all students by resourcing schools based on the needs of students.

We are creating safe, positive and inclusive school environments and ensuring that every classroom has a quality teacher and every school has exceptional leaders.

We respect and value the role of families and communities in their children's education.

We are investing in areas that we know will make the most difference to the quality of education, to ultimately deliver better outcomes for all Northern Territory students.