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## **Non-Government Reform Support Annual Report**

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**2019**

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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 NT – Annual Report 2019

#### Executive Summary

The Association of Independent Schools of the Northern Territory is committed to the National Reform agenda and works closely with all Independent Schools in the Northern Territory on the improvement of School and student outcomes. Effort has been placed on the identification of students' needs and schools' needs to assist in the process of improving outcomes. This work extends and enhances the work that we have been undertaking with the schools over past years.

The Non-Government Reform Support Funds have been used to enable our work with our member schools on their continuous improvement journeys that are identified in the National Plan for Schooling and the Northern Territory Bilateral Agreement.

The plans that were developed were done so in close collaboration with the schools. We held full day sessions, one in Darwin and one in Alice Springs, to which all schools are invited. All schools were represented by either, or all three, by their Principals, School leaders and Business Managers, either at one or both of these workshops. This process along with individual school visits identifies the areas of priorities for the schools and informs our annual and Strategic Planning. We have managed the majority of our identified programs centrally, but the main work is carried out with the individual schools or small groups of schools.

As AISNT has very limited resources, the fact that the majority of our schools do have high levels of disadvantage and the high cost of education delivery in the NT, we identify the NGRSF funding as being invaluable in allowing us the level of interaction we have with our schools and the assistance and support that we can offer. Assisting schools with high levels of disadvantage to improve identification for students and then working with the school to develop and introduce strategies to lessen or overcome the disadvantage has been a large part of the work we undertook during 2019.

This work was undertaken under the banner of the NGRSF Program and included work in the following National Priorities and the NT Bilateral Agreement as identified in the AISNT 2019 Work Plan:

- The quality assurance, moderation and support for the continued improvement of the Nationally Consistent Collection of Data on School Students with Disability. Included in the NT Bilateral Agreement.
- The implementation of online delivery of the National Assessment program. Included in the NT Bilateral Agreement.
- The improvement of governance and financial management practices in non-government schools.
- Enhancing the national evidence base through working towards the implementation of a national unique student identifier. Included in the NT Bilateral Agreement. Please note that AISNT intended to work with the NT Education Department on this activity, however this opportunity was not available due to other priorities being addressed by the Department.
- Schools' Quality Improvement which is a continuation of an existing program.

NB As AISNT is not a system, we offer support to our member schools and they choose the levels and type of support that suit their needs.

## **Progress against your strategic plan**

The AISNT's objectives in our Strategic Plan 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.

During 2019 AISNT has continued the provision of professional learning opportunities informed by the National Reform Agenda. We have provided 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 as well as ZOOM and teleconferencing.

Specific progress against the strategic plan is described under the reports on the individual projects.

Please see the following from the 2019 work plan which we have included for context with the information provided in the tabular report below.

### **Quality assurance, Moderation and Support for Nationally Consistent Collection of Data on School Students with Disability**

AISNT will continue the work that has been undertaken previously with the 21 schools having the opportunity to be involved in the moderation and quality assurance sessions offered. We will also work closely with the other sectors in our jurisdiction providing the best available opportunities for our schools to be involved in quality professional development to inform their work in the NCCD space. AISNT will also provide on the spot advice and information for schools across the range of modalities available to us including phone, email, website, communiques, face to face discussions, workshops and through AISNT meetings.

We also plan to ensure our remote Aboriginal schools and those catering for remote Aboriginal students have access to tools to assist them in evaluating their students within the context of all Australian students.

### **Assisting in the implementation and delivery of NAPLAN online**

AISNT will provide schools with timely, relevant information on NAPLAN Online as and when it becomes available via our communications channels.

We will also provide schools/systems with support, assistance and advice on the implementation and delivery of NAPLAN Online on request.

AISNT will also provide on the spot advice and information for schools across the range of modalities available to us including phone, email, website, communiques, face to face discussions, workshops and through AISNT meetings.

### **Improving Governance and Financial Management Practices in the Non-Government School Sector**

AISNT will provide individual schools/systems and their boards with support, assistance and advice in regards to improving governance and financial management. This work will include the provision of

workshops and forum opportunities for schools and school boards with a view to providing quality solutions in this area.

AISNT will continue to work closely with the relevant Government agencies to improve legislation and regulations that will support better governance and financial practices in schools.

AISNT will also provide on the spot advice and information for schools across the range of modalities available to us including phone, email, website, communiques, face to face discussions, workshops and through AISNT meetings.

#### Schools' Quality Improvement

AISNT will continue and enhance our Professional Learning program which is aligned with national strategic priorities, with an emphasis on supporting quality leadership and teaching, wellbeing, improving educational outcomes for Indigenous youth and disadvantaged young Australians, promoting world class curriculum and assessment, sustainability, global perspectives and relationship-based education. This work will be implemented over the life of this program.

AISNT will also provide on the spot advice and information for schools across the range of modalities available to us including phone, email, website, communiques, face to face discussions, workshops and through AISNT meetings.

#### **Relationship with your state and territory government**

AISNT works closely with the NT Government and the Department of Education.

AISNT attends the Non-Government Schools Council Meetings and Board of Studies Meetings which both have high relevance to the reform priorities. We are provided with information at these meetings and also contribute through reports and discussions on our activities and progress.

We have also been involved in specific meetings held in relation to specific reforms. These include meetings held on Enhancing the National Evidence Base; Quality Assurance, Moderation and Support for Nationally Consistent Collection of Data on School Students with Disability and Assisting in the implementation and delivery of NAPLAN online.

There is significant collaboration between the three sectors in our jurisdiction through formal and informal processes.

## **Project Report**

### **PROJECT TITLE: Quality assurance and support for Nationally Consistent Collection of Data on School Students with Disability**

#### **Project description:**

- Provide two face-to-face workshops for school staff. This will include the following;
  - i) understanding NCCD,
  - ii) legislative requirements,
  - iii) moderation,
  - iv) record keeping and reporting.
- Work with individual schools/systems as requested to provide support, assistance and advice in regards to NCCD.
- Contextualise and offer workshops and assistance to schools using the ESA guidelines for the categorisation of students under the four NCCD levels of adjustment with a view to improve quality assurance.
- Provide clear and relevant communications on NCCD.

#### **Include here a general statement that provides a response to the following:-**

The projects AISNT has undertaken have:

- Contributed to the continuing improvement in student outcomes as demonstrated through the NAPLAN data. This has been achieved through the ongoing work undertaken in the areas of identification of students requiring adjustment and assisting with strategy developments to assist these students as well as through moderation activities including workshops and forums.
- This work has been undertaken jointly with the NT Department of Education and the Catholic Education Office of the NT.
- These findings have been used to inform our next steps which have been included in our 2020 work plan.

### Summary of project's achievement

Activities undertaken/Achieved outcomes	Achievement against indicators of success
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Two workshops and the distribution of information combined with support from AISNT staff directly to schools resulted in schools reporting an improved understanding of the legislative requirements of the NCCD. Professional learning for school leaders and teachers was the focus of this activity.</li> <li>• Documentation with explanations of the levels and examples were developed and workshopped with teachers and appropriate leadership staff to inform the NCCD levels of adjustment for students with disabilities.</li> <li>• AISNT provided ongoing support and assistance either in-school or via email/telephone regarding categorisation of students under the levels as defined under the NCCD. Schools reported greater understanding on the application of the levels of adjustment. Most also requested a way of collecting more consistent data and storing it for easy access. This led to us investigate the INSPIRE software developed by Catholic Education Office NT in conjunction with SRA for implementation in our schools.</li> <li>• Schools were all provided with specific written information and discussions at two meetings explaining the impact of accurate collection of adjustments made under NCCD and its direct impact on their funding and ability to implement strategies for these students.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 65% of schools were represented at these workshops. Of the 35% not present, 6 out of the 7 schools belonged to the NT Christian Schools System. The 7<sup>th</sup> school was a one teacher very remote Indigenous School.</li> <li>• 100% of workshop participants (school leaders) reported better understanding of the identification of student levels under the NCCD Adjustment levels.</li> <li>• 60% of schools reported improvements in data collection practices within their schools.</li> <li>• 40% of schools requested and received individual school training with teachers. Our target had been 30%.</li> <li>• 90% of schools were provided with support on data collection and appointing levels of adjustment and related advice by phone and email.</li> <li>• 100% of schools were provided with Information packages developed specifically for their school circumstances.</li> </ul>

## **PROJECT TITLE: NAPLAN Online**

### **Project description:**

AISNT worked closely with individual schools and systems and provided support, assistance and advice in regards to the readiness and implementation of NAPLAN Online.

AISNT worked closely with the National bodies including ACARA and ESA as well as the NT Minister and Department of Education and assisted schools in the transfer to NAPLAN Online. This included the provision of:

- I. Accurate and timely Information.
- II. Professional development for individual schools, groups of schools and at general meetings.
- III. Assisting individual schools with implementation.

### **Include here a general statement that provides a response to the following:-**

- AISNT has worked with the NT Department of Education NAPLAN Team to ensure all of our member schools have been included in all discussions related to their preparedness and implementation plans for NAPLAN Online. This meets our first objective to provide advocacy and support to our member schools to provide the highest possible outcomes for their students.
- It also supported our second and third objectives that are to ensure that NT Independent Schools are recognised as valued contributors to education in the Northern Territory and to work closely with the Catholic and Government Education sectors to ensure equity in opportunities and choice in education.
- These findings and results have been used to inform our next steps which have been included in our 2020 work plan.

### **Summary of project's achievement**

<b>Activities undertaken/Achieved outcomes</b>	<b>Achievement against indicators of success</b>
<p>All but one of the 20 NT Independent Schools, through the provision of professional development, individual school assistance and timely updates:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Were provided with the information related to the introduction of NAPLAN Online and were able to adhere to the timelines related to its implementation.</li><li>• Understand and abided by their responsibilities in regards to the implementation of NAPLAN Online.</li><li>• Met their readiness targets for the implementation of NAPLAN Online.</li></ul>	<p>95% of NT Independent Schools met their readiness targets for the implementation of NAPLAN Online.</p> <p>5% (1 school) did not reach its readiness target due to outdated hardware.</p>

**PROJECT TITLE: Governance and Financial Management**

**Project description:**

AISNT worked closely with individual schools and systems and provided support, assistance and advice in regards to the governance and financial management.

AISNT help two x one day workshops that were dedicated to what good governance should look like in schools. School board members and school leaders including business managers attended these workshops.

AISNT worked closely with both the AG and the NT Departments and the Ministers for Education on changes to the schools funding models and as a result schools were provided:

- I. Accurate and timely Information.
- II. Professional development for individual schools, groups of schools and at general meetings.
- III. Assisting individual schools with understanding their funding and the requirements.

**Include here a general statement that provides a response to the following:-**

- AISNT has worked with the AG and NT Department of Education and Ministers to inform the debate on changes to both the AG and NT funding models. The schools were included in the collaborative process to determine the fairest, most equitable and a transparent model for all of their schools and the Sector as a whole. This work was important in ensuring our member schools received a high level of advocacy that would underpin strong ongoing educational and social/well-being outcomes.
- It also supported our second and third objectives that are to ensure that NT Independent Schools are recognised as valued contributors to education in the Northern Territory and to work closely with the Catholic and Government Education sectors to ensure equity in opportunities and choice in education.

These findings and results have been used to inform our next steps which have been included in our 2020 work plan.

**Summary of project's achievement**

Activities undertaken/Achieved outcomes	Achievement against indicators of success
<p>AISNT used the services of Stephen Brown from the Brown Collective to provide two full day workshops for school board members, leaders and business managers. Schools were provided information and tools on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Good governance practice and undertook an assessment of their current governance structure</li><li>• The roles of the board and the separation of these from school management roles.</li><li>• The compliance requirements that are necessary to their school's registration.</li><li>• The current financial compliance requirements.</li></ul> <p>AISNT provided three stakeholder forums regarding the changes to the AG and NT recurrent funding. We also provided timely updates as changes occurred in either model.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• 60% of the total member schools undertook the workshops with Stephen Brown.</li><li>• 85% of schools provided with professional learning and/or advice/support indicated improvements to governance arrangements and better clarity regarding the separation of roles between the board and management.</li></ul> <p>70% of AISNT member schools and two representatives from the system representing the remaining 30% attended and contributed to the forum on changes to the funding models.</p>



## **Project Title: Schools' Quality Improvement**

### **Project description:**

AISNT had worked closely with the schools in the year prior to 2019 to identify areas they identified as priority areas for professional development and the best way to provide the PD activities.

The areas identified that were consistent with the National Priorities were provided during 2019. We were unable to access the services of Paul Clarke due to his availability during 2019 however all other areas identified were delivered.

AISNT organised and supported 2 workshops with Stephen Brown, one on 'knowledge and understanding of education in your school in the global context' and one on school leadership.

George Otero provided one workshop on relationship based pedagogy offered to all schools and a two day intensive at a remote Indigenous school.

AISNT staff provided workshop sessions during the two General Meetings of the Association looking at the Indigenous Education Strategy and knowing, understanding and implementing the national education priorities.

### **Include here a general statement that provides a response to the following:-**

The projects AISNT has undertaken have:

- Contributed to the continuing improvement in student outcomes as demonstrated through the NAPLAN data. This has been achieved through the ongoing delivery of high level professional development by experienced presenters.
- We have worked closely with the NT Department of Education and the Catholic Education Office of the NT to ensure all students in the NT have the possibility to benefit from their teacher's continued learning.
- The outcomes and feedback from these activities have been used to inform our next steps which have been included in our 2020 work plan.

**Summary of project's achievement**

Activities undertaken/Achieved outcomes	Achievement against indicators of success
<p>School and system leaders and staff were involved in high level professional development using Stephen Brown (2 workshops) and George Otero (one workshop and one individual school intensive two day course) to provide practical advice and strategies to improve:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The understanding of the Indigenous Education Strategy.</li> <li>• Understanding the importance of relationship in improving student outcomes.</li> <li>• Knowledge and understanding of the education in their schools in the context of the global society including International trends and priorities.</li> <li>• Knowing, understanding and implementing national education priorities in their schools.</li> <li>• School leadership and interrelationships.</li> </ul> <p>The following activities were unable to be undertaken therefore the targets for these were not met. We plan to continue with these plans and ensure they are undertaken as soon as it is possible. Please see the yellow highlighted section in the achievement against indicators of success column explaining why we could not reach these targets.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Appoint a part-time international education officer to work with schools to assist with the further development of the global education program.</li> <li>2. 70% of NT Independent schools will have access to the opportunities, information and resources that are provided under the global Education project.</li> <li>3. 100% of NT Independent Schools will have access to the information and resources developed under the ecological sustainability project.</li> </ol>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 90% of remote Indigenous schools were represented at, at least one of the four workshops.</li> <li>• There was 75% representation at both of the Stephen Brown facilitated workshops and 45% representation at the George Otero workshop offered to all schools.</li> <li>• 100% of the 45% of schools involved in the George Otero workshop reported improved understanding on the importance of and strategies to improve relationships.</li> </ul> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. In regards to the part time international education officer, although working with the Northern Territory Department of Education, we were unable to find someone with the experience required that was willing to work part time. Cheryl and I absorbed some of the work under our usual daily work to assist in coordinating and hosting a number of visits to the NT by International Education Groups. We are also continuing negotiations with Edgar Qian from the Shanghai, Brisbane Education Training Centre and Tengda Industries to work closely with him in increasing the number of International students studying in the NT. This work will continue long term.</li> <li>2. Cheryl and I have been working with the schools to assist in the development of the cross curricular work but have undertaken that purely as assistance when the opportunity arises. We have treated this work as the usual business of AISNT.</li> <li>3. The ecological sustainability work we do is supported by Dr Paul Clarke but he was unable to be involved last year due to personal commitments. We are looking at trying to continue our work with him once the current COVID-19 restrictions are relaxed.</li> </ol>

## Financial Statement

<b>Quality Assurance and Support for NCCD</b>	<b>FTE</b>	<b>Reform Support Fund funding</b>	<b>Funding from other contributions</b>	<b>Total funding</b>
Salaries and ongoing costs		\$26 000		\$26 000
Workshops (venues and catering)		\$5 400	\$1 640	\$7 040
Travel		\$1 740	\$790	\$2 530
Professional development		\$9 400	\$1 200	\$10 600
Accommodation		\$1 700		\$1 700
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>\$44 240</b>	<b>\$3 630</b>	<b>\$47 870</b>

<b>NAPLAN Online</b>	<b>FTE</b>	<b>Reform Support Fund funding</b>	<b>Funding from other contributions</b>	<b>Total funding</b>
Salaries and ongoing costs		\$34 000		\$34 000
Workshops (venues and catering)		\$2 700	\$858	\$3 558
Travel		\$1 260	\$790	\$2 050
Professional development		\$6 600		\$6 600
Accommodation		\$1 200		\$1 200
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>\$45 760</b>	<b>\$1 648</b>	<b>\$47 408</b>

<b>Governance and Financial Management</b>	<b>FTE</b>	<b>Reform Support Fund funding</b>	<b>Funding from other contributions</b>	<b>Total funding</b>
Salaries and ongoing costs		\$36 000		\$36 000
Workshops (venues and catering)		\$6 200	\$3 200	\$9 400
Travel		\$4 250	\$2 120	\$6 370
Professional development		\$33 050	\$1 700	\$34 750
Accommodation		\$4 200	\$2 300	\$6 500
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>\$83 700</b>	<b>\$9 320</b>	<b>\$93 020</b>

<b>School's Quality Improvement</b>	<b>FTE</b>	<b>Reform Support Fund funding</b>	<b>Funding from other contributions</b>	<b>Total funding</b>
Salaries and ongoing costs		\$44 000		\$44 000
Workshops (venues and catering)		\$7 300	\$4 400	\$11 700
Travel		\$5 050	\$2 500	\$7 550
Professional development		\$36 200	\$4 100	\$40 300
Accommodation		\$6 850	\$3 900	\$10 750
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>\$99 400</b>	<b>\$14 900</b>	<b>\$114 300</b>

<b>Total Expenditure for NGRSF</b>	<b>FTE</b>	<b>Reform Support Fund funding</b>	<b>Funding from other contributions</b>	<b>Total funding</b>
<b>Salaries and ongoing costs</b>	<b>0.3</b>	<b>\$140 000</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>\$140 000</b>
<b>Workshops (venues and catering)</b>		<b>\$21 600</b>	<b>\$10 098</b>	<b>\$31 698</b>
<b>Travel</b>		<b>\$12 300</b>	<b>\$8 200</b>	<b>\$20 500</b>
<b>Professional development</b>		<b>\$85 250</b>	<b>\$7 000</b>	<b>\$92 250</b>
<b>Accommodation</b>		<b>\$13 950</b>	<b>\$6 200</b>	<b>\$20 150</b>
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>\$273 100</b>	<b>\$31 498</b>	<b>\$304 598</b>