

# **Non-Government Reform Support Strategic Plan**

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**2019-2022**

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**The Association of Independent Schools of the Northern  
Territory**

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## **Non – Government Reform Support Fund**

### **The Association of Independent Schools of the Northern Territory – Strategic Plan**

#### **Executive Summary**

The Association of Independent Schools of the NT's vision for the Non-Government Reform Support Fund is to be the leading body working with Northern Territory Independent Schools in the provision of quality education for the young citizens of the Northern Territory in a changing world.

AISNT's vision includes the provision of meaningful education for students in Northern Territory Independent Schools in the context of this rapidly changing world. The following are key considerations which AISNT reflect upon when developing the directions and work to achieve quality, meaningful education for the schools and the young people in their care. i.e. How does our planning contribute to the development of:

- Global citizens
- School community well-being
- Meaningful, effective education which is holistic in nature
- Strong school organisational capacity
- Responsiveness to changing priorities based on quality evidence

These are all based on the premise of choice and equity.

All Independent Schools in the Northern Territory are full members of the Association of Independent Schools NT.

AISNT intends to continue and expand upon the work that has been undertaken under the NGRSF to date. This work aligns with the directions identified in the AISNT Strategic Plan.

The NGRSF goes towards enabling AISNT to work closely with the member schools and other sectors of education in the NT to continue the work of improving education in Australia based on National and State based reforms.

## Current context

The Association of Independent Schools of the NT was formed in 1989 to represent and promote Independent Schools in the Northern Territory.

The independent Sector is the second largest and fastest growing sector in the NT.

The Association of Independent Schools of the Northern Territory has 21 member schools. Twenty of the member schools are located within the Northern Territory and we have one special membership school based in Dili in Timor Leste.

The characteristics for the schools in the Northern Territory are as follows:

- Provincial/Regional 8
- Remote 7
- Very Remote 5
- Multi Campus 3
- Single Campus 17
- Majority Indigenous 8 (these 8 schools have total Indigenous enrolment)
- Comprehensive 16
- Primary Only 1
- Secondary Only 3
- Boarding 5 (4 of the 5 boarding schools have total Indigenous boarders and one has Indigenous and non-Indigenous boarders)

Approximately 40% of students in NT Independent Schools are Indigenous with approximately 30% being remote and very remote students and the other 10% being from the major centres of Darwin, Alice Springs and Nhulunbuy.

The Northern Territory Independent Schools cater for students from across the spectrum of all levels of achievement and advantage. A high number of the NT's highest achieving students are found within the NT Independent Sector. The sector also caters for a high proportion of disadvantaged students with very poor achievement levels due to their circumstances. These students' rate among the highest levels of disadvantage from the most remote areas of Australia.

AISNT is committed to providing services and support to all of the schools in our sector. The high cost of delivery, particularly for the remote and very remote schools as well as the level of disadvantage, has a major impact on the services and support that we can offer these schools in terms of the reform priorities. This is an ongoing issue. The distribution of funds between the States and Territories, of the funds from the NGRSF, does not take into account the high level of the cost of delivery, level of remoteness or level of disadvantage that we face in the NT. An example of the costs is related to travel to the 5 very remote schools. All but one of these very remote locations are only accessible by charter flights which range in cost from \$3,500 to \$5,000 per flight.

The major area of reform that we have identified as a need for our Indigenous and Community based schools is in governance and financial management capabilities. Strengthening capabilities in this area of reform is a prerequisite for working in the other areas of reform that have been identified. The difficulties of improving capabilities for the other identified reform areas listed below are many and

complex for our remote and very remote schools. These other areas of reform that we have identified are:

- Quality Assurance and Support for NCCD
- Implementation and Delivery of NAPLAN Online
- Enhancing the National Evidence Base
- Schools' Quality Improvement

The level of capability for the schools located in the Provincial/Regional areas is higher than that found in the remote/very remote areas but still require on-going support and development. AISNT works closely with the member schools to identify and support the ongoing improvement agenda in relation to the identified areas of reform.

The needs of the schools in addressing each of the areas of reform were and will continue to be the major driver of the projects that are proposed. The level of funding will have a significant impact on the types and number of projects that we can offer. The main types of projects we will offer will be workshops tailored to addressing the identified needs of the schools and individual school assistance where possible with limitations.

AISNT is working with its member schools in all areas of the reform priorities listed in this document.

## **National Policy Initiatives**

1. Supporting students, student learning and student achievement
  - i. Assisting teachers monitor individual student progress and identify student learning needs through opt-in online and on demand student learning assessment tools with links to student learning resources, prioritising early years foundation skills
2. Supporting teaching, school leadership and school improvement
  - i. Reviewing teacher workforce needs of the future to attract and retain the best and brightest to the teaching profession and attract teachers to areas of need
3. Enhancing the national evidence base
  - i. Implementing a national unique student identifier (USI) that meets national privacy requirements in order to support better understanding of student progression and improve the national evidence base
  - ii. Improving national data quality, consistency and collection to improve the national evidence base and inform policy development.

## **State-based Reforms**

Reform Area 1: Quality Assurance and Support for NCCD

Reform Area 2: Implementation and Delivery of NAPLAN Online

Reform Area 3: Improving Governance and Financial Management Practices in the NT Non-Government Sector

Reform Area 4. Enhancing the National Evidence Base

Reform Area 5: Schools' Quality Improvement

These areas of reform have been identified through collaboration with the NT Department of Education based on the needs identified by schools in the NT Independent Sector.

Work will continue with the NT Department of Education and the NT Government through the Non-Government Ministerial Advisory Committee.

## **Objectives**

AISNT's objectives are:

- To provide advocacy and support to our member schools to provide the highest possible outcomes for their students.
- To ensure that NT Independent Schools are recognised as valued contributors to education in the Northern Territory.
- To work closely with the Catholic and Government Education sectors to ensure equity in opportunities and choice in education.

AISNT commits to the continued provision of professional learning opportunities informed by the National Reform Agenda. We provide timely and ongoing support and advice to schools through a range of modalities including face to face specialist support, phone and email, regular communiques, workshops and forums to name a few.

### **Measurement and Evaluation**

AISNT will use a range of methods to measure and evaluate the NGRSF outcomes.

We will use:

- Attendance and feedback from workshops and forums
- Feedback from schools on responses to enquiries for information and support.
- Information gathered on school visits.

AISNT also uses an annual survey to track the work we do under relevant programs and projects. We will dedicate a section of the school survey to gather information to measure and evaluate the NGRSF