

PUBLIC RECORD

LEARNING LESSONS IMPLEMENTATION STEERING COMMITTEE (LLISC)

Darwin
4 and 5 March 2004

SUMMARY

Five presentations were given at this meeting. Each presentation related to an aspect of particular *Learning Lessons* recommendations and the Indigenous Education Strategic Plan (IESP).

Due to unforeseen circumstances, a number of LLISC members were unable to meet for the full day on March 5, and the meeting agenda was compressed accordingly. A number of planned presentations were held over for the next meeting of the LLISC, scheduled for 7 June 2004.

The meeting commenced with a full day's facilitated discussion workshop to consider issues and make recommendations relating to the establishment of a future Northern Territory Indigenous Education Consultative Body (IECB). The structure and functions of IECBs across Australia were the subject of a recent review commissioned by the Commonwealth, the final report of which is currently being considered by the Minister for Education, Science and Training, Dr Brendan Nelson.

On the second day, officers of the Department of Employment, Education and Training made presentations on current components of the Department's strategy to improve education outcomes for Indigenous students in the Northern Territory. In addition, representatives of Batchelor Institute of Indigenous Tertiary Education presented a detailed overview of the Institute's teacher education programs.

ATTENDANCE

Hon. Bob Collins	Co-Chair
Ms Esther Djayhgurrngna	Co-Chair
Ms Beverley Angeles	
Ms Carmelita Dunn	
Ms Katherine Henderson	
Mrs Kilipayuwu Puruntatameri	
Mr David Ross	
Commissioner Hill	
Mrs Didamain Uibo	
Ms Valda Shannon	
Mr Shane Williams	

THURSDAY 4 MARCH 2004

Tour of Mitchell Centre:

Members of the LLISC visited each floor of the Mitchell Centre where staff of the Department of Employment, Education and Training (DEET) work. DEET staff were proud to show Members their new work environment and many took the opportunity to talk about current projects related to Indigenous education and training.

Committee Members greatly appreciated the warm reception and the readiness of DEET staff to share information and ideas.

Workshop – A Future Indigenous Education Consultative Body (IECB) for the Northern Territory.

Facilitators: Barbara Weis
Director, Learning Lessons Implementation Branch (LLIB)

Tracey Masterton
Strategy Manager, LLIB

Building upon previous Committee discussions of this issue, including the workshop held in Alice Springs on 9/12/03, the LLISC made significant progress in developing a draft Charter, operating mechanism and Terms of Reference for the proposed future body. The draft has been presented to the Minister for Employment, Education and Training to assist in his consideration of an appropriate Indigenous education advisory mechanism for the Territory. The Minister has indicated that he would like the LLISC to continue with the development of a proposal for a Territory IECB for his consideration.

Video “From Little Things Big Things Grow”

During the lunch break the DEET commissioned video *‘From Little Things Big Things Grow’* was screened for the Committee. The video documents the progress of the first three Indigenous students to complete their Northern Territory Certificate of Education in a remote community. Committee Members were impressed by the tenacity and determination of the staff, community and students shown in the video. It is particularly pleasing for the Committee to see the tangible link between its work and the progress of the Department in improving Indigenous education outcomes.

FRIDAY 5 MARCH 2004

1. Apologies:

Ms Pat Anderson
Mrs Didamain Uibo (could not attend today)

2. Confirmation of Meeting Records for Meeting 7

The Meeting Summary and Meeting Record for Meeting 7 of the LLISC were confirmed as correct, and Incoming and Outgoing mail was noted.

PRESENTATIONS

Due to the inability of a number of LLISC members to meet for the full day, the meeting agenda was compressed accordingly. Written briefings for the following postponed agenda items were provided to Members:

- LLISC Action List (including Actions Arising from the last meeting)
- Learning Lessons Implementation Recommendations Update Report
- Community Controlled Schools Update (School/Community Profiles)

Committee Members were particularly pleased to note that 136 of the 151 recommendations they have made since their first meeting in 2002 have been implemented, and the remaining 15 are under active consideration by the Department. However, Members expressed concern that the recommendations on which little progress has been made towards implementation appear to be those requiring significant expenditure.

A detailed report on each recommendation was noted by the Committee.

PRESENTATION AND DISCUSSION

3. **Financial Issues: Parity In Infrastructure and Costing *Learning Lessons* Recommendations**

Presenter: Trevor Saunders
Chief Financial Officer
Department of Employment, Education and Training

The presentation described the major elements of the Strategy and provided an update on the current situation.

Schools Infrastructure:

The Financial Services Division of DEET has prepared a proposal for Government consideration to fund the development of a Service Delivery Plan and a Facility Plan for primary and secondary schools. The proposal identifies the indicative capital resource requirements for upgrading all schools to the appropriate standards.

The Committee was pleased to note the Government's recent commitment of \$3 million per annum to upgrade schools in remote areas, but also noted the large divide between identified need and available funds.

Housing for Teachers:

The Committee received information about the core elements of the teacher housing component of the Strategy and challenges faced by the Department.

Members were particularly interested in the issue of availability of serviced land in remote areas and how this impacts on the prioritisation of capital works.

Transport for Children in Remote Areas:

Of concern to the Committee was the obvious disparity between remote and urban students in respect of the provision of transport to and from school, and that town camp students in Alice Springs are treated as 'remote' in that they are not covered by current urban provision.

Committee Members expressed thanks for Mr Saunders' work on progressing Parity In Infrastructure and for his detailed presentation.

PRESENTATION AND DISCUSSION

4. Indigenous Teacher Training at the Batchelor Institute of Indigenous Tertiary Education (BIITE)

Presenters: Dorothy Morrison
Head of School of Education & Humanities, BIITE

Nick Richardson
Senior Lecturer, School of Education & Humanities, BIITE

Ms Morrison provided the Committee with a structural overview of Batchelor Institute of Indigenous Tertiary Education (BIITE) and a description of its teacher education offerings, highlighting the level of flexibility and responsiveness built into its programs in order to cater for the diversity of Indigenous students. The content of the presentation included:

- New courses in education
- Scoping for Tomorrow's Teachers – what their characteristics and needs will be
- Graduate attributes (what is sought by communities & professional bodies, portability of qualifications, ESL considerations)
- Resource Allocation within BIITE
- Structural and procedural changes that BIITE has introduced or is considering, such as the provision of substantial bursaries to encourage students to study.

It was noted that a considerable number of principals have been asking about mixed mode and on-site delivery of teacher education courses to encourage a greater number of participants and improve student retention.

The Committee thanked Ms Morrison and Mr Richardson for their presentation.

PRESENTATION AND DISCUSSION

5. Indigenous Language and Culture in DEET

Presenter: Paul Bubb
Manager Two Way Learning Program
Schools Division

Panel Discussion Participants:

Debbie Efthymiades	Acting General Manager School Services
John Glasby	General Manager Schools (Palmerston and Arnhem)
John Dove	General Manager Schools (Darwin and Katherine)
Karmi Dunn	General Manager Indigenous Education

Mr Bubb outlined Indigenous language and culture programs currently available in schools within the Northern Territory Curriculum Framework (NTCF). The Two Way Learning program aims to maximise the literacy learning outcomes for Indigenous students in both their first language and in English. An underlying premise of Two Way Learning is the strengthening of literacy in the first language before the introduction of English.

Mr Bubb explained that Two Way Learning Program schools are regularly and intensively reviewed. They are required to report annually on student progress against targets, action statements and specialist staff reports. Further, they report in detail every two years on outcomes in students' first languages, in ESL, in mathematics and on student attendance. School MAP data is also considered.

A Review of the Two Way Learning Program commenced recently and aims to assess the efficiency and effectiveness of the program and to develop a policy that will set the future direction for this program and for language and culture programs across the Northern Territory. The Review is due to be completed in August 2004.

Committee members thanked Mr Bubb for his presentation.

PRESENTATION AND DISCUSSION

6. Hearing Health Issues

Presenter: Noelene McCormick
Director
Student Services
Department Employment, Education and Training

Ms McCormick outlined the relationship of the Conductive Hearing Team and ear-health operations within the Student Services Branch to the Ear Health Plan - which came out of the Aboriginal Health Forum. The Student Services Branch is presently focusing on identification of individual students who need assistance. Prior to 2002 the conductive hearing program was based on providing information to teachers, with a number of professional development activities offered. The program then moved into supporting and monitoring individual students. Within 18 months of commencing that process, 405 students with significant hearing loss have been identified across the NT, and are now supported by the Hearing Officers of this program.

The Student Services Branch is working to reduce the impact of hearing loss on language development and pronunciation learning. Ms McCormick distributed a teaching resource package from Western Australia called 'Do You Hear What I Hear?' which incorporates classroom strategies for teachers to implement.

Committee members thanked Ms McCormick for her presentation.

LLISC FULL MEETING

1. LLISC Correspondence

The LLISC noted incoming and outgoing correspondence.

2. Actions Arising From Previous Meetings (Report)

All of the actions, decisions and recommendations from previous LLISC meetings have been incorporated into the Action Table. The Committee noted progress.

3. Confirmation of Meeting Record: 27 and 28 October 2003

The LLISC confirmed the record of the last meeting as true and accurate.

4. Discussion and Recommendations

Discussion focussed on actions and recommendations to the Minister arising from the presentations made to the LLISC on 27 October 2003.

Workshop on future Indigenous Education Consultative Body (NT)

ACTIONS:

- *LLISC invite George Hewitson, Principal, and Robyn Hewitson, Senior Teacher, Kalkaringi Community Education Centre, to address the next Committee meeting on the subject of their experience of the Secondary Provision in Remote Areas program and the success of their 2003 Year 12 students.*
- *LLISC write to Dr Brendan Nelson, Minister for Education, Science and Training:*
 - *endorsing the successful approach of the Kalkaringi Community Education Centre's secondary program and celebrating the achievement of the three Indigenous students who gained their NTCE at Kalkaringi in 2003*
 - *enclosing the video 'From Little Things Big Things Grow'*
 - *describing what made the program a success and highlighting the partnership and learning outcomes agenda pursued by the Principal and Senior Teacher at Kalkaringi*
 - *noting the Committee's thanks for the significant contribution of Mr Williams to the work of the Committee – particularly noting his contributions on the issue of a future IECB.*
- *LLISC develop a process for tabling of agenda items from people/schools (LLIB to facilitate).*
- *The LLISC Actions List item 7.138(e) be amended to reflect that a Commonwealth review of issues related to parent/community participation in schools is underway and that this may result in a re-defining of roles – including those of ASSPA committees. The Committee is of the view that DEET should defer changes to the Schools Policy Handbook and advice to schools pending the publication of this review.*
- *Records of LLISC meetings be distributed by the LLIB on behalf of the Committee. Members will provide distribution list requests/details to the LLIB.*

RECOMMENDATIONS:

- *That a Communication Plan be developed for the proposed IECB and that it include the use of Community Forums with one or more IECB members – with secretariat support from the LLIB.*

- *That a publication which is accessible to a wide range of people be prepared and widely distributed by the LLIB detailing the achievements of the LLISC.*
- *That the Terms of Reference of a future IECB stipulate that that body be signatory to any Agreement between the Commonwealth and Northern Territory Governments related to Indigenous education, higher education, training, VET etc.*
- *That a future IECB hold a meeting dedicated to a debate about ‘what impacts on Indigenous education nationally’ – and that that debate include presentation of the Commonwealth Government’s current priorities in Indigenous education.*

Financial Issues: Parity In Infrastructure and Costing *Learning Lessons* **Recommendations**

Committee Members expressed thanks for Mr Saunders’ work on progressing Parity In Infrastructure and for his detailed presentation.

ACTION:

Invite Mr Peter Siebert and the Chief Executive Officer of the Department of Community Development, Sport and Cultural Affairs to address the Committee on the issue of matching DEET’s priority list for new houses with available serviced land.

ACTION:

The Committee will write to the Minister as follows:

- *expressing sorrow and anger about the lack of progress with the local recruit housing issue*
- *expressing concern about the obvious disparity between the transport services provided for urban students and Town Camp and remote students (the majority of whom are Indigenous)*
- *noting the lack of a transparent transport policy*
- *noting the lack of an outstations policy that clearly identifies responsibilities and standards in relation to service delivery*
- *expressing concern about the gap between identified need and available funds for schools upgrades*
- *expressing concern about the prioritisation of urban schools above remote schools on the capital works lists when the Committee feels strongly that decisions about priority should be made on the basis of need, and the greatest needs are in remote communities*
- *pointing out that current initiatives demonstrate that bussing does improve attendance.*

Indigenous Language and Culture in DEET

Members noted the presentation.

RECOMMENDATION:

That LLISC Members be advised of the outcomes of the Review of the Two Way Learning Program and the Language and Culture programs of DEET– whether as Members of this Committee or otherwise.

Hearing Health Issues

Members noted the presentation

ACTIONS:

The LLISC endorse the new case manager model for Student Services Education Officers working with Department of Health and Community Services officers to support teachers of students who have hearing difficulties.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

LLISC recommends that the Minister for Employment, Education and Training write to the Minister for Health and Community Services commending the case management model for Education Officers working in the Conductive Hearing Program and seeking ongoing cooperation between Departments on this issue.

LLISC recommends that the Minister support the provision of 'core funding' for the creation of permanent Hearing Support Officer positions so that the Conductive Hearing Program is not reliant on Commonwealth supplementary assistance funding.

5. Next Meeting

The next meeting will be held in Darwin on 7 June 2004