# PROJECT AGREEMENT FOR INDEPENDENT PUBLIC SCHOOLS INITIATIVE

An agreement between:

- the Commonwealth of Australia; and
- Northern Territory of Australia.

This project will increase the autonomy of government schools in Northern Territory.

# Project Agreement for Independent Public Schools Initiative

#### **PRELIMINARIES**

- 1. This Project Agreement (the Agreement) is created subject to the provisions of the Intergovernmental Agreement on Federal Financial Relations (IGA FFR) and should be read in conjunction with that Agreement and its Schedules, which provide information in relation to performance reporting and payment arrangements under the IGA FFR.
- 2. This Agreement will support the increased autonomy in some 1,500 government schools across Australia including through greater engagement of parents and local communities in school decision making and the provision of professional development for principals, school leaders and school communities through:
  - (a) focus on local governance;
  - (b) increased accountability to the local community;
  - (c) the use of streamlined or one-line budgets;
  - (d) local management of school facilities; and
  - (e) increased delegation over staffing for school principals.
- 3. This Agreement, including its Schedule, constitutes the entire agreement for this project.

#### PART 1 - FORMALITIES

## Parties to this Agreement

4. This Agreement is between the Commonwealth of Australia (the Commonwealth) and Northern Territory.

# Term of the Agreement

5. This Agreement will commence as soon as the Commonwealth and Northern Territory sign the Agreement and will expire on 30 June 2017 or on completion of the project, including final performance reporting and processing of final payments, unless terminated earlier or extended as agreed in writing by the Parties.

#### PART 2 - PROJECT OUTPUTS

- 6. The outputs of this Agreement are activities to assist government schools in transitioning to greater independence.
- 7. The specific outputs to be achieved by Northern Territory are described in the Independent Public Schools Implementation Proposal at Schedule 1 of this Agreement.

#### PART 3 - ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF EACH PARTY

#### Role of the Commonwealth

- 8. The Commonwealth will be responsible for:
  - (a) monitoring and assessing the achievements of Northern Territory against its Implementation Proposal in the delivery of the Independent Public Schools Initiative under this Agreement to ensure that outputs are delivered within the agreed timeframe; and
  - (b) providing a financial contribution to Northern Territory to support the implementation of this Agreement.

## **Role of Northern Territory**

- 9. Northern Territory will be responsible for:
  - (a) all aspects of delivering on the project outputs set out in this Agreement; and
  - (b) reporting on the delivery of outputs as set out in Part 4 Performance Requirements, Reporting and Payments.

#### **Shared roles**

10. Both Parties will meet the requirements of Schedule E, Clause 26 of the IGA FFR, by ensuring that prior agreement is reached on the nature and content of any events, announcements, promotional material or publicity relating to activities under this Agreement, and that the roles of both Parties will be acknowledged and recognised appropriately.

# PART 4 — PERFORMANCE REQUIREMENTS, REPORTING AND PAYMENTS

11. Table 1 summarises the performance requirements for the project, relevant reporting dates and expected payments to be made, subject to the annual performance report demonstrating that the milestones have been met.

Table 1: Milestones, reporting and payment summary

Outputs	Milestones	Report due	Payment
Increased autonomy in government schools in accordance with clause 7 of this Agreement	Agreement to Implementation Proposal	n/a	\$0.23M
7 of this Agreement	Achievement of scheduled progress against the agreed Project Implementation Proposal	30 April 2015 covering the 1 July 2014 to 31 March 2015 period	\$0.46m
	Achievement of scheduled progress against the agreed Project Implementation Proposal	30 April 2016 covering the 1 April 2015 to 31 March 2016 period	\$0.46m
	Achievement of scheduled progress against the agreed Project Implementation Proposal	30 April 2017 covering the 1 April 2016 to 31 March 2017 period	\$0.46m

#### Reporting arrangements

- 12. Northern Territory will provide the Commonwealth with performance reports in accordance with Table 1 of this Agreement, consistent with the agreed Independent Public Schools Implementation Proposal included at Schedule 1.
- 13. If all scheduled progress has not been completed by 31 March 2017, then Northern Territory will also provide the Commonwealth a final performance report within 90 days of the completion of the project, covering achievement of scheduled progress against the Implementation Proposal for the 1 April 2017 to 31 December 2017 period.

#### PART 5 - FINANCIAL ARRANGEMENTS

- 14. The Commonwealth will provide a total financial contribution to Northern Territory of \$1.61 million in respect of this Agreement. All payments are GST exclusive.
- 15. The Commonwealth's funding contribution will not be reduced were Northern Territory to secure funding from other activity partners through innovative and collaborative partnerships.

16. The Commonwealth's financial contribution to the operation of this Agreement, including through National Partnership payments to Northern Territory paid in accordance with Schedule D — Payment Arrangements of the IGA FFR, are shown in Table 2.

Table 2: Estimated financial contributions

(\$ million)	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	Total
Estimated total budget	0.23	0.46	0.46	0.46	1.61
Less estimated National Partnership payments	0.23	0.46	0.46	0.46	1.61
Balance of non-Commonwealth contributions	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0

17. Having regard to the agreed estimated costs of the project specified in this Agreement, Northern Territory will not be required to pay a refund to the Commonwealth if the actual cost of the project is less than the agreed estimated cost of the project. Similarly, Northern Territory bears all risk should the costs of the project exceed the agreed estimated costs. The Parties acknowledge that this arrangement provides the maximum incentive for Northern Territory to deliver projects cost effectively and efficiently.

# PART 6 - GOVERNANCE ARRANGEMENTS

# **Enforceability of the Agreement**

18. The Parties do not intend any of the provisions of this Agreement to be legally enforceable. However, that does not lessen the Parties' commitment to this Agreement.

## Variation of the Agreement

- 19. The Agreement may be amended at any time by agreement in writing by both the Parties.
- 20. Either Party to the Agreement may terminate their participation in the Agreement at any time by notifying the other Party in writing.

# Delegations

21. The Commonwealth Minister for Education may delegate the assessment of performance against the Project Implementation Proposal and the authorisation of related project payments to senior Commonwealth officials, having regard to the financial and policy risks associated with those payments.

# Dispute resolution

- 22. Either Party may give notice to the other Party of a dispute under this Agreement.
- 23. Officials of both Parties will attempt to resolve any dispute in the first instance.
- 24. If a dispute cannot be resolved by officials, it may be escalated to the relevant Ministers.

The Parties	have conf	irmed thei	r commitn	nent to th	nis agreeme	ent as fol	lows:

**Signed** for and on behalf of the Commonwealth of Australia by

# The Honourable Christopher Pyne MP

Minister for Education

Date:

**Signed** for and on behalf of the the Northern Territory of Australia by

The Honourable Peter Chandler MLA

Minister for Education

Date:

# Schedule 1 – Northern Territory: Independent Public Schools Implementation Proposal

#### 1. Current level of autonomy

Government schools in the Northern Territory (NT) already enjoy a relatively high degree of autonomy, particularly in the area of local governance where the operations and scope of school councils are embedded in legislation. Schools in the NT are also responsible for making decisions across a range of other areas of their operations including facilities, as well as human and financial management.

#### 1. Local governance

Incorporated School Councils, elected by the school community, work under approved constitutions and:

- have authority to employ staff to assist deliver the functions of the school council under private sector industrial awards and conditions;
- have involvement in the selection of the principal and in the development of their job description;
- o advise the principal in relation to the job descriptions for teaching and support staff;
- o assist with implementation the educational policies of the school and can inquire into and identify particular areas of educational need;
- o approve the allocation of the school budget;
- determine and regulate the use of school buildings or grounds for the benefit of the local community;
- o exercise general control over school buildings and grounds and can with permission of the Chief Executive, control the conduct of work being undertaken on them; and
- o raise funds for the school.

#### 2. The use of consolidated or one-line operating budgets

Schools have consolidated operational grant funding that comprises approximately 15 per cent of their total funding allocation. These enable local school decisions over

- o relief teachers;
- essential services;
- o educational operations; and
- o property management.

Schools have the authority to determine their teaching and learning program in accordance with the directions set by the Northern Territory Board of Studies, and to choose the programs they are

implementing to support this within their staffing allocation and budget.

Schools can access student support services at the central, regional and in some case school levels. Schools also have the option of engaging independent specialist services (ie speech pathologists, psychologists) where they have funding available within their school budget to do so.

#### 3. Delegation over staffing for school principals

Staff in NT Government schools are currently allocated via a staffing formula which determines the distributions for each site, based on the numbers and year levels of students. Additional 'out of model' staffing is provided to account for specific school contextual needs, for example Low Socio Economic Status or English as an Additional Language/Dialect Learners. In terms of school staffing arrangements, principals have:

- flexibility to negotiate the school's staffing profile (teaching, administrative and school support staff) in line with resources provided through the staffing formula to ensure they have the appropriate mix to support the delivery of the teaching and learning program;
- o industrial relations capacity to progress graduate teachers through salary increment levels at an accelerated rate;
- authority to approve leave for teachers with the exception of study leave and leave without pay;
- o authority over recruitment decisions for positions within their school. This is managed through a data base of applicants and a centralised online recruitment system. Schools are also expected to assist with the management and placement of excess staff.

#### 4. Local management of school facilities

Schools in the NT have:

- flexibility to manage urgent minor repairs to facilities (ie faults, breakdowns < \$5 000) and engage contractors, with the exception of heating, ventilation and air conditioning. For major repairs and maintenance (> \$5,000), schools require pre-approval of funds and to engage contractors:
- flexibility to undertake discretionary maintenance with an annual grant of non-urgent minor repairs of up to \$25 000;
- opportunity, with system support and approval, to manage specific maintenance projects; and
- authority to employ grounds management, maintenance, cleaning and gardening staff or contractors.

#### 5. Accountability to the local community

Schools in the NT operate within an Accountability and Performance Improvement Framework and are required to participate in a school review process every four years. Review findings are addressed in their school planning processes and schools are encouraged to share review findings within their school communities.

All schools in the NT are required to produce an Annual Report, which is available online, and provides information on the school's performance and showcases work being undertaken to support student learning outcomes.

#### 2. Element/s of autonomy to be targeted in this initiative and the implementation proposal

From 2015, the NT intends to increase the autonomy of all Government schools through the introduction of two key initiatives:

1. Global School Budgets (GSB); and

#### 2. Independent Public Schools (IPS).

While the Northern Territory *Education Act* does not impede the implementation of these reforms, the current reform of the Act will ensure it supports greater levels of autonomy for schools over the longer term.

The resources provided through this program will be used to support the Territory's school autonomy initiative, particularly in relation to the initial and ongoing cost to build the capacity of school leaders, their business managers and school councils to operate effectively in an increasingly autonomous environment.

#### 1. Global School Budgets

The NT's GSB initiative will be implemented in all 154 schools from the 2015 school year. It will be underpinned by a student centred, needs-based funding model developed from the recommendations of expert consultants who have been engaged to ensure resources are targeted to the learning needs of students in a transparent and equitable manner.

The NT's GSB initiative will meet the following objectives of this program:

#### The use of streamlined or one-line budgets

In addition to the consolidated operational grant funding that is already managed by schools, GSB will provide schools with a one-line budget that enables them to determine the best use of the majority of resources in their schools. Approximately 90 per cent of the available funding to schools will be managed and allocated directly by schools – including resources allocated for staffing, operational and program expenses and some facilities management. The remaining ten per cent of funding will continue to be managed centrally and includes such costs as long service leave and remote conditions of service (ie teacher housing and study leave).

#### Focus on local governance

School councils in the NT are responsible for approving school budgets. As a consequence of GSB and the substantial increase in funding to be administered by schools, their role will be strengthened as they take on greater responsibility to ensure school resources are targeted effectively and efficiently to staffing, programs and operations that support the specific needs of their students.

While principals will have accountability and authority for day-to-day operational management of the school, school councils will play a key role in determining the school's strategic direction and monitoring performance covering student outcomes, staff performance and financial sustainability.

#### Increased delegation over staffing for school principals

Through the introduction of GSB, school staffing will no longer be allocated based on a complex centrally managed staffing formula. Schools will be provided a one-line staffing budget generated by the aggregate needs based funding allocated to their student cohort.

Principals will be able to determine the staffing mix that best suits their student needs. This will need to be done with reference to industrial relations standards and they will continue to assist to manage displaced staff across the system. However, they will have the flexibility to determine staffing needs within the parameters of the funding available to them and the vacancies at their school. This will assist to facilitate, over time, a strong performance based culture in schools.

#### Increased accountability to the local community

GSB will enable locally-determined allocation of approximately 90 per cent of a school's available resources. This increased authority will in turn increase accountability for the decisions made and the process used to allocate these resources. School communities will have unprecedented access to information about the resources available to them and principals and school councils will need to be open and transparent about the choices made to support the school deliver its agreed strategic

direction. School communities can expect to receive open and transparent communication about the outcomes being achieved by the school and how the resource allocation process is supporting its ongoing improvement.

#### 2. Independent Public Schools

The NT's IPS initiative will commence in 2015 and will provide selected schools greater autonomy to manage their operations. The NT's IPS approach will meet the following objectives of this program:

#### The use of streamlined or one-line budgets

All IPS will implement a GSB as outlined in the section above.

#### Focus on local governance

The governance structures at IPS will vary from those in other schools in that they will be governed by a school board which will be encouraged to include not only representation from school stakeholders but also the local the community (ie local business/industry). IPS will be encouraged to consider including board members with relevant specialist professional expertise (ie legal, accounting).

The IPS board's role would not be substantially different from a school council, it still will be responsible for setting the strategic direction and overseeing the implementation of the associated business plan. However, given the school will be operating independently of a regional support structure, a constructive and strong partnership between the board's chairperson and the principal will be critical. Clarity of roles and responsibilities within this relationship will be essential as will the trust of the school community in the decision making processes used within the governance structure. Both the principal and school board will need strong business acumen to ensure financial and legal compliance in their decision making processes, and that they create space for school-wide and classroom based innovation.

It is intended that consideration will be given to the reporting structures for principals to enable them to operate more autonomously and within minimal bureaucracy. This may include enabling them to report directly to the Chief Executive and removing the existing requirement that schools report through a regional structure.

#### Increased delegation over staffing for school principals

All IPS will have the increased flexibility outlined in GSB section above that will enable them to determine the staffing profile to suit their needs.

In addition, there will be increased flexibility for IPS in recruitment and workforce management processes, for example, they will be able to directly advertise their own vacancies. This will provide greater local decision making about the staffing profile at the school and will enable IPS to have full authority over, and therefore accountability for, staffing decisions.

#### Local management of school facilities

IPS may have the option to take on greater responsibility in managing infrastructure projects to a threshold value. The opportunities for this are currently being explored.

#### Increased accountability to the local community

A focus on accountability and school improvement is central to IPS. However, IPS will operate within a differentiated and streamlined accountability structure that is outcomes focused and provides enhanced information to the school community about a school's performance. Resource allocation, system support, programs and performance and accountability requirements will be defined in the

school's strategic plan and agreed between the principal, the school board chairperson and the Chief Executive. The Principal's performance agreement will also been endorsed by the Chairperson and approved by the Chief Executive.

A strategic plan developed by the board and signed by the School Board Chairperson, will be developed to set direction for the school and to identify the key deliverables and indicators it will use to measure performance. It will be made publicly available to the school community. Principals will be required to report progress against this plan to their boards on a quarterly basis and to continue to publish annual reports as per current arrangements.

IPS will be required to participate in an independent school review at least every four years. Findings will be made publicly available and will need to be considered in the school's subsequent strategic planning.

#### 3. Changes to existing practices to increase autonomy

The objectives of the school autonomy initiative in the NT are to improve school performance by:

- 1. Providing schools with greater decision making authority in respect to the management of their operations, particularly in relation to
  - o the management and allocation of resources; and
  - o staff selection, management and development.
- 2. Facilitating greater engagement between the school and community and greater accountability of school performance to the community it serves;
- 3. Minimising bureaucracy and red tape through adaptive and efficient corporate, regional and school support services that are responsive to the intent of school autonomy and support schools to exercise their autonomy to the degree chosen by each individual school community.

There is significant work to do to ensure schools are equipped and supported to operate effectively with increased autonomy and to ensure the systems, policy and capability exists to enable them to succeed in this environment.

The NT is learning from what is being done nationally and internationally in this area to inform the development of both the GSB and IPS models. This work is ongoing and will ensure the best elements of other school autonomy program are used to create an effective model appropriate to the unique NT context.

School principals and their communities will need to empower themselves to operate in the new environment, and actively assist to entrench this reform. Support staff in regional and central offices will also need to change their focus from managing detailed system directed processes and support to providing services and advice in response to the needs of individual schools.

A comprehensive implementation and communications strategy is being developed to support this work. Significant components of this include the development of:

- a new student-centred needs based funding model;
- online tools that provide schools with financial, human and student performance reporting to
  assist monitor their progress and also planning capability to enable them to determine the best
  allocation of available resources;
- a capability development program across all levels of the organisation to assist schools, regional offices as well as corporate and school support services to introduce greater autonomy and

operate effectively under GSB and IPS arrangements;

- a policy framework for IPS and a transparent school selection process;
- an extensive cultural change program that will involve reconsidering how services and support is
  provided to schools and what is needed to ensure schools are supported to operate more
  autonomously;
- revised policy, procedures and operational frameworks that reflect and support more autonomy for schools;
- an evaluation scope that will assist to measure the impact of this reform and inform future roll
  out of school autonomy over the longer-term; and
- a reformed Education Act that will support greater school autonomy over the longer term.

The funding provided under this program will substantially be used to support the development of the online tools for schools and to increase the capability of schools to ensure they are able to operate successfully in an environment of increased authority and accountability.

#### 4. Number of schools targeted for participation in the initiative

All 154 schools in the NT will be implementing GSB from 2015.

IPS in the NT will be an opt in arrangement that is subject to a selection process, and as such there has been no target set for a specific number of IPS, as it will be dependent on the number that choose to apply and can demonstrate readiness against the selection criteria.

It is most likely however, that in the early years of the program, IPS will come from within the pool of approximately 48 per cent (74) of the NTs schools located in provincial and remote (regional) areas. It is not anticipated that more than five sites will commence in 2015. It is expected that numbers will grow over time as momentum builds and schools have had the opportunity to consider the IPS model in their context and prepare their staff and school communities for transition. Should the program grow at a rate of up to five schools per annum, by the end of 2017, up to 20 per cent of the NT's provincial and remote schools would be participating in the initiative.

Cohort	Year of Operation	Number of schools
1	2014	All schools will be involved in capability development programs to prepare for GSB over this period.
2	2015	All 154 government schools commence GSB  Phase 1 - IPS commence with up to 5 schools
3	2016	All 154 government schools continuing to implement GSB  Phase 2 – IPS commence – up to 5 additional schools giving a total of up to 10 IPS schools
4	2017	All 154 government schools continuing to implement GSB  Phase 3 – IPS commence –up to 5 additional schools giving a total of up to 15 IPS schools
Total		All 154 government schools implementing GSB and up to 15 IPS schools.

<sup>\*</sup>Note: numbers for IPS above are approximate only, and will be dependent on the number that opt in and meet selection requirements.

#### 5. School selection criteria

GSB will be systemically introduced into all schools from 2015. A transparent process will be developed to select schools that will participate in the IPS. IPS will be an opt in arrangement for schools

in the NT that can demonstrate:

- capacity to work more autonomously and assume greater responsibility for their own affairs;
- that there is local support, including of their staff and school council, for becoming an IPS;
- the potential benefits to students and the broader school community.

The NT is intending to adapt an approach similar to that being used in Western Australia where schools respond to an expression of interest to become an IPS, and participate in a development program that

- provides detailed information about the scope and responsibilities of IPS
- assists them to determine their level of readiness to operate more autonomously; and
- assists them to measure and demonstrate the level of community and staff support for the change.

The development program will culminate in a formal selection process which will assess each applicant school's claims against the selection criteria. Schools not successful in this process will be provided feedback and support to assist them prepare for future IPS transition.

#### 6. Implementation activities

Funding from the Australian Government for this proposal will be provided as follows:

2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	TOTAL
\$230 000	\$460 000	\$460 000	\$460 000	\$1 610 000

This funding will be used to provide professional learning and systems over the term of the agreement to ensure schools are well prepared and continue to operate successfully in an environment where they have greater control over decision making, and frame of accountability that goes with it.

The funding under this program will be used as follows:

#### 1. Capacity Building Program for GSB

A comprehensive and ongoing capacity building program will be provided for principals, school councils and business managers in 154 schools in varying contexts across the NT, to enable them to manage GSB with a strong understanding of:

- effective financial management process and planning;
- staff profiling and employee cost modelling; and
- the legislative and industrial relations frameworks which they work under.

The program will include particularly intensive support in Semester 2, 2014 prior to the commencement of GSB, however will continue to be refined and delivered over the life of this funding arrangement to continue to grow effective business and financial management capability.

School principals will also be able to access ongoing professional support and coaching over the term of this funding arrangement to assist them to effectively and efficiently plan and manage their resources.

#### 2. Online Planning, Reporting and Performance Monitoring Tools for GSB

A suite of tools will be needed to assist schools to provide effective budget and staff planning, and to monitor and report their performance to their school community.

Initial development of these tools is required and ongoing adaptation will be necessary as schools commence working with them and seek greater output from them. School principals and business

managers will access these tools on a day-to-day basis to review their performance and plan for future resource use.

Extensive and ongoing training for school staff in how to use these tools will be provided to ensure they make best use of the information available and use it to inform their school communities on matters of school performance.

#### 3. Capacity Building Program for IPS

A program to support schools identify their readiness to commence operating as an IPS will be provided, and selected IPS schools will have access to a further support program to assist them transition to operating under this model. The program will be offered in an ongoing way throughout this funding arrangement for both new and continuing IPS schools. It will cover

- empowerment and taking advantage of the level of autonomy available;
- assessing readiness for transition to IPS and engaging the school community in this discussion;
- effective workforce planning including recruitment and performance management; and
- effective business acumen (ie strategic planning for education and business performance, managing a board, risk management and performance monitoring).

#### 4. Transition Grants for IPS

Transition grants of up to \$50 000 will be available to IPS to assist them prepare for their commencement. These funds will be used at the school's discretion but may be applied to additional administrative or financial staffing support, to access specialist expertise or school specific professional development programs.

The NT will acknowledge funding provided under the Australian Government's IPS program for these activities.

Details of specific activities to be undertaken and outputs to be delivered, including in the following table:

Reporting period	Implementation Activities
1 July 2014 to 31 March 2015	<ul> <li>Principals, school councils and business managers from all schools will be involved in capability development programs to prepare for GSB</li> <li>Development of online planning, reporting and performance monitoring tools for GSB</li> <li>Develop and commence of IPS capacity building program</li> <li>Selection process for IPS</li> </ul>
1 April 2015 to 31 March 2016	<ul> <li>All 154 government schools commence implementation of GSB</li> <li>Further GSB training and professional development for school principals, school councils and business managers</li> <li>Continuing refinement, provision and training of online planning, reporting and performance monitoring tools for GSB for all schools</li> <li>IPS capacity building program to continue in selected schools</li> <li>Selected IPS receive transitional grants of up to \$50,000</li> </ul>
1 April 2016 to 31 March 2017	<ul> <li>All 154 government schools continuing to implement GSB</li> <li>Further GSB training and professional development for school principals, school councils and business managers as required</li> <li>Continuing refinement, provision and training of online planning, reporting and performance monitoring tools for GSB for all schools</li> <li>IPS capacity building program for newly selected schools and continuation</li> </ul>

1 April 2017 to 31 December 2017	<ul> <li>of training for existing IPS</li> <li>Newly selected IPS receive transitional grants of up to \$50,000</li> <li>All 154 government schools continuing to implement GSB</li> <li>Further GSB training and professional development for school principals, school councils and business managers as required</li> <li>Continuing refinement, provision and training of online planning, reporting</li> </ul>
· .	Further GSB training and professional development for school principals,
31 December 2017	school councils and business managers as required
	Continuing refinement, provision and training of online planning, reporting and performance monitoring tools for GSB for all schools
	IPS capacity building program to be undertaken by selected schools and
	continuation of training for existing IPS
	Newly selected IPS receive transitional grants of up to \$50,000

#### 7. Evidence of impact

The NT will report as per part 4 of the Project Agreement.

In addition, the NT intends to develop a formal evaluation of this program to assist assess the extent to which it has met its objectives and to inform further roll out of the school autonomy agenda in the NT.

The scope of this evaluation will be developed during 2014 and is likely to involve the expertise of external evaluators to assist develop a formative evaluation scope that is likely to:

- identify the indicators for measuring the success of school autonomy in the NT;
- measure the impact of the initiative against these indicators and analyse the extent to which they have contributed to improving the overall performance of schools;
- identify issues that are impacting on the efficiency and effectiveness of implementation, and areas where there is demonstrable success; and
- provide advice to guide future implementation of school autonomy and the areas in which further development should be considered.

The evaluation will take into consideration the extent to which evidence can be found on the impact of the program on student outcomes noting that there is little existing evidence to suggest a causal link, particularly in the early stages of implementation.

It will also give consideration to the changes in school leadership practices, parental involvement and/or community engagement as a result of this program of reform.

Findings from this evaluation will be used to inform reporting to the Australian Government on this initiative.

The Parties have confirmed their commitment to this agreement as follows:

Signed for and on behalf of the Commonwealth of Australia by

The Honourable Christopher Pyne MP
Minister for Education

Date: \(

·Signed for behalf and on the Northern Territory of Australia by

The Honourable Peter Chandler MLA

Minister for Education

Date: 2.6.14