

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF THE NORTHERN TERRITORY

WRITTEN QUESTION

Mrs Hersey to the Minister for Education:

ICAC Investigation into Milingimbi School

1. What was the result of the investigation undertaken following the complaint lodged by the NT branch of the Australian Education Union (AEU NT) to the Department of Education in mid-2017?

An independent consultant investigated the matter and the department took appropriate action based on the evidence provided at that time.

2. What actions were taken following the results of the 2017 investigation, including any actions taken against the former principal of Milingimbi School, Ms Jennifer Sherrington?

The department ensured that the school:

- Reviewed the school's excursion policy with a focus on risk assessment and permissions, including the local area excursion zones.
- Reviewed and established policies and guidelines around the use of the school boats.
- Ensured that the cleaning of toilet facilities was carried out regularly.
- Reviewed the school induction program to ensure that all new staff were made aware of Milingimbi School's specific operational procedures and policies.
- Ensured that Milingimbi School induction included four wheel drive training for staff using school vehicles.
- Ensured that staff were reminded of expected behaviour and obligations under the Code of Conduct during induction, including:
 - Acceptable use of social media; and
 - Physical contact with other members of staff.

3. What duties has Ms Sherrington been undertaking since this matter was reported to ICAC in September 2019? Did Ms Sherrington remain Principal of Milingimbi School throughout the investigation?

Ms Sherrington has not been in the principal position since early 2020. She has been on leave for the majority of the time since, with a short period where she worked in the corporate sector of the department.

- 4. It has been reported that Ms Sherrington has been on leave since mid-2020. What date did Ms Sherrington commence leave from the Department of Education and was she paid during the period of leave?**

All leave was within Ms Sherrington's accrued entitlements. Detailed information on individual employee leave will not be provided.

- 5. Ms Sherrington's executive contract reportedly expires on 24 July 2021. Will the Department take any action against Ms Sherrington prior to the expiration of her contract or will the Department of Education simply not renew her contract?**

Ms Sherrington had previously been notified that her contract as Principal Milingimbi School would end on 24 July 2021 and would not be renewed.

- 6. Will the Department be taking any action against Ms Sherrington to recover Department of Education and Milingimbi school council funds which the report found she used for her own personal benefit?**

The department is currently seeking advice in relation to the ICAC public statement.

- 7. Has the Department of Education accepted all 16 recommendations contained in the Investigation Report into Milingimbi School?**

The department supports in principle all recommendations made in the report.

- 8. Given the ICAC conducted a joint investigation with Department of Education, what steps has the Department taken so far to address the issues identified during the investigation?**

The department has accepted in principle the recommendations outlined in the ICAC Public Statement and has commenced responding to the recommendations.

- 9. What steps will now be taken to implement the recommendations?**

The department has established a governing program board to monitor the work already underway and to ensure the report's recommendations are successfully addressed.

- 10. Will an audit be undertaken at all schools operating under the same governance model as Milingimbi School?**

All School Representative bodies (under the same governance model as Milingimbi school) are audited annually.