

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF THE NORTHERN TERRITORY

WRITTEN QUESTION

Mr Mills

to Minister for Employment, Education and Training

100 extra teachers

In relation to the government's promise to provide 100 extra teachers:

1. What process was used to determine the need for 100 extra teachers.
2. Staffing in the areas of special education and Indigenous students were identified by Labor as being inadequately staffed. Of the 100 extra teachers, how many will be directed to these areas.
3. What provision is there in the costings contained in the Mini Budget for an automatic indexed annual pay rise for teachers as announced by Labor during the election campaign.
4. What student to teacher ratio does a Labor Government expect once the 100 extra teachers have been recruited.
5. Will any student to teacher ratio calculations be limited to the actual number of teachers in classrooms.

ANSWER

1. The Government, while in opposition, formed the view there were shortages in specialist areas across our education system; and particularly in the areas of special education and Indigenous education.
2. Current and future allocations of the 100 extra teachers are considered on the basis of emerging specialist shortages and identified needs. The following is a breakdown of the allocations made of 40 teachers over the period 2001-2002:

24 have been special education teachers. Of these 15 have been placed in remote schools, 6 in rural schools and 3 in urban schools.

16 have been used to support programs to improve the quality of remote education, including 6 teachers for alternative provision.

For the current year, 10 teachers have been identified to extend the ESL general support program outside of the urban context. Under consideration is the use of additional teachers to target behaviour management, literacy and to subsidise relief teacher pools servicing regional and remote schools.

3. There was no promise made for an automatic indexed annual pay rise for teachers. The Government remains committed to the enterprise bargaining process.
4. This is not an initiative aimed at changing the pupil/teacher ratios. The 100 additional teachers will be in addition to the school staffing formula.
5. The pupil/teacher ratios, when applied to the school staffing allocation tables, determine all staff allocations to schools. Office-based educators are not included in these calculations.