

- 1. Australian Acoustic Standards in Schools – Infrastructure funding for acoustic upgrades: If elected, will you commit to immediate funding to complete the school Master Plans for:**
 - a. Yuendumu School,
 - b. Tennant Creek High School, and
 - c. Katherine High School.

In addition, will your party commit to this immediate infrastructure funding to ensure all general learning areas are upgraded to Australian Acoustic Standards for:

- d. Yuendumu School,
- e. Tennant Creek High School, and
- f. Katherine High School.

Hearing health in childhood has been recognised as a significant factor in a child's future achievement. If we are elected, innovative solutions such as training teachers to recognise hearing difficulties, acoustic upgrades to schools and classrooms, and vaccination strategies to prevent otitis media are all on the table.

A Country Liberal Government will develop a strategy to improve outcomes in the first 100 days of Government, in partnership with Government departments, the Commonwealth, NGOs, Communities and stakeholders.

- 2. School Based Policing – Program Reinstatement: If elected, will you adequately resource NT Police to reinstate the School Based Police Program and ensure School Based Police return and remain in schools?**

We recognise the value of school-based policing. We will support the continuation of school-based policing, and will consider expanding it. All positions for school-based policing roles have been filled from within current Northern Territory Police Force (NTPF) capabilities. Our commitment to continuous recruitment of police will mean that police have the confidence and resources to expand programs. Decisions about the expansion of SBP will be made in conjunction with police in respect of their other operational priorities, and in consultation with the individual schools and school communities involved.

- 3. School Based Police Program Expansion in Primary & Secondary Schools: If elected, how much additional funding will you provide to NT Police for the expansion of the School Based Policing program for additional School Based Police for all primary and high schools across the NT? This additional funding must maintain School Based Police positions, in schools, 5 days a week.**

Please refer to question 2.

- 4. Barkly Region – Barkly Region Strategic Plan: If elected, will you commit to work with all Barkly schools to develop a Strategic Plan for the region that includes, but is not limited to future needs; infrastructure; and individual school masterplans?**

We believe that local school communities, parents, teachers and principals are the best placed to know what is best for their children. We will commit to working with all our regions, all communities and all schools to help develop plans for the future. It is important that decisions about the future directions of schools and school communities are forward thinking, strategic, and community-led.

Across all our schools, we commit to targeting infrastructure spending towards schools with high projected growth, and those that have the highest level of need.

- 5. NTG Funded Student Transport to Both Tennant Creek High and Primary Schools: If elected, will you commit to providing free student public transport to both Tennant Creek Primary and High Schools? Currently funded by Tennant Creek School budgets which has no provision for transport.**

If more assistance is needed in specific areas such as transport, that is something we are happy to explore with the Department of Education and the schools involved, not just Tennant Creek Schools. We recognise the value of community-led decisions, and want to work with schools to address the most pressing issues of their regions and support the development of solutions.

- 6. Katherine Region – Katherine Flexible Learning Education Centre: If elected, will you commit to providing ongoing funding to Katherine High School for the continued operation of the Katherine Flexible Learning Education Centre (KFLEC), to ensure that this campus and service is a permanent facility supporting students and families in the Katherine Region? This funding must be in addition and separate to the school's global budget and within separate reporting.**

We understand a review has been undertaken of the centre that is complete but not yet released. We will make a decision based on the review.

- 7. Equity of Funding for High Needs Students with No Access to Specialist Schools: If elected, will you commit to equitable levels of funding for students with a disability who have to be in a mainstream school as they have no access to a special school? As they have to attend a mainstream school, they do not receive the same level of funding as students who attend a specialist school.**

We support student needs-based funding of all Government schools, and targeted funding for students with additional needs such as a disability.

We are aware of NDIS packages that can include therapies delivered during school time, self-care support, specialist transport, equipment and specialised training of teachers and other staff for the specific support needs of a student with a disability in mainstream schools.

We will work with the Commonwealth to make sure students with a disability are able to navigate and access their entire packages under the NDIS, and consider additional targeted funding for students with a disability in mainstream schools.

- 8. Funding for Students with Additional Needs: If elected, will you commit to funding government schools for every student with additional needs based on enrolment and not attendance.**

We support an equitable, needs-based model of funding for all Government schools. We want to ensure that students with disability are provided with education services and support appropriate to their needs.

- 9. Mental Health Support – Community Benefit Fund Priority Change: If elected, will you commit to changing the priorities of Community Benefit Funding from Infrastructure to addressing the mental health and wellbeing of Territorians? This would recognise that Community Benefit Funding is generated through a 10% levy applied to electronic gaming machine losses, which have significant negative social consequences as a direct result of problem gambling.**

The Community Benefit Fund is currently aimed at improving the capacity of not-for-profit organisations to provide services, leisure activities and opportunities to Territorians in the wider community.

Consideration of addressing mental health and wellbeing through additional funding will be looked at as separate funding. We will not be changing the priorities of the Community Benefit Fund, which has seen many successful projects.

10. Trained Counsellors – Full Time Access for All Schools: Will your party commit to providing all schools with adequate access to a trained counsellor/psychologist on a full-time basis to assist teachers to work with students who are facing adversity or are demonstrating mental health challenges?

In October 2019 the Productivity Commission released a draft report regarding mental health . It made a number of draft recommendations regarding social and emotional learning programs in the education system. We will look at the recommendations of the final report which look at ways to address this issue.

While a counsellor in every school may not be feasible or appropriate due to historical challenges of recruiting qualified professionals, a Country Liberal Government will be exploring strategies for attraction/retention, and additional positions and services to support the shortage of school counsellors, and to enhance the important role they play in our schools.

11. Funding for Full Time Counsellors in Remote Schools: If elected, will you commit to the provision of full-time counsellors to meet the all remote student’s mental health needs?

Please refer to question 10.

12. Central Funding and Provision of Onsite Primary School Counsellors: If elected, will you commit to providing centrally funded school counsellors onsite at all primary schools to enable early support to students, families and staff in developing positive mental health through trauma informed approaches/practices?

Please refer to question 10.

13. Discrimination Within Faith-Based Educational Institutions: If elected, will you commit to opposing exemptions in Territory and Commonwealth legislation which allow faith-based educational institutions to discriminate against students, teachers or staff on the basis of sexual orientation, gender identity or intersex status?

Please refer to our response to the 2017 Discussion Paper entitled Modernisation of the Anti-Discrimination Act, on which we undertook wide consultation with schools and stakeholders. No other state or territory in the whole of Australia has removed the exemption for religious educational institutions from its anti-discrimination legislation, which may be an expensive burden on schools, contradictory to Commonwealth Law and may violate some United Nations conventions.

14. Allied Health – Speech Pathologist Support: If elected, will you commit to increasing the number of Speech Pathologists working in schools, to increase the opportunity for early intervention and better outcomes for Territory children?

We will review existing programs that support school wellbeing initiatives, and establish whether funding could be better directed, and whether this means the employment of additional school staff where there is need, or if it means a more coordinated effort with the Department of Health to ensure that allied health professionals are more accessible for early intervention.

15. Case Management – Framework for Students at Risk: If elected, will you commit to the development of a collaborative framework for the Departments of Education, Families, Health and NT Police, supported by detailed service guidelines, to enable effective case management of at-risk students and their families?

A strong collaboration between all departments and school communities is important for ensuring the health and safety of students, especially when it comes to issues such as hearing loss and at-risk behaviour. We will commit to a collaborative framework between departments to better case manage at-risk students, which will include accurate record-keeping, follow-up, and measurable outcomes.

16. Remote Aboriginal Teacher Education (RATE): If elected, will you commit to reinstating and retaining from Term 1 2021, the Remote Aboriginal Teacher Education (RATE) program and if yes, how will you fund it to ensure adequate, on the ground support for those participating? What steps would be taken to consult regarding design and implementation of a re-established RATE program?

We will support the introduction of the Remote Aboriginal Teacher Education (RATE) to increase and support Aboriginal teaching staff in some form, in consultation with school communities and providers. Our goal for the program would be to see teachers trained in a way that does not take them away from communities and that gives them access to the qualifications they want and input into the way schools are run.

We will be reviewing the outcomes following the first year, including consultation with relevant stakeholders, and evaluating how we can provide better support for participants.

17. Mobile Phone Use in Schools - Several Australian states, and democratically governed countries, have concluded from peer reviewed research that banning Mobile Phones in classrooms from first bell until last bell conveys academic, social and psychological advantages to the students. Further, such bans have been shown to reduce both the psychosocial and academic workloads of teachers. If elected will you commit to commissioning an independent, professional survey of DoE staff, parents and students as to whether they would support a ban on mobile phones in classrooms from first bell until last bell. If there is consensus for a ban, would you legislate or mandate for this?

We will support schools to make this decision based on their individual operational needs.