

# **Non-Government Reform Support Fund**

## **2020 Annual Report**

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

## Executive Summary

The Association of Independent Schools of the Northern Territory were challenged by the restrictions imposed due to COVID-19. As with all States and Territories, we looked for other ways in which we could provide the services to schools as we had agreed in our 2020 NGRSF Project Plan.

Overall, the delivery of the projects as described was successful. Regrettably, there were two areas that we were unable to deliver on. One was directly in response to COVID-19. This was the work we were undertaking with Dr George Otero on Relationship Based Learning. Dr Otero is based in New Mexico and was unable to come to the Northern Territory as planned. We held a number of phone conferences with Dr Otero to develop a possible plan to implement a program with the schools as planned. We developed a program that we did provide for schools to use with us providing some online support. The other project we were unable to deliver on was the Unique Student Identifier as this was not at a stage of readiness to go to schools other than to let them know that it will be implemented.

All other projects in the plan were delivered, either as stated or modified to make them deliverable. We were fortunate to have an opportunity during the latter half of Semester two to deliver face to face sessions, meetings, forums and workshops with our member schools. After the lockdown and other restrictions, schools were very proactive in requesting our services and for us to implement what we could of our NGRSF plan.

### Progress against your strategic plan

During 2020, we were forced to think outside the box and find ways to contribute to the work plan and the strategic plan for the Reform Support Funding. We spent some time researching and discussing other ways of contributing to the reforms we had committed to. This was a time of trial and error for us and as a team, we became quite proficient in the use of ZOOM, Teams and other platforms to assist with information sharing via meetings, discussions webinars etc. This was successful overall and we were able to enhance this with face to face forums, meetings and workshops from part-way through Term 3.

The areas of inclusion in our Strategic Plan, as informed through workshops and discussions with our member schools were identified as follows:

- 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.

The work that underpinned these were the reform support priorities below.

- Quality Assurance and Support for NCCD - AISNT has been an active contributor in the work that is being undertaken by the NT NCCD Working Group. 2020 saw significant progress in the work undertaken to assist schools in understanding and improving their data collection and reporting against NCCD levels.
- Implementation and Delivery of NAPLAN Online – AISNT has been proactive in the NAPLAN Online Working Group and has provided high levels of support to assist schools in getting ready and using NAPLAN Online. All NT Independent Schools are ready for the 2021 implementation of NAPLAN Online.
- Enhancing the National Evidence Base - AISNT has worked with the Non-Government Ministerial Council of the NT to keep informed and contribute to the discussions on the implementation of Unique Student Identifier.
- Schools' Quality Improvement – AISNT is active across a number of Committees and Working Groups whose work is to enhance schools quality improvement. We also held a number of Governance and Well Being Forums throughout 2020. We have also worked closely with the individual schools to assist in the development of school improvement plans. This includes having the school taking a thorough look at all aspects of the school and determining areas that could or should be improved and then developing their plans on what they believe their school requires. This is very much School improvement from within.

### Relationship with your state and territory government

AISNT has spent significant time liaising with the NT Department of Education. Where we have agreed to work together with the Education Department we have been involved in a number of formal and informal discussions and meeting.

Our two schools' Education Officers have met with the relevant departments to contribute to planning and implementation of various projects. One has been heavily involved in the implementation of Online NAPLAN testing for all schools in the Northern Territory. She is a member of the NCCD Working Group and provides regular information and support to schools. The other Schools' Education Officer has held a number of forums for our schools with a focus on NCCD and differentiation in the curriculum. She has worked closely with the Differentiation Support team from the N T Department of Education.

The Executive Director and Deputy Director are members of various relevant high-level committees. These include but are not limited to:

- Attending Quarterly meetings with the Minister for Education, the Hon Lauren Moss MP
- Attending regular meetings with the Chief Executive of NTDoE, Ms Karen Weston.
- The Ministerial Advisory Committee which oversees all relevant issues effecting Non-Government Schools in the Northern Territory.
- The Board of Studies
- The Key Stakeholder Group for Early Years Education and Compliance.

AISNT contributes to the reporting on the Bi-Lateral Agreement.

Our relationship with the NT Government and the NT Department of Education is very positive and we work closely on the issues effecting education in the NT. We also become involved at the early stages of planning various projects where our Independent Schools are impacted or can benefit. Being a very small jurisdiction with a large expanse of land with students spread across it, we work together to try to find solutions to ensure all young Territorians have high standard and engaging opportunities in their education. This is difficult in the remote and very remote areas of the NT.

## Project Report

### Summary of 2020 achievements

Project title	Project description and activities	Expected outcomes/ Overall achievements	Indicators of success	Variations and Additions
<b>1. NCCD Quality Assurance and Support for NCCD data collection</b> Bilateral Reform Direction B: Continued implementation of National Consistent Collection of Data (NCCD) with a focus on moderation and quality control measures.  This project is a continuation of the previous work program we have undertaken in this area of reform.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provide two face-to-face workshops for school staff. This will include the following;               <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>understanding NCCD,</li> <li>legislative requirements,</li> <li>moderation,</li> <li>record keeping and reporting.</li> </ol> </li> <li>Work with individual schools/systems as requested to provide support, assistance and advice in regard to NCCD.</li> <li>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.</li> <li>Provide clear and relevant communications on NCCD.</li> </ul>	School and system leaders and staff will be able to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Understand and adhere to the legislative requirements of the NCCD.</li> </ul> <b>ACHIEVED</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Understand and apply the levels of adjustment for students with disabilities using the NCCD Adjustments.</li> </ul> <b>ACHIEVED</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Make informed decisions on the categorisation of students using the NCCD levels of adjustment.</li> </ul> <b>ACHIEVED</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Keep up to date data on students to comply with the requirements of NCCD.</li> </ul> <b>ACHIEVED</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Understand the way in which the data is reported and used.</li> </ul> <b>ACHIEVED</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>75% of workshop participants report better understanding of the NCCD</li> </ul> <b>100% ACHIEVED</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>50% of schools report improvements in data collection practices within their schools</li> </ul> <b>100% ACHIEVED</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>100% of NT Independent Schools will have access to up to date information and timely assistance in understanding their requirements in regard to NCCD.</li> </ul> <b>100% ACHIEVED</b>	One workshop was held rather than two. This was attended by 70% of AISNT member schools. The feedback by participants demonstrated a dramatic improvement in understanding the requirements of NCCD. It also resulted in requests from 55% of the participants for assistance with implementation at the school level.  Assistance to schools was provided via individual school visits when possible.  Approximately 50% of the assistance to schools had to be offered as online and phone support due to the limitations due to COVID-19.
<b>2. Assisting in the implementation and delivery of NAPLAN online</b> Bilateral Reform Direction A: Implementation of NAPLAN Online This project is a continuation of the previous work program we have undertaken in this area of reform.	AISNT will work closely with individual schools and systems to provide support, assistance and advice in regard to the readiness and implementation of NAPLAN Online. AISNT will work closely with the National bodies including ACARA and ESA as well as the NT Minister and Department of Education to assist schools in the transfer to NAPLAN Online. This will include the provision of: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>accurate and timely Information.</li> <li>professional development for individual schools, groups of schools and at general meetings.</li> <li>assisting individual schools with implementation.</li> </ol>	School and system leaders and staff should: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Know and adhere to the timelines related to the implementation of NAPLAN Online.</li> </ul> <b>ACHIEVED</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Understand and abide by their responsibilities in regard to the implementation of NAPLAN Online.</li> </ul> <b>ACHIEVED</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ensure their readiness for the implementation of NAPLAN Online.</li> </ul> <b>ACHIEVED</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>100% of schools will be prepared to undertake NAPLAN online as per the agreed schedule.</li> </ul> <b>100% ACHIEVED</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>100% of Independent Schools will have access to up to date information and timely assistance in understanding their requirements for the introduction of NAPLAN Online.</li> </ul> <b>100% ACHIEVED</b>	AISNT worked with the NT Department of Education (NTDoE) to identify and assist member schools who required assistance to prepare for NAPLAN Online.  100% of AISNT member schools had in school assistance by an AISNT and/or NTDoE NAPLAN Officer.
<b>3. Improving governance</b> Bilateral reform direction B: Improving governance through training and resource support.	AISNT will provide the following assistance to schools through workshops and meetings as well as the provision of timely advice and response to requests for information and assistance. <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>AISNT will provide individual schools and systems with support, assistance and advice in regard to improving school governance.</li> <li>AISNT will provide individual schools and systems with support, assistance and advice in regard to improving school financial management processes.</li> <li>AISNT will work with a consultant to provide governance sessions through forums.</li> <li>AISNT will play an instrumental role in providing advice to both levels of Government in</li> </ol>	School and system leaders and governing bodies should: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Understand and implement the governance structure, roles and compliance requirements for their school.</li> </ul> <b>ACHIEVED</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Understand and show evidence, as required, that their school is complying with the requirements of registration.</li> </ul> <b>ACHIEVED</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Understand the financial responsibility and demonstrate that they meet the compliance requirements in regard to government funding.</li> </ul> <b>ACHIEVED</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Have in place an appropriate constitution, company documents or rule book by which they are governed.</li> </ul> <b>ACHIEVED</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>75% of schools provided with professional learning and/or advice/support indicate improvements to governance arrangements</li> </ul> <b>90% ACHIEVED</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>75% of schools provided with assistance/support/advice and/or professional learning/training in regard to financial management procedures and processes, report improvement in practice.</li> </ul> <b>90% ACHIEVED</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>100% of NT Independent Schools will have access to up to date information and timely assistance in understanding their requirements in regard to Governance and Financial Management.</li> </ul> <b>100% ACHIEVED</b>	One workshop was held to which all schools were invited. 65% of member schools and 100% of Systems sent participants.  COVID restricted our ability to visit schools, particularly the remote member schools. Services were provided online or by phone. There was limited access to provide support for school Board members I the remote schools. The remote communities were closed under the biosecurity emergency direction. 50% of AISNT member schools were restricted under this direction.  All schools were provided with information and services via phone, email and online.

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	<p>regard to legislation, regulations and policies in regards to school governance and financial requirements. This will include consultation on the review of the NT Education Act.</p> <p>V. AISNT will provide advice, assistance and support to new schools in setting up their governance structures including their constitutions and business plans.</p> <p>VI. AISNT will provide assistance to schools in relation to registration requirements including providing panel members for assessments.</p>			
<p><b>4. Enhancing the National Evidence Base.</b></p> <p>Bilateral Reform Direction C(i): Enhancing the National Evidence Base</p> <p>This project is a continuation of the previous work program we have undertaken in this area of reform.</p>	<p>AISNT will work with the departments of the other sectors of education in the NT and with the Australian Government Department of Education to further the work on the enhancement of a national evidence base to support improved understanding of student progression. This work will be inter-sectorial in nature and therefore dependent on the cooperation and timing of the other sectors and departments involved.</p> <p>AISNT will work closely with the Independent schools in our sector to assist them in forwarding this work.</p> <p>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.</p>	<p>School and system leaders and staff should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Understand that work will be undertaken across all sectors and jurisdictions to implement a national unique student identifier for all students in Australian schools.</li> </ul> <p><b>ACHIEVED</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Work with the AISNT to contribute to the implementation of the national unique student identifiers.</li> </ul> <p><b>ACHIEVED</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Understand the relevance and importance of the introduction of the national unique student identifiers to improve knowledge and understanding of student progression which improves the national evidence base.</li> </ul> <p><b>ACHIEVED</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>100% of school principals in NT Independent schools understand that there is a commitment to developing national unique student identifiers.</li> </ul> <p><b>100% ACHIEVED</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>100% of NT Independent schools take part in the process to develop national unique student identifiers.</li> </ul> <p><b>100% ACHIEVED</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>100% of NT Independent schools understand the significance of creating national unique student identifiers in improving the knowledge and understanding of student progression to improve the national evidence base.</li> </ul> <p><b>100% ACHIEVED</b></p>	<p>NTDoE undertook very high-level preliminary work on the Unique Student Identifier (USI) with other States/Territories and the Australian Government.</p> <p>100% of AISNT member schools were made aware of the intent to introduce a USI and they were provided with any information that became available.</p> <p>As this work continued as high-level negotiations, schools were not able to take part in the development of the process.</p>
<p><b>5. Schools' Quality Improvement</b></p> <p>Bilateral Reform Direction B: Support teachers through a system of coaching and mentoring to build teacher and school leader capability to ensure students have quality teachers.</p>	<p>Provide professional development and training for school and system leaders and staff with an emphasis on the National and NT priorities Including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Quality leadership and Governance professional development sessions for school leaders led by Dr Stephen Brown.</li> <li>Improving outcomes for all students through further work on Relationship Based learning with Dr George Otero. Hold a week intensive certification course with George Otero as facilitator.</li> <li>The continuation of the work already commenced in improving education through international connectedness with Edgar Qian. Continued employment of an FTE International Education Officer</li> <li>The provision of support and assistance for schools in providing quality and meaningful advice and assistance with curriculum in the area of ecological sustainability. AISNT works closely with Professor Paul Clarke and Keep Australia Beautiful NT on this area of reform.</li> </ul>	<p>School and system board members, leaders and staff should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Have improved understanding of school leadership as it relates to their school.</li> </ul> <p><b>ACHIEVED</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Understand the importance of relationship in improving student outcomes. Improved understanding in effective strategies to improve student attendance and engagement.</li> </ul> <p><b>ACHIEVED</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Know and understand education in their schools in the context of the global society including international trends and priorities. Including innovative and creative pedagogy to inform future global priorities in education.</li> </ul> <p><b>ACHIEVED</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Know and understand the purpose of education from an ecological sustainable perspective.</li> </ul> <p><b>ACHIEVED</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>75% of NT Independent Schools participate in workshops with Dr Stephen Brown.</li> </ul> <p><b>100% ACHIEVED</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>75% of NT Independent Schools participate in the forums with Dr George Otero improved understanding in community led schools to encourage effective strategies to improve student attendance and engagement.</li> </ul> <p><b>100% ACHIEVED</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>70% of NT Independent schools will have access to the opportunities, information and resources that are provided under the global Education project.</li> </ul> <p><b>100% ACHIEVED</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>100% of NT Independent Schools will have access to the information and resources developed under the ecological sustainability project.</li> </ul> <p><b>100% ACHIEVED</b></p>	<p>The forums with Dr George Otero were cancelled due to COVID-19. AISNT provided details of available resources for schools and held ZOOM meetings for schools who requested professional development on relationships.</p>

**2020 Budget expenditure**

<b>Project</b>	<b>Reform support funding</b>
<b>NCCD Quality Assurance and Moderation</b> Two workshops. Offer individual school sessions for all schools. Provide advice and communications to all NT independent schools.	\$57,000
<b>NAPLAN online</b> Work with NT Dept. Ed. To assist NT independent schools. Includes school visits. Provide information & assistance for schools as requested. Provide advice & communications to all NT independent schools.	\$48,000
<b>Governance and Financial management</b> Dr Stephen Brown provide Governance training & workshop on principles/processes of good governance & financial management. Consultants support/advice to AISNT & schools. Provide info/assistance, advice/communications to NT independent schools.	\$63,000
<b>Enhancing the National evidence base</b> Two information sessions on USI. Provide information & assistance on progress/requirements as this develops. Provide advice/communications.	\$27,000
<b>Schools' Quality improvement</b> Dr Otero certification week; part-time International Education Officer; maintain/develop ecological sustainability across curriculum.	\$78,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$273,000</b>