

ITEM ENROLMENT – COMPULSORY EDUCATION

POLICY Part IV of the *Education Act* deals with compulsory attendance at schools.

Section 21 of the Act requires that a parent of a child of compulsory school age, i.e. a child who has attained the age of six years but who has not yet attained the age of fifteen years shall either

- a) enrol the child in a government school, or
- b) enrol the child in a registered non-government school, or
- c) provide efficient and suitable education for the child.

The approval of the Chief Executive is required in the case of c) above, and the Chief Executive shall decide whether or not the education is efficient and suitable (see s.21(1)(b) and (2) of the Act).

The above requirements do not apply to children with special learning needs (see s.21(3) of the Act). Part V of the Act establishes guidelines for the provision of special education services to students who may be defined as disabled.

Right of school to refuse to enrol a student

The *Education Act* makes provision for the availability of education to all people in the Northern Territory.

A central concept in the Act is that education is a parent's responsibility (see s.22 of the Act).

Principals should be aware that they must accept enrolments of all children of compulsory school age who wish to become students at their school unless the Secretary has directed otherwise (see s.26 of the Act).

The refusal by a Principal to enrol a student in a school may breach the following discrimination legislation

- *Anti-Discrimination Act* (NT)
- *Disability Discrimination Act* (CTH)
- *Racial Discrimination Act* (CTH)
- *Sex Discrimination Act* (CTH)

