

Northern Territory Remote Aboriginal Investment 2024-25 – Children and Schooling (Government Schools)

FEDERATION FUNDING AGREEMENT – AFFORDABLE HOUSING,
COMMUNITY SERVICES AND OTHER

Table 1: Formalities and operation of schedule	
Parties	Commonwealth Northern Territory of Australia
Duration	This Schedule is expected to expire on 30 June 2025
Purpose	<p>Northern Territory Remote Aboriginal Investment 2024-25</p> <p>This schedule forms part of the continued investment in Northern Territory remote communities for the Northern Territory Remote Aboriginal Investment. The aim of the investment is to ensure First Nations people living in remote communities have equitable access to mainstream services in a way that is relevant to their context.</p> <p>The parties recognise the importance of continued investment in service delivery that benefits Aboriginal people in remote areas of the Northern Territory is essential to achieving the socio-economic targets under the National Agreement on Closing the Gap.</p> <p>This Schedule will build on investments made under the National Partnership on Northern Territory Remote Aboriginal Investment and replaces that Agreement.</p> <p>The reporting milestones and activities under this Schedule will inform an evaluation approach to identify agreed priorities. The evaluation will be governed by the Joint Steering Committee. The evaluation framework will be aligned with principles of the National Agreement on Closing the Gap.</p> <p>Key data to be included in the evaluation is:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • employment data • client and community experience • data to support achievement of Closing the Gap Priority Reforms and targets • data to support related social outcomes framework(s). <p>Children and Schooling</p> <p>This Schedule will support the delivery of improved school readiness, attendance, attainment and engagement in remote Northern Territory</p>

schools by providing funding to continue agreed activities under four overarching project areas: Foundations, Pathways, Engagement and Workforce.

The project activities are outlined in Attachment A and the program logic is outlined in Attachment B.

This Schedule provides the public with an indication of Commonwealth and Northern Territory effort in relation to the aims that:

- Aboriginal children entering primary schooling have the skills and attributes they need to succeed in their education.
- Aboriginal children at all stages of schooling attend school regularly, are incentivized to attend through a culturally relevant education delivered in a physically and culturally safe environment, and are supported in their education by their families and community.
- Aboriginal student outcomes are improved through a consistent, system-wide approach to providing highly skilled and motivated educators and leaders in our schools.
- Aboriginal students complete schooling well equipped to take up employment, training and higher education opportunities.
- Aboriginal students achieve age benchmarks in literacy and numeracy in their primary years of schooling, and plan for their secondary education with confidence.

This Schedule will support increased local Aboriginal employment, professionalisation and career development in the delivery of government-funded services. The goal of increasing local Aboriginal employment needs to be undertaken in the context of improving Aboriginal student outcomes as the first priority.

In addition to this Schedule, 14 non-government schools in remote and very remote areas are funded through an agreement between the Commonwealth and the Northern Territory Block Grant Authority.

This Schedule will contribute to the Northern Territory's approach to engagement and attendance, as outlined under the Indigenous Education Strategy 2015-2024, the Education Engagement Strategy 2022-2031 and the Education NT Strategy 2021-2025.

Activities progressed under this Schedule will be developed in such a way that they will be sustainable beyond the term of this Schedule. In particular, activities will continue to focus on community engagement, building the capacity of the Aboriginal community controlled sector, and local decision-making, in line with commitments under the National Agreement on Closing the Gap.

Estimated financial contributions	The Commonwealth will provide an estimated total financial contribution to the Northern Territory of \$26,410,230 in respect of this Schedule.																
	<table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th colspan="3">Table 1</th> </tr> <tr> <th>(\$ million)</th> <th>2024/25</th> <th>Total</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Estimated total budget</td> <td>26.41023</td> <td>26.41023</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Less estimated National Partnership Payments</td> <td>26.41023</td> <td>26.41023</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Balance of non-Commonwealth contributions</td> <td>0.0</td> <td>0.0</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>			Table 1			(\$ million)	2024/25	Total	Estimated total budget	26.41023	26.41023	Less estimated National Partnership Payments	26.41023	26.41023	Balance of non-Commonwealth contributions	0.0
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Additional terms	<p>Definitions</p> <p>References to schools mean government schools located in remote and very remote areas, as defined by the Australian Bureau of Statistics. References to students within this schedule refer to Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander students attending schools in remote or very remote communities, as well as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander students from remote or very remote communities who may be attending school in a provincial area (e.g. boarding school).</p> <p>Role of the Northern Territory</p> <p>In addition to Clause 20 of the Federation Funding Agreement (Role of the States and Territories), the Northern Territory will be responsible for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • maximising opportunities for local businesses and employees to be involved in the delivery of the projects • ensuring that First Nations Australians realise employment and business opportunities by incorporating appropriate First Nations employment and, where relevant, First Nations supplier requirements • seeking to provide opportunities for participation of First Nations businesses in the delivery of capital works. <p>Additionally, the Northern Territory agrees to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • liaise with the Joint Steering Committee prior to the release of any media statements relating to the Schedule. <p>The Northern Territory is committed to increasing attendance for Aboriginal students and recognises the importance of engaging and retaining students in education, particularly in early childhood and the primary years, to establish strong patterns of attendance and contribute to improvements in literacy and numeracy outcomes, and Year 12 or equivalent completions. The Northern Territory recognises that attendance rates are reflective of the relevance and effectiveness of</p>
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education, and will strive to improve delivery of education to ensure it is appropriate and effectively meets the needs of Aboriginal students.

Shared Roles and Responsibilities

The Commonwealth, the Northern Territory and the Aboriginal Peak Organisations Northern Territory will form a Joint Steering Committee that will guide the implementation of this Schedule and related Schedules under the Northern Territory Remote Aboriginal Investment 2024-25, ensuring shared-decision making, transparency and collaboration with Parties to the agreements.

With regards to the Northern Territory Remote Aboriginal Investment 2024-25, the Joint Steering Committee will:

- oversee and monitor remote service delivery under this and related Schedules
- meet at a minimum bi-annually
- support the development of Aboriginal community-controlled organisations to deliver services
- agree key priorities in remote Aboriginal communities in the Northern Territory for future investment
- develop and maintain an evaluation framework to measure the impact and outcomes of priorities delivered under future investments
- establish an appropriate partnership or tripartite agreement to inform future investments, that implements the Priority Reforms under the National Agreement on Closing the Gap.

The Parties acknowledge that some issues affecting educational outcomes are outside the control of schools and the education system, such as health and development of the community and limited economic opportunity in many remote communities. However, the Northern Territory has a principal role in delivering many social services that impact on equitable education outcomes and will use its best endeavours to provide a complementary and coordinated service offering. Further, the Parties are committed to progressing holistic responses and are committed to working with communities, the not-for-profit sector and businesses to make a contribution to addressing these issues.

Table 2: Performance requirements, reporting and payment summary

Output	Performance milestones Reporting period: 1 January – 31 December 2024	Report due	Payment
Foundations – 1	Continued operation of Families as First Teachers (FaFT) in 32 sites.	01 May 2025	\$1,786,793
Foundations – 2	Each FaFT program is delivered at least an average of three days per week.	01 May 2025	\$1,786,793
Foundations – 3	A minimum of 1700 children supported by their families are enrolled in FaFT programs.	01 May 2025	\$1,786,793
Foundations – 4	An adult literacy program to 60 parents and guardians in four sites, reported by gender.	01 May 2025	\$1,786,792
Pathways	Transition support provided to at least 63 remote and very remote government schools that do not offer a Northern Territory Certificate of Education and Training.	01 May 2025	\$3,248,620
Engagement – 1	A minimum of 11 case workers supporting chronically disengaged students and families.	01 May 2025	\$1,077,723
Engagement – 2	The Northern Territory provides evidence to the Commonwealth of an increase in the number of families engaged to improve attendance in remote and very remote schools to 950.	01 May 2025	\$1,077,723
Engagement – 3	The Northern Territory provides evidence to the Commonwealth of community engagement and local decision making unit engaging with 70% of remote and very remote schools.	01 May 2025	\$1,077,723
Workforce	The Northern Territory provides evidence to the Commonwealth of 70% of Aboriginal educators enrolled in further accredited training, reported by gender through the Remote Aboriginal Teacher Education program.	01 May 2025	\$4,114,850
Performance benchmarks	To achieve total funding for each performance benchmark, the Northern Territory must achieve the relevant benchmarks in full. Where a benchmark is not achieved in full, but performance exceeds the baseline set in Table 3, partial payments will be made based on the proportion of each benchmark achieved above the baseline.	01 May 2025	Up to \$4,752,420 (see Table 3 for breakdown)

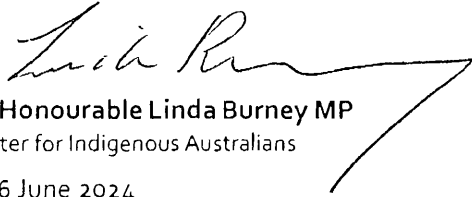
	<p>Partial payment calculation:</p> <p>Where the target has not been met but the benchmark has been maintained or exceeded, a partial payment can be made using the following method:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 50 per cent of payment plus 50 per cent of payment calculated pro rata, based on the proportion of performance benchmark achieved above the baseline. <p>For example: A performance benchmark worth \$200,000 with an agreed baseline of 50 per cent and a target of 60 per cent, but the achievement was 53 per cent the payment will be calculated as 50 per cent for the baseline + the difference between the actual and baseline, divided by the difference between the target and the baseline, multiplied by the remaining 50%. In this example, a partial payment of \$130,000 could be released.</p>		
Capital works	Agree a Capital Works Schedule as per line 4a. Workforce Capital of Attachment B	01 September 2024	nil
Capital works	Delivered as per an agreed Capital Works Schedule.	01 May 2025	\$3.914m

Table 3: Performance Benchmarks

Performance measure	Performance Indicator	Weighting of payment	Baseline	2024 Target		
Families As First Teachers (FaFT) program increase in dosage	10 per cent per year increase in the average number of days a child participates	7.0% (\$332,669.40)	2023 Actual (19 days)	Baseline +10% (20.9 days)		
Transition Support Unit case management retention rate	Retention rate of year seven boarding students case managed by the Transition Support Unit	7.0% (\$332,669.40)	2023 Actual (63.8%)	Baseline + 3% (66.8%)		
Aboriginal Assistant Teachers supported to complete accredited training	Completion rate of enrolled Aboriginal Assistant Teachers in accredited training	6.0% (\$285,145.20)	2023 Actual (46%)	Baseline + 1.5% (47.5%)		
Aboriginal student attendance rate of 90 per cent	Increase in the attendance rate of Aboriginal students in the Northern Territory toward a benchmark of 90 per cent	5.0% (\$237,621.00)	2023 Actual (58%)	Baseline + 3% (61%)		
Aboriginal students attending at least four days per week or more	Increase in the proportion of remote and very remote Aboriginal students attending at least four days per week or more	25.0% (\$1,188,105.00)	2023 Actual (15%)	Baseline + 1.1% (16.1%)		
Aboriginal students in government schools in remote areas achieving above 'Needs additional support' National Assessment Program – Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN) reading and numeracy until 31 December 2024	Increase in the proportion of remote and very remote Aboriginal students achieving above 'Needs additional support' proficiency standard in NAPLAN reading and numeracy until 31 December 2024	Literacy	Year 3	7.0% (\$332,669.40)	2023 results	Baseline +1%
			Year 5	7.0% (\$332,669.40)	2023 results	Baseline +1%
			Year 7	6.0% (\$285,145.20)	2023 results	Baseline +1%
			Year 9	5.0% (\$237,621.00)	2023 results	Baseline +1%
		Numeracy	Year 3	7.0% (\$332,669.40)	2023 results	Baseline +1%
			Year 5	7.0% (\$332,669.40)	2023 results	Baseline +1%
			Year 7	6.0% (\$285,145.20)	2023 results	Baseline +1%
			Year 9	5.0% (\$237,621.00)	2023 results	Baseline +1%

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

Signed for and on behalf of the Commonwealth
of Australia by



The Honourable Linda Burney MP
Minister for Indigenous Australians

26 June 2024

Signed for and on behalf of the
Northern Territory by



The Honourable Eva Lawler MLA
Chief Minister

28 June 2024

Attachment A – Project activities

1. This schedule contains four activities with potential to have a direct and measurable positive impact on student outcomes. Activities also include provision for the development of systems data collection and monitoring of outcomes, as well as evaluation.
2. Activity 1 — Foundations — the Evaluation and Consultations process of Stage 1 of the Northern Territory's Indigenous Education Strategy 2015-2024 (the Strategy) recommended the consolidation of services that have demonstrated success and the strengthening of parental engagement and school readiness through Families as First Teachers (FaFT) Programs; with a particular focus on increasing the number of days attended per week. This activity acknowledges the importance of establishing strong patterns of attendance in early childhood as a precursor to strong school attendance in the primary and secondary years.
3. Activity 2 — Pathways — the Evaluation and Consultations process of Stage 1 of the Strategy highlighted the importance of a quality secondary education in providing opportunities for Aboriginal students in accessing employment, training and further education. There are two valid options for secondary education in the Northern Territory. The first model is parents elect for their children to undertake senior secondary and the majority of middle years schooling in regional and urban schools, supported with residential arrangements. The second option is that parents elect for their children to undertake a secondary education program (Employment Pathways) in their community understanding that this program provides pathways suited to employment within the local community. The Transition Support Unit (TSU) is focused on ensuring secondary education provision meets the needs of remote and very remote students and communities.
4. Activity 3 — Engagement — prioritises the importance of Aboriginal students attending school every day. Research clearly identifies that without at least four days attendance at school per week, students find it difficult to achieve outcomes and national benchmarks. The delivery of quality education that is tailored to meet the needs of Aboriginal students is critical to their ongoing engagement in education throughout their years of schooling. The 2014 review of Aboriginal education in the Northern Territory, *A Share in the Future*, identified many of the contributing factors that lead to poor school attendance rates for remote and very remote schools. School efforts need to be enhanced by a whole of government approach that addresses the existing issues of welfare reform, employment opportunities and community safety issues. Governments will also seek to align efforts in these areas.
5. Activity 4 — Workforce — the Evaluation and Consultations process of Stage 1 of the Strategy highlighted the importance of attracting and retaining high quality teaching staff and principals in remote settings and increasing the number of local Aboriginal employees, including assistant teachers, teachers and principals. The focus on high quality staff is to ensure Aboriginal children receive quality educational programs that optimise learning.

Attachment B – Program logic

Activity	Outputs	Outcomes	Objectives
1. Foundations	<p>Across all Families as First Teachers (FaFT) sites develop place-based strategies to engage parents to have their children participating more regularly.</p> <p>Deliver Adult Literacy training focused on improving levels of parental engagement in their children's schooling. Programs will be provided for both Aboriginal men and women at existing Child and Family Centres.</p>	Aboriginal children entering primary schooling have the skills and attributes they need to succeed in their education.	<p>Enhance the delivery of early childhood education to remote and very remote children through:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • more exposure of children to successful programs • students having access to integrated early childhood services
2. Pathways	Actively prepare Year 6 and 7 Aboriginal students and their parents from very remote communities to engage with and complete secondary school boarding. Identify and support students at boarding schools to transition to work and further study on completion of their schooling.	Aboriginal students complete schooling well equipped to take up employment, training and higher education opportunities.	<p>Provide access to secondary education to remote and very remote students that meets the academic and vocational aspirations of students and families.</p> <p>To improve the completion of secondary education of students from remote and very remote communities in the NT.</p>
3. Engagement	<p>Work with the Commonwealth to repurpose existing attendance resources to develop new initiatives that enable children to access school, engage in the classroom and achieve growth.</p> <p>Support Senior Attendance and Truancy Officers (SATOs) or similar, to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • work both inside and outside the school fence, supporting students on their re-entry to school • work with other agencies to refer families where there are underlying issues that need to be addressed • liaise and work with the Education Engagement Attainment Initiatives team within the community and relevant cultural authorities • develop strong relationships with schools • coordinate home visits • engage with early learner families • engage in incentive and reward activities • effectively report responses to community issues (volatile substance abuse, night-time activity etc) 	Aboriginal children at all stages of schooling attend school regularly and are supported in their education by their families and community.	<p>Increase community engagement, including with relevant cultural authorities and governance in remote schools with a specific focus on improving:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a) literacy and numeracy b) students attending primary school four days per week or more <p>Increase enrolment and attendance of remote and very remote students through alignment of efforts (Commonwealth and Northern Territory) to improve school attendance.</p>

Activity	Outputs	Outcomes	Objectives
4. Workforce	Aboriginal educators are enrolled in further accredited training.	Aboriginal student outcomes are improved through a consistent, system-wide approach to providing highly skilled and motivated educators and leaders in our schools.	Support and develop a highly skilled and motivated education workforce through: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • comprehensive staff induction and preparation • strengthened professional development and training
4a. Workforce Capital*	Strategically target specific housing initiatives of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New housing • Upgrades to existing housing • Increased security <p>The funding will ensure that appropriate housing is available for teachers to deliver quality education in very remote schools.</p>	Improved teacher housing will contribute to attracting and retaining a skilled and motivated teacher workforce.	Support and develop a highly skilled and motivated education workforce through: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improved teacher housing (refurbishment and construction).

*New houses counted towards meeting milestones under this Implementation Plan may not be counted towards meeting milestones or performance benchmarks under any other agreement, and vice versa, at any time.