

# LEARNING LESSONS IMPLEMENTATION STEERING COMMITTEE (LLISC)

## Public Record

*Darwin*  
*6 and 7 October 2005*

### **SUMMARY**

This was the final meeting of the Learning Lessons Implementation Steering Committee (LLISC). The meeting planned for June 2005 was cancelled due to caretaker provisioning being in place during the Northern Territory election.

The main focus of the October 2005 meeting of the LLISC was finalisation of the draft Learning Lessons 151 Recommendations Status Report - *The Implementation Phase* prepared by Ms Fabienne Balsamo. The final report documented the achievements of the Committee and the Department of Employment, Education and Training's progress in relation to the implementation of recommendations from the *Learning Lessons Review*. The LLISC discussed and signed off on the final report and instructed the Secretariat to present it to the Minister.

The Committee received status reports from invited guests on the following:

- Building Better Schools - Department of Employment, Education and Training (DEET)
- Future Consultative Body (NT Indigenous Education Council) - Learning Lessons Secretariat
- Indigenous Teacher Numbers - People and Learning Division, DEET
- Indigenous Languages and Culture in NT Schools Review - Business Planning and Information Division, DEET

Day 2 focussed on an update of the draft Indigenous Education Strategic Plan 2005-2008 prepared by Ms Sibylle Brautigam. Committee members were informed on priority areas for the next four years. The meeting concluded with final addresses by the Acting Chief Executive DEET, Minister for Education and the Co-Chair LLISC.

### **BUILDING BETTER SCHOOLS UPDATE**

Presenter: Mr John Glasby  
Acting Executive Director Strategic Initiatives  
DEET

Mr Glasby provided a status report to the Committee on Building Better Schools (BBS).

The Government announced BBS in February 2005 and that \$42 million would be allocated to five commitment areas with a strong focus on investing in Indigenous education. There are 77 pieces of work, 54 of these to be commenced immediately with 24 funded. Work and consultation has commenced around the middle years approach to schooling, with implementation to commence in 2007.

Packages have been sent out to schools and principals to seek feedback on the middle years principles and policy. Responses are due at the end of October 2005.

Within the BBS package of initiatives, the three unifying aims are:

- Improved outcomes for all students in the NT
- Improved access, especially access to secondary education in remote areas of the NT
- Improved engagement of all stakeholders

## FUTURE CONSULTATIVE BODY UPDATE

Presenter: Ms Anne Martin  
Executive Officer  
Learning Lessons Secretariat  
DEET

Ms Martin provided a status report on the proposed Northern Territory Indigenous Education Council (NTIEC). Ms Martin advised that the Minister has committed to the establishment of the NTIEC, with the Terms of Reference developed by the LLISC. The Secretariat will be housed and supported within DEET.

Ms Martin also outlined that the NTIEC would undertake a range of activities that would lead to positive outcomes for Indigenous students across the NT. The NTIEC will provide a means through which Indigenous students, parents and communities can provide advice and feedback to government about the impact and effectiveness of education and training programs.

The Secretariat will develop a framework for appointing members to the NTIEC. It is anticipated the NTIEC will be established by March/April 2006.

### **Action:**

*The Committee agreed that a resolution be drafted seeking clarification from the Minister regarding the breadth of responsibility that will be accorded to the NTIEC in relation to the Government and non-government sector.*

## INDIGENOUS TEACHER NUMBERS UPDATE

Presenter: Ms Julie Donald  
Indigenous Capacity Building Research Consultant  
People and Learning Division  
DEET

Ms Donald provided an update to the Committee based on her current research project, which is to develop an action plan to increase the number of Indigenous teachers in the system. The current research aims to identify viable initiatives to support, sustain, increase and build the capacity and capability of Indigenous teachers and support staff across DEET.

In 2004, a survey was conducted by Business Planning and Information Division, to find out the number and employment details of school based Indigenous employees. Further information will be collected, including the professional learning that Indigenous teachers and support staff participate in, and the reasons Indigenous educators leave the system. DEET is also looking at the level of study completed by Indigenous staff. To facilitate this, collaboration will need to take place between Batchelor Institute of Indigenous Tertiary Education, Charles Darwin University and DEET.

It was also highlighted to the Committee that DEET currently runs a number of projects that support Indigenous people to undertake teacher education. These include:

- The Indigenous Cadetship Program
- Indigenous Teacher Education Salary Scheme (ITESS)

The number of Indigenous people participating in ITESS has dropped from approximately 25 in 1999 to 7 in 2005, indicating that this scheme is no longer considered a viable incentive to study.

## INDIGENOUS LANGUAGES AND CULTURE IN NT SCHOOLS REVIEW UPDATE

Presenter: Ms Anna King  
Manager Research and Innovation  
Business Planning and Information Division  
DEET

Ms King provided information on the current status of the Indigenous Languages and Culture Review.

The review commenced in 2003 in response to *Learning Lessons* recommendations, in particular those recommendations regarding the Two-Way Program and Indigenous languages and culture. In August 2005, the Minister's statement in Parliament clearly outlined that Bilingual programs were back on the agenda and recognised Bilingual education as an important teaching methodology.

The review was broken into four areas:

- Indigenous languages
- Policy
- Two-Way education
- Bilingual in the NT

The review found 97% of NT schools, including non government schools, are doing some form of Indigenous language/s and culture activities, with 50% of these delivering structured weekly programs. The other 50% are doing one off activities.

The review of Indigenous Languages and Culture in NT Schools Report will:

- Describe the continuum of Indigenous languages and culture activity in NT schools including a resource and funding index
- Summarise the views of DEET personnel, school staff and key stakeholders regarding access to, and appropriateness of Indigenous languages and culture resources
- Provide findings and recommendations regarding future directions for the range of Indigenous Languages and Culture programs in NT Schools
- Provide findings and recommendations regarding future directions for the Two-Way Learning program
- Develop a draft NT Government policy to guide the development and delivery of Indigenous languages and culture initiatives and programs in all NT schools

The draft report includes recommendations related to further improvements at the system level to the existing Two-Way Learning Program and a stronger focus on access for all students to quality Indigenous languages and culture programs. Policy and guidelines will be developed to assist schools in delivering Indigenous languages and culture programs. Ms King also advised that one of the review's recommendation is that the Two-Way Learning program be renamed the Bilingual Education Program. The Committee were pleased with the overall presentation from Ms King and asked that a resolution be drafted in support of the proposed directions of the Report.

### **Recommendation:**

*The LLISC supports the broad findings and recommendations of the Indigenous Languages and Culture in NT Schools Review, particularly the increased focus on Indigenous languages and culture in all NT schools.*

## LEARNING LESSONS 151 RECOMMENDATIONS STATUS REPORT

Presenter: Ms Fabienne Balsamo  
Senior Project Officer  
Indigenous Education Division  
DEET

Ms Balsamo presented the Committee with the *Learning Lessons The Implementation Phase*, which reports on the implementation of the Learning Lessons 151 recommendations and the status of the 212 LLISC recommendations to the Minister and DEET. Ms Balsamo outlined the structure of the report to the Committee and referred members to the appendix section that included the status of each recommendation.

Ms Balsamo spoke about what has been achieved and outlined major achievements during the term of the LLISC, including:

- Major improvements to data systems
- Increase in students participating in the Multilevel Assessment Program (MAP)
- Incremental improvements in MAP results
- Increased accountability across DEET
- Secondary Provision in Remote Schools

Ms Balsamo highlighted that over the four-year period, the LLISC made a total of 212 recommendations, of which 46 were directed to the Minister. Forty-one recommendations were endorsed by the Minister and had resultant action. Five recommendations did not require any resultant action. The Committee also made 166 recommendations to DEET and to the LLISC secretariat. All of the 166 recommendations have had resultant action.

Ms Balsamo finished her presentation and agreed to make herself available for the Committee's evaluation session on the report. The Committee thanked Ms Balsamo for the presentation of the status report.

### **Recommendation:**

*The LLISC accepted and endorsed the Learning Lessons Final Status Report and recommend it to the Minister. The LLISC referred outstanding issues to the future Northern Territory Indigenous Education Council for their consideration. These include:*

1. *Monitor and request information from DEET about the provision of housing for remote Indigenous recruits with full teaching qualifications.*
2. *Advocate for improved school infrastructure in remote NT. There is scope for the NTIEC to advocate a bilateral agreement on infrastructure between the NT and the Australian Governments.*
3. *Request information from DEET about the Indigenous teacher-mentoring program.*
4. *Request information about DEET's future intentions to assess school administrative arrangements that currently do not incorporate Indigenous communities of affiliation or communities with shared languages. The current school Cluster arrangements make it difficult for some schools that share a common language to utilise formal communication channels and to access training and development funds so that they can work together.*
5. *Request information about existing legislation covering student school attendance, and request information about the roles and responsibilities of various government departments in this matter. The NTIEC may use this information as a beginning point to survey the options for future strategies to improve student school attendance.*

## **INDIGENOUS EDUCATION STRATEGIC PLAN 2005-2008**

Presenter: Ms Sibylle Brautigam  
Project Manager  
Indigenous Education Division  
DEET

Ms Brautigam presented an update on the Indigenous Education Strategic Plan 2005-2008. The Committee was informed that the draft had been sent to key stakeholders for comment. Where possible, feedback will be incorporated into the final document.

The plan provides DEET with a framework that incorporates priority actions aimed at:

- Improving stakeholder partnerships
- Increasing enrolment, attendance and retention
- Increasing achievement at school
- Increasing Indigenous students' access to more opportunities and choices after they finish school

The draft plan is structured on the basis that no one solution will necessarily fit all local situations, and that effort needs to be focussed at both a systemic and local school level for results to be realised.

Priority actions for the next four years include:

- Developing education contracts with large remote townships
- An increased focus on literacy and numeracy plans
- A school level focus on individual teaching programs
- Expanding access to preschool programs and secondary education
- Developing strategic infrastructure plans for school assets and teacher housing
- Developing protocols in all remote communities between the school and the health centre
- Leadership and workforce development
- Linking education and training programs to enterprise development initiatives in the community
- Developing school and community data profiles, protocols for allocating resources and developing an evidence base to determine what works

The Committee passed a resolution in support of the Indigenous Education Strategic Plan 2005-2008.

## **CLOSING COMMENTS FROM ACTING CHIEF EXECUTIVE, DEPARTMENT OF EMPLOYMENT, EDUCATION AND TRAINING, MR KEN SIMPSON**

Mr Ken Simpson thanked Ms Esther Djayhgurrnga for her introduction to committee members and for the opportunity to attend today's meeting.

Mr Simpson congratulated the Committee on the wonderful effort they had put in towards making advances over the last few years.

Mr Simpson also acknowledged the adoption by the Committee of the draft report *Learning Lessons The Implementation Phase* and advised the Committee that it would be forwarded on to the Minister. In closing, Mr Simpson said he was confident that as the Committee wound up their work,

and passed on the responsibility to the new advisory council (NTIEC), that is soon to be established, that DEET would make sure that the new Council is well briefed and well supported.

Mr Simpson closed by thanking the Committee for their efforts.

#### **CLOSING COMMENTS FROM MINISTER FOR EMPLOYMENT, EDUCATION AND TRAINING, THE HONOURABLE SYD STIRLING**

Minister Syd Stirling thanked the Acting Chief Executive Mr Ken Simpson for his comments and thanked the Committee for the opportunity to attend today's meeting.

Minister Stirling commended the Committee for the work reflected in the Learning Lessons Status Report, stating that statistics back up their achievements. The Minister noted the Committee had worked to highlight concerns and issues impacting on Indigenous student outcomes and had provided valuable advice to ensure the system is responsive to improving outcomes for Indigenous students.

Minister Stirling said the work of the Committee was both ground breaking and historic, and extended a personal 'thank you' to each Committee member on behalf of the government.

#### **CLOSING COMMENTS FROM CO-CHAIR LEARNING LESSONS IMPLEMENTATION STEERING COMMITTEE, MS ESTHER DJAYHGURRNGA**

Ms Djayhgurrnga said it was a privilege to be the Co-Chair of the LLISC and to be associated with such a strong Committee who are leaders in their own right.

Ms Djayhgurrnga stated that the LLISC had successfully undertaken the task set and that this success is reflected in the Learning Lessons Status Report. The Committee had a vision to improve Indigenous education in the NT. Contributing to such a worthwhile task reflected the spirit of support, cooperation and efforts of many people and stakeholders from different sectors including government and non-government agencies as well as external agencies who had contributed to helping progress the recommendations of Learning Lessons.

In summing up, Ms Djayhgurrnga thanked the Minister for Employment, Education and Training, the Honourable Syd Stirling for his ongoing commitment to Indigenous education, the former Chief Executive of DEET Mr Peter Plummer, the Acting Chief Executive of DEET Mr Ken Simpson for the supportive and interactive role that DEET had taken in regard to the LLISC and to her fellow Committee members for their fantastic contribution; The Hon. Bob Collins, Ms Pat Anderson, Ms Beverley Angeles, Ms Carmelita Sceney, Mr Akarriyuwu Hill, Mrs Kilipayuwu Puruntameri, Mr David Ross, Mr Patrick Puruntameri, Ms Valda Shannon, Mrs Didamain Uibo, Mr Shane Williams and Mr Warren Williams and special mention to Ms Barbara Weis, Mrs Sue Boyd and Ms Suzie Peckham for providing excellent secretariat support to the LLISC. Ms Djayhgurrnga also extended thanks to those who came onto the Committee at a later stage; Mr Greg Gibbs and Mr John Glasby and acknowledged Ms Katherine Henderson's contribution as a member prior to leaving the NT.

Meeting closed