Improving Indigenous Education Outcomes

Schedule 4.2

Issues

The parties agree the key issues to be addressed are:

- Accelerating Literacy is one of the few interventions capable of yielding demonstrable improvements in Indigenous literacy. The program leaders for Accelerating Literacy (Dr Brian Gray et al) are based at the University of Canberra. Demand for the program is growing nationally and has brought its developers to the point of needing to package their methodologies so many can implement it.

- A Centre of Excellence in Literacy and Numeracy would, in the first instance:
  a. Develop and deliver short courses to teachers working with the Accelerating Literacy approach
  b. Develop and deliver tertiary courses at both undergraduate and graduate levels
  c. Publish and promulgate a theoretical rationale of the program
  d. Maintain longitudinal assessment at key sites for research purposes

- In the longer term, the Centre would also build expertise and address the key research questions, which beset educational efforts in the Territory. It would explore, research and evaluate interventions beyond the Accelerating Literacy program with a view to improving educational outcomes for Indigenous people across the board.

- The design and delivery of effective education solutions will ensure the Centre becomes a nationally and internationally recognised Centre of Excellence in Education Interventions

Strategies

The parties agree the following strategies are to be employed:

Current Strategies:

Phase One:
A small working group comprising Katherine Henderson, Tess Lea and Anna King has been established to coordinate activities under this schedule. This working group has:

- Identified the program implementation resources required by the Department of Employment, Education and Training (DEET) to rollout Accelerated Literacy within willing schools across the Territory, with the goal of reaching 10,000 targeted students by 2008.
- Explored preferred delivery mechanisms, clarifying DEET’s role as purchaser, CDU’s role as service deliverer, brokering expertise from the University of Canberra’s AL team
- Commenced negotiations with the University of Canberra to develop joint capacity to implement the Accelerated Literacy Program in northern Australia as Stage One of an Australia-wide rollout.

**Phase Two** (commencing 2004)

Establish a new task group to:

- Design the CDU delivery mechanisms for a stand-alone post-graduate certificate course designed by the University of Canberra, drawing on existing AL coordinators and experienced teachers to build a cohort of advanced AL practitioners.
- Develop a more comprehensive learning plan integrating DEET-delivered professional development activities with additional university short courses and components of the UC-designed Grad Cert to articulate into nationally accredited qualifications within the University.
- Second curriculum staff to develop teaching resource materials of publishable quality for AL classroom practice
- Transfer AL data repository for NT students from Uni Canberra to DEET warehouse
- Engage research and evaluation staff to commence meta-evaluation of rollout.

Originally, a Centre for Indigenous Literacy and Numeracy was envisaged as necessary to progress this program. With the establishment of the Institute of Advanced Studies within the Charles Darwin University, the need for a separate Centre has been obviated. The School for Social and Policy Research within the Institute of Advanced Studies was established as part of the NTG:CDU Partnership Agreement to focus on priority social policy development issues for northern Australia. To that end, an Education Interventions Research theme is to be established as part of the School for Social and Policy Research, Institute of Advanced Studies. A collaborative partnership between the School and the University of Canberra will be formed, with the aim of building resident AL capacity. In turn, this partnership exercise will be used as the vehicle for building core education intervention research skills, with the premium aim of redressing the achievement gap between Indigenous and non-Indigenous students in the compulsory school aged system. The mission is to develop the research-informed intervention equivalent of the Menzies School of Health Research for the education system.

**2004 / 2005 Goals and Target**

1. Establish a national steering committee
2. Develop a Professional Workforce Training Plan for the NT
3. Get sign off for the National Accelerated Literacy Project Plan and Memorandum of Agreement between partners
4. Ongoing development of professional development courses
5. Provide a Graduate Certificate course in 2005
6. Produce a catalogue of teaching resources (12 titles per annum)
7. Develop a website for teachers/schools to access resources and to provide general information about the approach, and the program
8. Develop a data base to monitor student outcomes
9. Develop assessment PD materials
10. Develop a risk assessment strategy
11. Communication manual
12. Finalise branding and marketing
13. Establish policy and ethics guidelines for the use of information within the project
14. Continue to include new schools
15. Provide effective professional development support and training to new and existing schools and to schools in other jurisdictions
16. Prepare the evaluation and costing project
Performance Indicators

The parties agree the indicators to be used are:

- Collaborative partnership between Charles Darwin University and University of Canberra to grow implementation capacity for Accelerated Literacy within the Northern Territory and, thusly, develop capacity for national rollout, established by March 2004
- Service Agreement established between DEET and CDU by mid 2004
- Graduate Certificate delivered to up to 30 NT teachers in 2004
- Comprehensive training plan designed end 2004
- Pre-service teacher training modules to commence in 2005/6
- Meta-evaluation of program rollout to commence mid–2004
- 12 new schools running AL on whole-school basis by end 2004
- 50 (30 existing, 20 new) schools running AL by end 2006
  - 100 (70 existing, 30 new) schools running AL, and 10,000 target students impacted by AL, by end 2008.

Working Party members

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Don Zoellner
Katherine Henderson
Tess Lea
Anna King
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