

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF THE NORTHERN TERRITORY

WRITTEN QUESTION

Mr Guyula to the Minister for Education:

Procurement Policy for Local Elders in Schools

Schools in Aboriginal communities must employ local Elders in leadership positions and curriculum development positions if they want to see an increase in school attendance.

1. How does the Education Department encourage or set a procurement policy of local employment of Elders that ensures that schools are properly engaging with their local communities?

The Department of Education strongly supports the Northern Territory (NT) Government's whole-of-government local decision making policy. The department has established 30 Local Engagement and Decision Making (LEaD) committees which provide input and advice into school decision making in remote and regional schools. Ten schools are also on a pathway to being community-led school which places local decision making at the forefront of the schools operations. These include three Groote Eylandt Archipelago schools, Gunbalanya School, Yirrkala School and Lanhupuy Homelands schools, Lajamanu school, Willowra school, Yuendumu school and Nyirripi school.

The department employs a team of eight community engagement and local decision making staff to assist communities to undertake the local decision making journey.

Each school council has the autonomy to recruit, employ or consult with Elders using their school-held funds.

The department's new Remote Aboriginal Teacher Education (RATE) program (starting in 2021) will enable aspiring teachers in Northern Territory communities to further their school leadership capabilities by studying teaching while living and working on Country.

The 2021 RATE pilot will be tailored to meet site specific needs, by:

- listening and responding to community representative groups
- supporting aspiring teachers to engage in study pathways that are based on their career aspirations and preferred ways of learning
- negotiating agreements with education settings to meet community and aspiring teacher needs
- linking teacher education study with local education priorities.