“A Good School with Good Teachers”: Educational Aspirations of Indigenous People in the East Katherine Region, N.T.

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South Australia
Racial harmony is hardly universal in this country, and relationships operate against a larger background of cultural misunderstandings, unmet promises and dispossession. It can also be forgotten what a personal process education and training is for all concerned.

(What has worked and will again in The IESIP Strategic Results Projects 2000:7)
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“A good school with good teachers”

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ACDE</td>
<td>Australian Council of Deans of Education</td>
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<td>ACE</td>
<td>Adult and Community Education</td>
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<td>AECG</td>
<td>Aboriginal Education Consultative Groups</td>
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<td>AEP</td>
<td>Aboriginal Education Program</td>
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<td>AESIP</td>
<td>Aboriginal Education Strategic Initiatives Program</td>
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<tr>
<td>AIETW</td>
<td>Aboriginal and Torres Straits Islander Education Workers</td>
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<td>AIILF</td>
<td>Aboriginal Indigenous Languages Framework</td>
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<td>AIITAP</td>
<td>Aboriginal and Islander Tertiary Aspirations Program</td>
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<td>ALT</td>
<td>Academic Learning Time</td>
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<td>ANTA</td>
<td>Australian National Training Authority</td>
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<td>ANR</td>
<td>Annual National Report on Funding</td>
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<td>ARO</td>
<td>Aboriginal Resource Officer</td>
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<td>ASSPA</td>
<td>Aboriginal Student Support and Parental Awareness</td>
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<td>ATSIC</td>
<td>Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission</td>
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<td>AVTS</td>
<td>Australian Vocational Training Scheme</td>
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<td>CAP</td>
<td>Country Areas Component</td>
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<td>CDEP</td>
<td>Community Development Employment Program</td>
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<td>CECs</td>
<td>Community Education Centres</td>
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<td>CFT</td>
<td>Curriculum Framework Team</td>
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<td>DETYA</td>
<td>Department of Education, Training and Youth Affairs</td>
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<td>DEP</td>
<td>Distance Education Program</td>
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<td>ECE</td>
<td>Early Childhood Education</td>
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<td>EdNA</td>
<td>Education Network Australia</td>
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<td>ESD</td>
<td>English as a second dialect</td>
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<td>ESL</td>
<td>English as a second language</td>
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<td>FTE</td>
<td>Full time equivalent</td>
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<td>IEB</td>
<td>Indigenous Education Branch</td>
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<td>IED</td>
<td>Indigenous Education Division</td>
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<td>IESC</td>
<td>Indigenous Education Standing Committee</td>
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<td>IESIP</td>
<td>Indigenous Education Strategic Initiatives Program</td>
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<td>IT</td>
<td>Information Technology</td>
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<td>ITESS</td>
<td>Indigenous Teacher Education Salary Scheme</td>
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<td>JSSC</td>
<td>Junior Secondary Studies Certificate</td>
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<td>LOTE</td>
<td>Languages other than English</td>
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<td>MAP</td>
<td>Multilevel Assessment Program</td>
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<td>MCEETYA</td>
<td>Ministerial Council on Education, Employment, Training and Youth Affairs</td>
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<td>NATSIEP</td>
<td>National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education Policy (AEP) also</td>
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<td>NCISA</td>
<td>National Council of Independent School's Associations</td>
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<td>NEPS</td>
<td>National Equity Program for Schools</td>
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<td>NTBOS</td>
<td>Northern Territory Board of Studies</td>
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<tr>
<td>NTCE</td>
<td>Northern Territory Certificate of Education</td>
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<td>Acronym</td>
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<tr>
<td>NTITAB</td>
<td>Northern Territory Industry Training Advisory Board</td>
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<td>NTOEC</td>
<td>Northern Territory Open Education Centre</td>
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<td>NTSCS</td>
<td>Northern Territory Secondary Correspondence School</td>
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<td>PTI</td>
<td>Part-Time Instructor</td>
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<td>RATE</td>
<td>Remote Area Teacher Education</td>
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<td>SAE</td>
<td>Standard Australian English</td>
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<tr>
<td>SEIP</td>
<td>Secondary Indigenous Education Program</td>
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<td>SIEPP</td>
<td>Secondary Indigenous Education Pathways Program</td>
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<td>SIP</td>
<td>Special Intervention Program</td>
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<td>SLPP</td>
<td>Scaffolding Literacy Pilot Project</td>
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<td>SRP s</td>
<td>Strategic Results Projects</td>
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<td>RPL</td>
<td>Recognition of Prior Learning</td>
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<tr>
<td>TAFE</td>
<td>Technical and Further Education</td>
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<tr>
<td>TER</td>
<td>Tertiary Entrance Ranking</td>
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<tr>
<td>TESL</td>
<td>Teaching English as a Second Language</td>
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<tr>
<td>VET</td>
<td>Vocational Education and Training</td>
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<td>VISE</td>
<td>Volunteers for Isolated Student Education</td>
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<td>YASA</td>
<td>Young Australian Student Access</td>
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Executive Summary

Terms of reference
This review was commissioned to establish:

- The secondary education aspirations of the Indigenous people of East Katherine.
- The secondary education needs of the Indigenous people of East Katherine.
- And to produce a secondary education plan that would further those aspirations and needs.

Key issues
The most important issue for Indigenous people in the East Katherine region is the perceived need for Indigenous people to move away from the system whereby the greater Australian community has taken responsibility for the future of Indigenous people. The overwhelming feeling expressed is that it is now time for Indigenous people to take control of their own lives and their own culture.

This study established that:

- The desire to take control of their own lives is frustrated by an education shortfall.
- The people genuinely want to be able to monitor those who run their communities whether they be black-fellows or white-fellows.
- Secondary education achievement levels are declining in the region.
- The East Katherine area of familial relationships can be divided into two groupings, the inner communities of Barunga, Manyallaluk, Wugulaqrr, Weemol and Gulin Gulin and the outer communities of Numbulwar, Urupunga, Minyeri, Jilkimnggan and Mataranka.
- Parents prefer that their children are taught by good teachers at a good school on the community.
- Parents are supporting their children’s secondary education in Darwin because it is perceived that that system is more likely to bring their children to a mainstream level
- There is a tension between Indigenous desire for good education outcomes and the family's desire that their young people enjoy their youth.
- Indigenous youth are now 'time poor', overloaded with expectations that they will learn their own culture, modern youth culture and formal European schooling.
- Parents are certain that youth cultural knowledge is suffering.
- A general feeling of cooperation and a desire for change exists between white teachers and the Indigenous community.
- Indigenous people would like good teachers to stay in communities for a long time and take long-term responsibility for the education outcomes of Indigenous youths.
- Parents would like teachers to become well acquainted with their pupil's family.
- Indigenous secondary education would be improved if the Nyirranggulung Reference Group's Agreement on Education accepted a Pilot Self Managing Schools Program (recommendation 149, Collins 1999).
• A new regional secondary boarding school be built and governed by the Nyirranggulang Reference Group.
• The Nyirranggulang Reference Group establish an Education Development Committee to collect, create and produce education resource material that will encourage a curriculum that is meaningful and relevant to Indigenous cultural perceptions and values.
• The Education Development Committee work to develop methods for the incorporation of formal education goals into activities such as religious performance, dance, sport and music.
• The development of a regional Indigenous boarding school would be more readily achievable by the forming of a knowledge sharing partnership between the Nyirranggulang Reference Group and Christian Schools Association of the Northern Territory.

Research methods
The research methods used in this study included interviews with students, parents, teachers, assistant teachers and community members of the East Katherine region. Meeting were also held with council presidents of the outer communities of East Katherine, school principals and representatives of education bodies both private, government and traditional Indigenous.
The qualitative data collected in this study was supplemented by the analysis of archival and documentary data.

The research team
The principal researchers for this study were Gary Jackson and Claire Smith who have conducted community-based research in the Katherine region since 1990. They have worked intermittently in Katherine town and the wider region since 1975.

Limitations of the study
Any body of research is subject to limitations and it was found that:

• The Indigenous people of East Katherine have a highly developed sense of political circumspection and rarely give their complete opinions, especially if they are likely to be quoted in a written report.
• This study is politically fraught because the need for an education review implies that past education is flawed.
• There is a wariness of change that is stronger the further the community is from Katherine.
• In general, poorly educated parents are fearful that they are not yet trained in managing the school education of their children.
• Overworked community leaders often were not available for interviews.

An overview of the education history of East Katherine
The history of education in the region shows that:
• Before contact with Europeans education was undertaken within family groups, was different in content for young boys and girls, was geared to individuals and paced according to their relative strengths.

• School education was a major means through which the Australian government sought to assimilate Aboriginal people.

• Beswick Government Training Station for Natives was intended for vocational training of Aboriginal people and ignored the general educational needs of the people.

• Mrs Dodd established a school at Mainoru station during the 1950s.

• In 1951 an open-air school was established at Tandangal settlement.

• In 1951 people moved from Tandangal to a new settlement at Bamyili (now Barunga), where a school was established.

• In 1954 a formal school was established at Beswick Station which white children did not attend.

• In the mid 1980s a bilingual education program was introduced at Barunga Community Education Centre and was discontinued in the late 1990s.

• Young people received their secondary education at government secondary boarding schools at Kormilda in Darwin, Yirrara at Alice Springs and Dhupuma in north-east Arnhem Land. These colleges were subsequently gifted to church organizations with the exception of Dhupuma college which was closed.

• In 1999 the Hon Bob Collins completed an independent review, "Learning Lessons", of Indigenous education in the Northern Territory and an implementation committee has been formed to put in place all 151 recommendations of the review.
Learning Lessons - An independent review of Indigenous education in the Northern Territory

The 1999 review of Indigenous education by Bob Collins contained significant findings including:

- A widespread desire among Indigenous people for improvements in the education of their children.
- Unequivocal evidence of deteriorating outcomes from an already unacceptably low base, linked to a range of issues, led primarily by poor attendance which has become an educational crisis.
- Substantial evidence of long-term systematic failure to address this issue.
- An Indigenous Education Council of the Northern Territory in need of restructuring.
- Indigenous education is not considered a core business of the Northern Territory Department of Education.
- The lack of an outcomes based approach to Indigenous education.
- It is apparent that for decades there has been no interest at departmental or government level in a dispassionate analysis of the educational outcomes of Indigenous students.
- A need for partnerships between Indigenous parents, communities, peak bodies and service providers.
- A need for greater community and parent involvement.
- A need for greater Indigenous decision making.
- The need for the instigation of a Pilot Self Managing Schools Program.

Comparison between the Wells report and findings of the Collins Review

The comparison made in this study between the findings of the Wells Report and the Collins Review shows that the many failings of the secondary education system in East Katherine identified by Kathryn Wells (1999) have been fully addressed in Bob Collins Review 1999). The Collins Review is wide-ranging in scope, comprehensive and thoughtful and its recommendations are well considered. When the recommendations of this review are enacted the outlook for Indigenous education in the East Katherine region and the whole of the Northern Territory should experience a positive change to all Indigenous education.

Community views

- The opinions of parents regarding a regional high school in the East Katherine region vary in line with their access to secondary education on their community and their ambitions for their young people.
- There is general agreement that the secondary boarding colleges of Darwin are too far away. There are a few parents though who would prefer that their children are educated at Darwin because they perceive that that education is better as it is more mainstream. Some parents send their children to Darwin until more sympathetic teachers replace those in the community school.
- The parents of Barunga and Wugularr would not bus their children to a regional high school every day but are keen for their children to attend a regional secondary school in one week blocks to learn specialist subjects.
• Parents in all of East Katherine have indicated that they would like to see a regional secondary boarding school built as this would increase their young people's education options.
• All parents are keen that a regional high school be built away from a town or city and be on land still controlled by Aboriginal law.
• Homesickness is a great difficulty for young people leaving their communities but parents believe that a facility for visiting parents would greatly help this problem.

Different perspectives
The opinions of young people, old people, parents and teachers were sought, and included:

• Young people want education so they can get jobs where they can earn good money to buy cars and clothes.
• The young people plan to find jobs on their communities and they would like their education to be targeted towards that end.
• Old people are worried that their young people are going too far white-fellow way and are turning their backs on their own culture.
• Old people want a two-way education for their young people which keeps the two cultural values distinctly separate.
• Parents having varying ambitions for their children but all agreed that their children should be educated so they can take control of the running of their own communities.
• Some parents are worried that children become 'too big' when they go away to Darwin to study.
• Teachers agreed that the present Indigenous education system is under resourced and failing to meet their own expectations.
• The individual attention required and expected by students makes heavy demands on teachers.
• The commitment of individual teachers determines whether a school is good or not.

Education options for the East Katherine region
All secondary education options were considered and these included:

• The advantages and disadvantages of the state school system taken from both a black-fellow and a white-fellow's perspective.
• The advantages and disadvantages of the private school system taken from both black-fellow and white-fellow's perspective.
• The Pilot Self Managing Schools Program.
• The creation of a private secondary boarding school.
• The gifting of existing schools to the Nyirranggulang Association.
• The creation of a regional secondary hub school.
• Mobile classrooms and teachers.
The conclusion of this study is that a private indigenous secondary boarding school should be built in the East Katherine region.
Recommendations of this study
This report makes four major recommendations which are:

• That a private Indigenous boarding school be established for secondary students of the East Katherine region. And that a second phase of the school's development be its expansion into a hub school for providing VET courses to student at surrounding day schools and possibly adult education courses.

• That an Education Development Committee be formed to collect, create and produce education resource material that would be included in a new curriculum. The new curriculum would be designed to make education more meaningful and relevant to Indigenous youths.

• That a register be established for the recording of funding resources from both public and private sources.

• That an knowledge sharing partnership be formed between the Nyirranggulang Association and the Christian Schools Association of the Northern Territory.

Implementation of Phase 1 of these recommendations
This section of the report considers implications of the recommendation including:

• Registration of schools in the Northern Territory.
• A school philosophy.
• Location of the school.
• Size of the school.
• Infrastructure and school architecture.
• Transport and machinery needs.
• What sort of curriculum.
• Living arrangements for students.
• Facilities for visiting parents.
• Safety of students.
• Draft rules for the school.
• Resource implications.
Chapter 1
Introduction

Terms of Reference
The brief for this project was received from the Mike Popple, Town Clerk of Wugularr Community. In accordance with this brief, the main aims of the project were as follows:

- To ascertain the secondary education aspirations and needs of people in the Katherine East region and produce a secondary education plan that would further these aspirations and needs.

In accordance with the project brief, this research focussed on the following:

- Ascertaining the educational goals and aspirations of the Aboriginal people living in the Katherine East region.
- Sitting down and talking with students, parents and other community members.
- Ascertaining Aboriginal people’s perceptions of the strengths and weaknesses of current secondary education options.
- The need for appropriate secondary education and training which concurs with the aspirations of Aboriginal people in the region.
- The effect of regionalisation, for communities within the Nyirranguangle region.

Key Issues
The key issues identified in this report are as follows:

- There is a widespread desire among people of the East Katherine region for improvements in the secondary education of their children.

- There is substantial evidence that the educational system that currently exists has failed, and is continuing to fail, the majority of Indigenous people in the Katherine East region.

- An overwhelming dissatisfaction is evident in the lives of people in the East Katherine region. This is brought on by the people’s frustrated desire to take control of and responsibility for their own lives. For too long they have seen white-fellows come to their communities to administer the economic enterprises of the council and the shop. Many of these itinerant people only come to ‘fill their bags’ and then leave. This desire to control their own affairs is frustrated by Indigenous people not having sufficient education white-fellow way to achieve independence. This point was poignantly made
by a hardworking leader of one community, who said 'I am not stupid' when questioned about the need for a highly paid white-fellow as town clerk.

- The good white administrators who come to improve the lot of the people and whose main aim is to leave the community as a better place also share the frustration of having too few educated people to help them. Though these good white-fellows come and do a good job, in the end they still leave handing their hard-won achievements on to the next unknown, untried and often untrained person. This chain of renewal and rot is another arena of great frustration for people of the East Katherine region. This frustration is exacerbated because they do not have the educational skills to monitor the competence and honesty of the white administrators that are employed in their communities.

- Frustration at an inability to monitor white administrators is also true in reverse. The monitoring of the few Indigenous people who take on the role of commercial leaders in the shop or at the council offices is very difficult. The white employees are often hamstrung because of the political power of the Indigenous leader. The Indigenous community also feel helpless because black-fellows don’t have sufficient literacy, numeracy, or knowledge of white-fellow systems to monitor their own leaders.

- Indigenous people in the Katherine East region feel that their culture is under threat because the young people are not learning the old ways. This turning away from culture by the young reduces the authority of the parents and the old people. This problem is exacerbated when young people have to go to a secondary boarding school in Darwin where they are apart from the authority of their parents. Some parents say that when their children have finished school in Darwin they become too ‘big’ and have difficulties settling back into life on the community. These are part of the education problems for the parents of East Katherine.

- There is for the first time in the Northern Territory a new government who have taken on the recommendations made by Hon Bob Collins in his review of Indigenous education and are working on the implementation of all recommendations. These changes will have a major positive affect on the Indigenous education process but governments are sort-term. This is in contrast to planning for Indigenous education which must be a long-term enterprise. Therefore, it might not be wise to place too much hope in the long-term ability of government to solve the secondary education problems of East Katherine.

The East Katherine Region
The communities included in this study were divided into two groups, on the basis of their proximity to Katherine and whether they were part of the Nyirranggulang Agreement on Education. Communities that are part of the Nyirranggulang Agreement and which are relatively close to Katherine were designated "inner communities", while those that are not part of the Nyirranggulang Agreement, and which are relatively far from Katherine. Both the inner and outer communities have close social relationships.
Inner communities
The communities defined in this study as 'inner communities' of the East Katherine region consist of those which are part of the Nyirranggulang Agreement. These communities are Barunga, Wugularr, Manyallaluk and Weemol. This report does not encompass communities that are part of the Nyirranggulang Agreement but not in the East Katherine region. For the purposes of this report Gulin Gulin is included as an 'inner' community, as it has strong cultural and social affiliations with the Nyirranggulang communities.

Outer communities
The communities that share family and friendship relationships with the communities of closer East Katherine are Numbulwar, Ngukurr, Urapunga, Minyeri, Jilkminggan, and Mataranka. These communities experience broadly similar difficulties with many of their young people being unsuccessful after having attended boarding schools off the community.

Research Methods and Time-Line
Data collection for this project focussed on qualitative data, which has the advantage that the people involved are able to express their views more broadly, rather than simply in terms of the evaluator’s agenda (Gardiner 1999:19). Qualitative data can also provide the individual insights and comments that can suggest specific strategies for re-evaluating a project. The collection of qualitative data was especially important in the case of this project plan since the overall aim of the project was to produce recommendations that will further the aspirations of local Aboriginal people.

The fieldwork and writing of this report was undertaken over a period of 12 months in 2001—2002. This included a block of ten weeks in the field in February—April, 2002, and of six weeks in June—July, 2002. This research involved extensive fieldwork and discussions with Aboriginal people throughout the region. It was divided into five broad phases. These were:

- Phase 1, a background literature search and initial interviews with local Aboriginal people over four weeks, in October and November, 2001
- Phase 2, intensive fieldwork in the community, conducted over a period of 10 weeks from February—April, 2002.
- Phase 3, the preparation of a draft report, conducted from October, 1999—April, 2000.
- Phase 4, a return visit to the community to obtain feedback on the draft report and collect targeted data, conducted from June—July 2002.
- Phase 5, a further visit to the region to collect targeted data, conducted in August 2002.
- Phase 6, the preparation of a final report, conducted in August—September, 2002.

Data was collected during interviews including:
- Interviews with students, parents, teachers, assistant teachers and community members of the East Katherine region.
• Meetings with the law men of the inner communities of East Katherine.
• Interviews with Phylis Wynjarroc, senior traditional owner of Bugula clan land.
• Meetings with Council Presidents of the outer communities of East Katherine.
• Interviews with officers of the Northern Territory Education Department.
• Telephone discussions with officers of the Department of Education, Training and Youth Affairs (DETYA).
• A formal meeting with the Nyirranggulang Reference Group.
• Informal meetings with officers of the Jawoyn Association Aboriginal Association.
• Interviews with school principals (including the principal of Kormilda College, Darwin) within and outside of the East Katherine Region.
• Meetings with officers of the Christian Schools Association of the Northern Territory.
• A meeting with Robert Laird, president of the Australian Education Union - Northern Territory.
• A meeting with Geri Pancini, Indigenous educator at Batchelor College.
• Meetings with field officers of the Northern Lands Council.
• A meeting with the regional director of ATSIC, Katherine.
• Meetings with Brenton Bailey, Northern Territory Employment Education Training Authority (NTEETA).

Consultation with Indigenous People
The extended periods in the field that were undertaken for this project allowed the collection of qualitative data. Since the overall aim of the project was to produce a secondary education plan that would further the aspirations of local people, close liaison with Indigenous people in the East Katherine region was an essential component of the field methods employed for this project. Indigenous input into the project occurred at the following levels:

• Discussions with students, parents, teachers and other community members of the Katherine East region.
• A formal meeting with members of the Nyirranggulang reference group.

We sought the advice of local Indigenous people at all stages of this project. In particular, feedback and interviews were conducted:

• Before fieldwork.
• During fieldwork.
• During the preparation of the report.
• As discussion of the draft report.

The qualitative data that was collected for this study was supplemented by archival and documentary data in order to provide a long-term perspective on education in the study area. This long-term view can be used to identify recurring problems as well as previous educational methods and options which had proved unsuccessful. This should enhance both the quality and durability of the recommendations in this report.
As mentioned elsewhere in this study, the writers asked the parents of East Katherine if they wanted state schools in the region be gifted to an Indigenous school board. It became apparent that their was a strong movement against such an outcome. It was only then that a senior Indigenous man at Wugularr voiced his own reservations about this form of Indigenous control of education, though he and his influential wife had been noncommittal when the subject had been raised with them previously. The point here is that Indigenous people do not always feel free to voice all of their opinions to non-Indigenous people.

It is certainly true that Indigenous people want to take control of their children's education but it is also true that they don't want to be set up for failure. This fear of failure comes with their inexperience in managing schools and their inability to organize appropriate management training for themselves.

Another difficulty encountered in the undertaking of this study was that of organising meetings with important Indigenous people in remote areas. This is because these people are always active in their communities and are regularly called on to attend ceremonies and meetings off community. The only method of working in this environment is for the researcher to patiently wait his/her turn to claim the elder's attention. The wait is always amply rewarded.

The subject matter of this report, the establishment of a boarding school, uncovered a fear by people from outer communities that a hidden agenda might be to 'steal away' their children to another place. This could be the ghost of the old people's experiences with the taking of the children of the Stolen Generation. This difficulty was overcome by openly reassuring the parents that this was not the intention of the new education program. This unspoken and possibly sub-conscious fear is one that will never be completely overcome.

Discussion
The aim of this report is to ascertain the secondary education aspirations and needs of people in the Katherine East region and produce a secondary education plan that would further these aspirations and needs. The recommendations presented here arise from research conducted over a period of 12 months in 2001 and 2002. This involved around five months in the field, as well as extensive background research. This extended field research was essential to the collection of high quality data, since this report had to take into consideration and present the views of Aboriginal people from a number of communities. The time taken to complete the report also reflects the need to observe Indigenous communities over a long period. This is so that trends, rather than individual events, can be witnessed.
Chapter 2
A Brief Overview of the Educational History of the Region

Introduction
This section of the report provides a brief overview of the educational history of the region. Education was a major means through which the Australian government sought to assimilate Aboriginal people. The following discussion focuses on the educational histories of a few of the communities within the East Katherine region, with the aim of providing in-depth knowledge of overall trends in this region.

Before Contact
Before contact with European societies, the traditional systems of education in the Katherine East region were based on family and gender. When children were small they were taught in small groups of around three or four children, opportunistically throughout the day, rather than in a formal classroom situation. Normally, they were taught by close family members. The education system of the East Katherine region was structured by gender with the girls being taught by their mothers and aunts and the boys taught by their father and uncles. This gender differentiation was an essential part of the process and boys were taken from the women's camp to live at the men’s camp at an early stage of their education. More formal levels of teaching were given to older children as part of a process of maturation and initiation into cultural knowledge. This teaching was done by elders, who again were usually close relatives, such as an uncle or a grandparent.

In short, the traditional education system of the East Katherine region included the following features:

- Education in small groups, usually of two or three children.
- Education by close family members with a personal responsibility for the welfare and educational outcomes of individual children.
- Differentiation in educational content according to gender, once children were around nine or ten years of age.
- Educational content was geared to the needs and interests of individual children as perceived by close family members.
- The pace of education was geared to the abilities of individual children, with the aim of achieving key competencies outside of a rigid time-frame, thus minimizing shame due to slow progress.

Education as Part of Assimilation
School education was a major means through which the Australian government sought to assimilate Aboriginal people. There were three main ways by which the Australian government attempted to assimilate Aboriginal people into mainstream European society. The first was by discouraging ceremonial life and traditional systems of thought and by getting Aboriginal people to participate in a planned program of social development which inculcated the values and practices of European society. The second was by educating Aboriginal children within a Western system of knowledge, and the third way was by removing children of mixed descent from Aboriginal communities and placing them in institutions or with adoptive parents. Assimilation policy was concerned with
governing Aboriginal people's spiritual and cultural beliefs as well as their physical movements; with controlling their minds as well as their bodies.

During the 1950s the Chief Minister of the Northern Territory, Paul Hasluck used assimilation policies to actively pursue what he judged to be the interests of Aboriginal people. His speech in the Estimates Debate in the House of Representatives on the 6th October 1955 identified education as one of the main precursors necessary for Aboriginal people being assimilated into European society:

... we have to give attention to their health. So long as there are native people subject to leprosy, or any other so-called loathsome disease, so long will there be exclusion. We have to give attention to hygiene. So long as natives are not living in a way that makes them physically acceptable—to put it crudely, so long as natives live in a way that makes them smell—then there is no hope for them. We have to improve their hygiene in order to make them acceptable. We have to give them education. Unless they can speak English well, and also express their thoughts fairly well, there will be no acceptance. We have to give them jobs. Unless they can earn their living, unless they can sustain the sort of life to which we are attempting to raise them, the attempt to raise them to that higher life will be in vain ... And over and above that ... is to make sure that those who have reached that desirable level also can get housing (emphases added)\(^1\).

This statement identifies Hasluck's priority areas of health, hygiene, education, jobs and housing and also makes it clear that in his view the major barrier to the successful implementation of assimilation policies was acceptance of Aboriginal people by the wider European community. The support of this community was sought in educational publications produced by the federal government. One series of booklets was particularly widely distributed and included Assimilation of Our Aborigines\(^2\), Skills of Our Aborigines\(^3\), One People\(^4\), Our Aborigines\(^5\) and Fringe Dwellers\(^6\). In Our Aborigines, assimilation was presented to the Australian public in the following terms:

... the policy of assimilation means in the view of all Australian governments that all aborigines and part-aborigines are expected eventually to attain the same manner of living as other Australians and to live as members of a single Australian community enjoying the same rights and privileges, accepting the same responsibilities, observing the same customs and influenced by the same beliefs, hopes and loyalties as other Australians\(^7\).

**Beswick Government Training Station for Natives**

\(^1\) F1 54/1013
\(^2\) Australian Government 1958
\(^3\) Australian Government 1960
\(^4\) Australian Government 1961
\(^5\) Australian Government 1962a
\(^6\) Australian Government 1962b
\(^7\) Australian Government, 1962a:8
The establishment of Beswick Government Training Station for Natives articulated with the plans of the Northern Territory government to expand the pastoral industry. The concern here was not with educating children per se but with the training and supply of Aboriginal labour to stations in the Territory as an essential part of a strategy to expand the pastoral industry. The report on the Administration of the Northern Territory for Year 1943-44 stated that:

I am convinced that the future of the Northern Territory is bound up in the development and prosperity of the pastoral industry. This development and prosperity can only be attainment by the pastoral areas of the Territory being put to their proper and full uses.

As with the mining industry, access to Aboriginal labour and expertise was critical to achieving this prosperity, something of which Europeans were consciously aware. The report on the Administration of the Northern Territory for Year 1944-45 reinforces the view of Nelson Johnson, the former United States Ambassador to Australia, that:

Without the Australian aboriginal these great cattle stations could not function at present, for the aboriginal ('abo' as more familiarly known) is the stockrider of the country, who assists the stockmen in rounding up, or 'mustering' the herds that are to be branded, inoculated and sent to market. With an unerring knowledge of the country and an uncanny ability to follow the trail of anything that moves, he can find wandering stock or horses and survive in a waterless, foodless area where the white men would perish.

It is clear that the concern here is with training for the placement of Aboriginal people in a pre-determined section of society, rather than their education as a whole - and the notion of education for self-determination was not even considered at this time. Patrol Officer Ryan's report in January, 1950 discussed this issue:

I have often thought that Beswick station would be a good place for a school for male half-caste children. The removal of half-caste boys from cattle stations to missions for education brings about the loss of valuable labour to the pastoral industry and means that the half-caste children lack training in a pursuit for which they are naturally adapted.

In 1954 a formal school was established at Beswick Station. It was immediately filled to capacity. Though there were white children living at Beswick they were not allowed to attend the new school. Schooling, like other aspects of assimilation policy, was marked by segregation rather than integration, as indicated in this report by Senior Education Officer Newby:

Attendance at Native Schools might have serious effects on the emotional and social development of white children and, consequently, on their intellectual development. There are a number of white

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8 F315 49/393A part1
9 CRS F1 54/87
children at Beswick. Although there can be no thought of their attending the Native School at the present time I advised their parents to allow their children to continue with correspondence work in their homes.

**Tandangal School**

Formal schooling was essential to the program of social development and education that was the cornerstone of assimilation policy. The first such school in the Barunga-Wugularr region was located at Tandangal settlement and in some ways marked the beginning of a sustained incursion upon Indigenous belief systems in the area. The school was established in 1951, partly in response to demands from Aboriginal people in the Northern Territory for better access to European education for their children. A strike in 1947 by Aboriginals in Darwin had brought this issue into the public consciousness, prompting the Northern Territory administration to be seen to act on this issue. But the other force behind the establishment of the Tandangal school was the role of education in the successful implementation of assimilation policies.

In March 1951, Mr Allom took up the position as Head Teacher of the newly established Beswick Native School. He found that most school-aged children were not living at Beswick station but were at Tandangal, eight miles away. Mr Allom decided to live in a tent at Tandangal and establish the school there. He built an open-air classroom consisting of a small piece of canvas and leafy boughs. It must have been reasonably successful since up to 40 children attended the Tandangal school, while between four and seven additional children living at Beswick station were taught by an assistant teacher.

The establishment of a school at Tandangal created an unprecedented dilemma for local Aboriginal people and the manner in which they reacted depended on how they envisaged their children’s futures. Some people saw European education as an essential tool for living in what they feared was increasingly becoming a ‘white man’s world’. They felt that European education could act as a means of freeing Aboriginal people from the domination of white bosses and so encouraged their children to attend the school. Others were concerned that the European system of education would undermine their children's traditional beliefs and understandings. Peter Manabaru’s father fitted into this category and he did not allow Peter to attend the school. Instead, Peter went to the ‘bush school' of Aboriginal people:

They used to call my daddy ‘culture man’. They had to call him first before ceremonies. I was only one kid hanging around there. I stayed there because my father was working there. My father didn’t want me to go to school.

I went to that mununga school for one week. I bin like that school all right but my father didn’t want me to stay. He want me to learn culture. My father didn’t want me to go to school. He used to tell me himself: ‘What you like, mununga school or blackfella school?’ Now, I liked mununga school but he didn’t want me to go. I might forget about my culture. That policeman asked him [to send me]. That manager asked him. That government man asked him. He said ‘No, that’s your way. I’ve got to
send him to my school. My son, him different. Him got to be culture law
man, not mununga law man.  

As his father had wished, Peter grew up to become a culture law man. Though unable to
read or write, he is a very powerful man within the present-day Barunga community—and
that power comes from his knowledge of Aboriginal culture. Others chose to send their
children to school and their children gained a better understanding of European systems
and so were empowered in those ways. What is clear, however, is that there was
considerable pressure on Aboriginal people to send their children to the European school
and whether or not people did so was an important cultural choice. The kind of pressure
exerted is evident in the recollections of Minnie George, who went to school at Roper
River Mission but ran away to Barunga:

We used to play hiding and run away from school in the bush. We'd drop
down dress, put on cockrag and go. ... And that other policeman came with
his missus. That missus brought a tin of lollies. She was carrying them.
We were looking at her from the hill. She was following us with that lolly
... Those two had been hunting everywhere for us to take us back to
school. But we didn't want it. We wanted bush. They wanted us to wear
clothes but we chucked them out and wore cockrag ... We didn't like that
teacher. He was a cheeky one. We called him 'School Master'. He belted
us no more little bit. We cried and cried. No matter how much they took
us back we still ran away.  

School was important to the implementation of assimilation policies not only for the
information the children were taught but also because the schooling system itself
inculcated European values, formally introducing and reinforcing values essential to the
planned transition of Aboriginal children to a European workplace. Among these values
were respect for the authority of the state, obedience, the desirability of clothing, the
merit of work and an acceptance of the scheduling of one's time by others.

Mainoru Station School
The importance placed on such cultural values is evident in the operation of the school
established at Mainoru station by Jack McKay's sister, Mrs Dodd. For instance, one of
Mrs Dodd's self-imposed responsibilities was overseeing Aboriginal women sewing
clothing for the children. Mrs Dodd envisaged her role as part of a wider crusade that
was the duty of all Europeans: that of civilising the native. As Cowlishaw  
points out 'clothing the black bodies was a crucial task'. Largely on the basis of the social aspects
of her work, Mrs Dodd's school was applauded by government authorities. Patrol Officer
Ryan reported:  

Mainoru station is unique and outstanding for its attention paid to the school
children and pre-school children ... From 7 am until 8 pm on seven days a week
the bulk of the children are in or adjacent to the station homestead. Not only do

10 Interview with CS; early April 1999.
11 Minnie George; 1995; p.2-3.
12 1999; p.173
they receive excellent academic training but the attention paid to their general well being is most creditable.

Rocky Cameron attended the Mainoru school during the 1950s. His memories focus on the discipline the children received, which would have been quite a shock after the freedom of camp life, and the provision of regular food:

We went to that school all the time. That school is where we learnt English. I was really brainy with Maths. I could multiply and add up in my head. I didn’t have to put it down in a book. I bin savvy the times tables right through to 12 times—if I asked these kids today 12x12, they wouldn’t know. We used to start school about 7am in the morning. If we were naughty we couldn’t knock off until 6 o’clock at night. Fair dinkum.

We used to go to school, come out for tea, have milk—not this powdered milk, goat’s milk—go to the toilet, wash our hands, back into school. Never allowed to play around. Same during lunch hour, just lunch, toilet, wash your hands, back into the class. They used to mix that goat milk with vitamins. That goat gave good milk and good meat. It’s better than lamb, not so much fat. The old people used to look after the goats. In the morning we had bread and milk and at lunchtime we had bread and vegemite, no meat. Mrs Dodd used to mix that vegemite herself, stir it in a big bucket, enough for the whole class.

That’s the hardest way I ever learnt. If they gave you something and you didn’t say ‘Thank you’, you got the strap for that. If you wanted to go to the toilet, you had to put up your hand, not just run out. You had to ask permission to do what you wanted to do. That was a hard school. The teacher used the cane across our palm or our legs. She used that feather duster, that cane, sometimes a two-foot ruler or a leather strap. This was a hard time for us. It’s better, now. That was a rough time. My parents knew about those hidings but they wouldn’t say anything. Mrs Dodd was a really good teacher but she gave too many hidings.

If we didn’t turn up for school a copper would come and look for us. One time the whole school walked out, those kids were sick and tired of getting hidings, and the policeman had to come up from Maranboy and look for us. We wouldn’t even say ‘booh’ to the teacher. You’d get a hiding for that. You had to say ‘May I go to the toilet?’ not ‘Can I go to the toilet?’ Not can, may. If we were sleepy Mrs Dodd would get a bucket of cold water and chuck it on us to wake us up. Mrs Dodd used to take us down the river for a bogie [swim]. That water pump never used to work. There was no hot water, nothing, even in cold weather you had to jump in the river.

In those days there was no video, no tapes, nothing. Only the old gramophone, with the needle. That Mrs Dodd had one. She took it to the school sometimes. On Saturdays we used to walk around picking up papers, just for tea and sugar, no bread, no beef. In 1965 my family left that teacher and we walked to Maningrida. I went to Bamyili school, too,
and later I went to Koomilda in Darwin. We went to the Sports Carnival in Darwin, too, under that [Paul] Hasluck banner, that flag\textsuperscript{14}.

Bamyili: A Medical, Educational and Training Centre for Natives

When Tandangal was condemned in June 1951 Aboriginal people moved to a new site, initially known as Beswick Creek Native Settlement, which was established as part of the Beswick station training scheme. The site of this settlement was chosen when it became apparent that there was an urgent need to abandon the Tandangal settlement and after several attempts to locate additional water supplies at Charaluk, the original choice for the settlement adjacent to Beswick, had failed.

The location that was finally selected had been the site of the Beswick homestead up until 1944 and was 40 kilometres closer than Beswick station to the Maranonboy mines and the main highway. It was on high, well-drained country with Beswick Creek providing permanent water and was joined to the Stuart highway by an all-weather road which gave access to the settlement throughout the year. A report by the Native Welfare Branch of the Northern Territory\textsuperscript{15} identifies education and training as one of the reasons for establishing the settlement. These reasons include:

- To bring natives together in a community and to teach them the habits and skills of living in such a community.
- To provide a means whereby education and training may be given, particularly to children and adults.
- To provide welfare services fitted to the needs of the people concerned bearing in mind the stage of social development they have attained.
- To introduce the general concept of 'work' as a worthwhile aim in life.

Patsy Adam-Smith provides the following description of education at Bamyili during the 1960s:

Earl Watter, the young Head Master of Bamyili school, is acutely aware of the immense problems that face the Aboriginal and believes that the problems ahead are greater still. He is the ideal worker in this field: he sees the problems, he has boundless sympathy with those affected, but he has the gaiety that prevents him from letting the job get him down. He teaches children who, after school, are influenced by people who have little understanding of, or in some cases are hostile to, the new order. Perhaps the saddest fact to acknowledge is that in time the policy of assimilation must split families, alienate the young from the old, as education has done in this generation among white communities. To work with and for Aborigines is to accept this; there is no other way, tragic as it is. The traditional Aboriginal way of life is ended as completely as is the Victorian Age to Europeans.

Adams-Smith's account identifies conflict between some older Aboriginal people and the educational system being put in place. This is congruent with the views put forward by

\textsuperscript{14} CS interview with Rocky Cameron June 2000
\textsuperscript{15} Australian Government on 1961
Peter Manabaru's father (above). However, Adams-Smith's assumption that assimilation would win out over family values proved to be incorrect. Today, it is clear that Aboriginal people at Bamyli (Barunga), and in the Katherine East region as a whole, have successfully resisted attempts to make them accept the values of the dominant Australian culture, in particular those values that place the obligations of employment before those of family.

In establishing schools in this region, the main aim of the Australian government was to promote the assimilation of Aboriginal people into European society. Government policy in this respect was extended during the 1980s when Bamyli became a Community Education Centre and began to serve a wider role in the community. For some time, many adult education courses were run from the school. These include:

- Mechanics.
- Sewing.
- Cooking.
- Woodwork.
- Hairdressing.

The courses offered were geared towards providing people with skills that were seen as essential by Europeans, but did not survive in the long term. This is probably due to two main factors: a lack of relevance to people's lives and aspirations, though the courses were certainly aimed to be relevant, and teaching methods that were not culturally suited to the needs of Aboriginal people.

In the mid 1980s a bilingual education program was introduced at what was now known as Barunga School. The overall aims of this program was to produce better educational results. According to Marwick-Smith (1985:2) the specific aims included:

- To develop competency in reading and writing in English and Mathematics to the level required on leaving school to function without disadvantage in the wider Australian community.
- To foster proficiency in school work by use of the Aboriginal language where appropriate.
- To develop a more positive self concept in each child through systematic use of the Aboriginal language as well as English as a medium of instruction, and the incorporation of studies of other aspects of traditional knowledge.

The bilingual program run at Barunga Community Education Centre was highly successful, when assessed in terms of community approval and the production of bilingual educational materials. Apart from this, it appears that students at this school in general have attained a higher standard of education than students at many other schools in the region. Unfortunately, the bilingual education program was discontinued in the late 1990s.

**Boarding Schools**

One of the major ways in which people in the Katherine East region have accessed secondary education for their children is to send them to boarding schools. It is thought that the 1970s were a high point in the history of Indigenous education in the
European knowledge system. Indigenous people were taking an new interest in the education of their children as noted by Elizabeth Somerlad in her study *Kormilda the way to tomorrow* but even in these hopeful times Somerlad was sign-posting unresolved problems:

In 1975 I participated in a study (Duke and Sommerlad 1976) which indicated that Aboriginal people have already begun to articulate their objectives for education and to choose the model they consider most appropriate to their needs, that of 'deschooling'. Discussions with aboriginals and whites working in an aboriginal context indicate that most aboriginal communities are rejecting current provision and seeking a form of education different from that of the dominant society. Their growing concern to reassert their identity and retain cultural values and pattern of behaviour has been accompanied by a rejection of western education, particularly in a form that removes their children from community for considerable periods of time. They want education that places aboriginal culture and values at the core, supplementing it by basic skills required for coping with the dominant society - most particularly oral English, reading, writing and numeracy (Sommerlad 1976).

This call for a greater involvement in education by Indigenous people and a greater focus on their cultural needs was reiterated in a report commissioned by the federal Department of Education; Access to Education, An Evaluation of the Aboriginal Secondary Grants Scheme, undertaken by B.H.Watts, professor of Special Education and Director of the Schonell Educational Research Centre at the University of Queensland:

Aboriginal and Islander people must be involved in educational decisions and practices. This is both a moral right and a matter of commonsense. The moral right of people to help determine the education they want for their children is a clear one; there is an obligation on planners and policy makers to respect it and to encourage the people to exercise it. Commonsense leads us to ask: how can we devise educational programs that will meet the people's needs and aspirations? How can we know what people want unless we engage in continuing and courteous dialogue with them? Furthermore, there is too much evidence from too many places of the overwhelming importance of the home for us to continue to believe that education is a matter for the schools alone, for us to continue to believe that education can be successful if we work only with the children. (Commonwealth Department of Education, 1976)

This changing of the focus of education away from the dominant culture deciding what is in the best interests of the Indigenous people to one of self determination has never occurred in practice and the subsequent problems of Indigenous education persist.

It was at this time that the Northern Territory Government decided to ease itself out of the expense and responsibility for secondary education for Indigenous pupils from remote communities by gifting their secondary Indigenous boarding schools Kormilda in Darwin and Yirrara in Alice Springs to independent church organizations and by closing a successful school, Dhupuma in north-east Arnhem Land. This move placed the schools under the umbrella of Federal Government funding of private schools while giving some control to the state through its system of registration of schools. The State's hope
that independent education bodies would be more flexible in the education models they
used have not, in the writer's opinion, been realized. A visitor to any school in the
Northern Territory which has a significant body of Indigenous pupils will find that little
to reassure them in the physical buildings nor in the curriculum that a different cultural
program is being pursued. This shift of responsibility for Indigenous education from the
state education bureaucracy to independent organizations might have allowed an
adaptation of the system to the needs of the Indigenous people but this has not
occurred.

Notable adaptations of teaching methods have taken place such as the 'Home and Away'
system used by St John's College where pupils are accompanied to their home
communities by their teachers for learning blocks. The state education system uses a
parallel lessons program whereby the same lesson is taught at all schools in a region so
that transient pupils can experience uninterrupted schooling when they move between
communities. But the important issue of Indigenous ownership of the education process
has yet to be addressed.

These adjustments of the mainstream education method have helped, but not solved,
the primary problem of Indigenous education which is the students voting with their
feet and choosing not to attend school. As a reaction to this non-attendance, the NTDE
(Northern Territory Education Department) initiated a program of asking the parents to
intervene to ensure that their children attend school regularly, in effect asking parents
to share responsibility for the education outcomes of their children. However, parents
have not had the opportunity to share the rights in education. For example, an
important question that has not been asked is what is it, in addition to English literacy
and numeracy, that Indigenous parents want their children to learn outside of the
family. Additionally what are the interests of Indigenous youths that if met will assure
them of the relevance of the knowledge to their future?

Discussion
This chapter has provided a brief history of education in the some of the communities
of the Katherine East region. While a range of approaches have been undertaken at
various times and in various communities, the overall picture is one of the failure of the
educational system to meet either the desires of the Australian government, or the
needs of Indigenous people in the region. It is our view that the failure of the
educational system is due to incongruence between European and traditional Indigenous
teaching methods, as well a failure for the school system to address the needs and
aspirations of Indigenous people. Clearly, there is good reason to try a fresh approach.
Chapter 3
The Collins Review

Introduction
This chapter outlines the major recommendations of the 1999 review of Indigenous education in the Northern Territory that was conducted by Bob Collins. It outlines the key issues identified in the Collins Review and assesses these against the report by Katherine Wells, 'To Pass the Rubicon', on the status of delivery of secondary education in the East Katherine region.

Key Issues Identified
The Collins review states that 'the single greatest challenge for the Northern Territory Department of Education is to improve educational outcomes for Indigenous students in partnership with Indigenous people and other agencies and jurisdictions'. The key issues identified by the Collins review are:

- A widespread desire among Indigenous people for improvements in the education of their children.
- Unequivocal evidence of deteriorating outcomes from an already unacceptably low base, linked to a range of issues, led primarily by poor attendance which has become an educational crisis.
- Substantial evidence of long-term systematic failure to address this situation.
- A number of complex, long-standing issues that must be addressed which have significant resource implications for the Department of Education and the Northern Territory Government.
- Evidence of failure to access significant available Commonwealth funds to address poor outcomes with intensive projects.
- A need for the Indigenous Education Council Northern Territory to be completed restructured.
- A need for management systems in the Department of Education to be organised to ensure that Indigenous education is a critical care business of the department.
- A strong imperative for an outcomes-based approach to Indigenous education at all levels.
- Northern Territory government responsibility for turning around the poor educational outcomes jointly shared by many departments, in particular Territory Health Services, Territory Housing, Local Government, PAWA and the Office of Aboriginal Development, making a whole-of-government response all the more essential.
- A need to establish partnerships between Indigenous parents, communities, and peak bodies, to service providers and both the NT and Commonwealth Governments, to honestly acknowledge the gravity and causes of declining outcomes, its destructiveness to future Indigenous aspirations, and to assume the joint responsibility of immediately reversing the downward trend.
Indigenous desire for improvements in education
The Collins review identifies deteriorating outcomes as a major source of concern:

Educational outcomes for Indigenous students are a concern across urban and non-urban categories. Having said this, it should be noted that remote area schools are particularly affected by two issues identified by the review as directly impacting upon low educational outcomes - high teacher turnover and poor attendance - and for this reason feature more heavily in this report. Poor attendance at school, for whatever reason, remains the most significant direct cause of poor learning. Observing a functionally illiterate twelve-year-old child receiving tutoring at a school, the review was advised that he had been at the school for a total of sixteen days in the previous year. A pattern has developed across the Territory of sporadic or unsatisfactory attendance up to year 7, at which point many students drop out of the system completely. If they labour on, it is through a desperately under-resourced remote areas sector which sees many students struggling through remedial courses designed to 'bridge' them into mainstream courses. ... At the same time, the rapidly increasing enrolments witnessed by the Northern Territory Open Education Centre, which offers distance education, stands as testimony to the determination of some young Indigenous students to get through an extraordinarily difficult system in increasing numbers (Collins 1999:19).

As this relates to East Katherine
The experience of the people of East Katherine confirm the findings of the Collins review on both school attendance and the desire of older students to restart their education. Attendance is similarly recognized in the East Katherine region as a prime difficulty in receiving education but the children are regular attendees at community events. The young people regularly demonstrate an ability to create purpose in their lives through acts such as:

- Working on CDEP programs though by doing so they will receive less money by missing a day's work than they would if they stayed at home.
- Spending long hours at Christian meetings that require the discipline of standing, listening and participation in singing and choreographed 'movements'.
- Expending a lot of effort in requesting discos and in dancing complex routines for many hours.
- Practicing on music instruments for a long time to achieve competence though their isn't a history of music-making in their family.
- Organizing and participating in strenuous games of football and basketball on their own initiative.

These are examples of young peoples desire to learn and participate in environments that they find relevant to their lives. The challenge for the educator is to find a way of teaching that uses the context of the activities that they enjoy. A way of capitalizing on these interests should be found and it is recommended that an Educational Development Group be formed to produce Indigenous resource material specific to the East Katherine
region and to develop methods of incorporating mainstream education into the activities that will be attended.

**Recommendations of this report**

The challenge for an Indigenous school is in making the curriculum meaningful and relevant to Indigenous cultural perceptions and values. This may require the establishment of a education development group whose work is the collection, creation and production of education resource material coming from the activities, stories and history of the immediate locality of the school.

Another way of solving education needs and poor attendance is to make education a part of the events the young people like to attend. Thus a further task for the education development group would be the development of method of incorporation of education into activities such as religious and cultural performance and sport.

**The Collins Review**

**Deteriorating outcomes**

The committee accepted evidence as does this review, that Year 7 level English literacy and numeracy are a necessary minimum for any person to function effectively in the wider Australian society, and a minimum of Year 10 literacy and numeracy are required for any management role in the community. The committee found that eleven to sixteen-year-old students in remote Indigenous schools were averaging around Year 2-3 levels. The stark reality is that many Indigenous students are leaving the school system with the English literacy and numeracy ability of six or seven-year-old mainstream child (Collins 1999:17).

**As this relates to East Katherine**

The findings of the Collins report have highlighted what is already known - the present system of education of Indigenous people has failed both the dominant culture and the Indigenous culture. The way that this result can be turned about and given a new face is the untried one of the governance of Indigenous education by Indigenous people. The creation of a private regional Indigenous secondary boarding school is now necessary and is a major recommendation of this report.

**Failure to address the situation**

The Collins review identifies a failure to address the situation as a major source of concern:

The review is pleased to note that for the first time a discrete branch dedicated to Indigenous education has been established in the department this year with its own Branch Head. However, because the range of issues impacting negatively on educational outcomes is so comprehensive, a whole-of-government approach is required: The effect of continuing and widespread low achievement by students on real Indigenous self-determination is so pervasive, the government must engage in a formal and cooperative dialogue with Indigenous parents, communities, and land
**Failure to access available Commonwealth funds**

The Commonwealth Department of Education, Training and Youth Affairs (DETYA) raised concerns with the review about what they described as a thirteen-year-old dysfunctional relationship between themselves and the NT Department of Education, which has only recently begun to transform under the new NTDE management. DETYA’s concern principally related to difficulties in accessing information on achieved outcomes. It is essential for the NTDE to have an open, cooperative relationship with DETYA which remains a significant funder and strategic partner in Indigenous education.

An example of the deteriorating relationship and communication difficulties between the department and the Commonwealth culminated with the department only accessing $196,000 from the Commonwealth’s Strategic Results Project (RP) monies, which is part of IESIP (Collins 1999:55).

**As this relates to East Katherine**

The lack of coordination between DETYA and the NTDE with the resulting failure to access Commonwealth funds set aside for Indigenous education has resulted in less education programs being initiated in the East Katherine region than would have been otherwise. The recommendation of the writers of this report is that the initiation of a Pilot Self-Managing Schools Program be requested for the East Katherine region and that a regional Indigenous secondary boarding school be created. This would lead to a more direct relationship with DETYA and bypass the difficulties of the past.

**Structure of Indigenous Education Council, NT**

The new Indigenous Education Council of the Northern Territory.

In the first instance the council should be constituted by a partnership between the NTDE, the Northern Territory tertiary sector, ATSIC and the land councils. The partnership would be based on a formal negotiated agreement, signed by the parties, detailing agreed objectives of the council, roles of the parties, the strategic plan for achieving the objectives, and all the necessary administrative and budget arrangements (Collins 1999:171).

**As this relates to East Katherine**

This new body will have the primary role of developing broad policy parameters for Indigenous education across all schools, providing advice to the Minister and DETYA and overseeing the budget for the delivery of the Self-Managing Schools Program. It would be hoped that an Indigenous representative from the East Katherine region is asked to sit on the Indigenous Education of Council, NT. If this does not occur the Council would probably still have sufficient Indigenous membership to protect the educational interests of the parents of the East Katherine region.

**Indigenous education as core business of NTDE**

There is an urgent need to have a system-wide, cross government partnership approach to improving outcomes. Above all, Indigenous education must become a
critical part of the core business of the NTDE and this will require a real cultural change to achieve (Collins 1999:17).

As this relates to East Katherine
It is interesting that the Collins Review chose to draw attention to the culture of downplaying the importance of Indigenous education within the NTDE. More interesting still is the recognition of the need for a real, as against a cosmetic, change of culture within that department. The adoption of the Pilot Self-Managing Program would give the people of East Katherine the change to alter these entrenched attitudes. In developing a more appropriate teaching model for Indigenous students the NTDE will benefit by learning how Indigenous education can be done differently. This is an example of two-way learning outside the classroom.

Outcomes based approach to Indigenous education
The review strongly supports an outcomes-based approach to Indigenous education, with the caveat on culture, language and remoteness issues that are addressed elsewhere in this report. The review believes that the systemic absence of a strong outcomes-based approach over a long period of time has been a significant factor in the failure to achieve better outcomes.

Schools and teachers are currently using a range of procedures to assess student academic performance and progress, from classroom observations and documentation of work in progress, through to individual subject area profiling and system-wide testing. Within some schools there is confusion about application and purpose of the different forms of assessment. Such confusion is unnecessary and should be repeatedly clarified by NTDE (Collins 1999:39).

As this relates to East Katherine
Though the Collins Review received widespread criticism of the testing of Indigenous students the recommendation of the review is that MAP tests and ESL profiling should continue. The review’s justification of this recommendation despite wide criticism is that:

There is a national commitment to measuring every child against agreed literacy and numeracy benchmarks which should be honoured (Collins 1999:43).

Additional to the desire that national commitments should be honoured is the unstated intention of not having Indigenous students seen as outside of the national student body. It is probable that this was one of the most difficult decisions made by the Collins Review. This is because the decision to include Indigenous students in a national education test refuses them the status of being a specially qualified group who are not to being tested in their areas of strength.

The real argument here is should the Indigenous students be included or excluded from national testing? Or will the Indigenous students be shamed by an uneven playing field? The decision has been made and Indigenous people will need to come to understand that
their children aren't of the same culture as those the tests are targeting. It is well understood by most people that most white children would do poorly in a community formulated test of Indigenous cultural knowledge.

**Responsibility for educational outcomes**

It is apparent that for decades there has been no interest at departmental or government level in a dispassionate analysis of the educational outcomes of Indigenous students. Indeed the review received credible evidence from current and former departmental officers that there had been a deliberate approach of burying or 'toning down' information about poor results being achieved by Indigenous students (Collins 1999: 47).

**As this relates to East Katherine**

This is the other side of the argument on whether Indigenous students should be nationally tested. The review makes the argument that if the outcomes such as poor achievement levels coming from disinterest or under-funding are hidden then the need for remedial action will also be hidden. This is a reasonable argument that reinforces the need for Indigenous people to understand that test results are culturally relative and that it is trends, education getting better or worse, that are important.

Of interest to Indigenous parents is recommendation 9 of the Collins review that 'schools explore alternative models of communicating student progress to parents, noting the good practice examples that already exist in schools'.

**Partnerships between Indigenous parents, communities, peak bodies and service providers**

The relevant recommendations of the Collins Review are:

Recommendation 144 (that) the Indigenous Council of the Northern Territory be established as a partnership between NTDE, the Northern Territory tertiary sector, ATSIC, and the land councils. All parties must be represented on the council at senior level.

Recommendation 147 (that) the council works closely with Territory Health Services and DETYA. The Council Secretariat must have an ongoing relationship with these two agencies and when appropriate they should be directly represented at meetings of the council. The council must also work closely with other providers of education services to Indigenous students (Collins 1999:175).

**As this relates to East Katherine**

The above recommendations both work to facilitate a stronger influence for Indigenous people on the education of their children. Recommendation 144 will particularly empower the people of the East Katherine region if they choose to participate in the Self-Managing Schools Program as the council will oversee the budget of that program. Recommendation 147 will ensure that a more direct link with DETYA is available to the people of the East Katherine region. The links to Territory Health Service will not have the same importance since the implementation of Nyirranggulung Association responsibility for the regions health services.

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23 A good school with good teachers
**Major Recommendations of the Collins Review in relation to this report**

The major recommendations of the Collins Review in terms of the issues discussed in this report are as follows:

- Restructuring of the Indigenous Education Council of the Northern Territory.
- Community and parent involvement
- Indigenous decision making
- Self-managing schools program

**Relationship of these major recommendations to the educational needs in the East Katherine region**

The report 'To Pass the Rubicon' by Katherine Wells is a compilation of Indigenous education in the East Katherine region as at November, 1999. Since that date two important milestones have passed; firstly the Northern Territory Department of Education independent review of Indigenous education undertaken by the Hon Bob Collins and secondly there has been a change in State Government control.

One of the first decisions of the new government was to accept all one hundred and fifty-one (151) recommendations made in the Collins 'Learning Lessons' review. A committee that includes Bob Collins has been convened to oversee the implementation of these recommendations.

The Learning Lessons review is a most thorough study that has touched on the cause problems of the decline in education outcomes in the present generation of young Indigenous people and recommendation of methods for repairing the damage and improving outcomes.

It is appropriate that the deficiencies highlighted in the Wells study should be compared against the recommendations for improvements made in the Collins report. This is done following the order which these problems were emphasised in the Wells report.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Wells Report</th>
<th>Recommendation of Collins' Review</th>
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<tr>
<td>Indigenous Education Initiatives Program has not been implemented initiatives</td>
<td><strong>Recommendation 29:</strong> IESP their contribution to the enhancement of educational outcomes for Indigenous students.</td>
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<td>clearly demonstrate in the remote areas of the East Katherine region.</td>
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<td>NT vocational and education programs staff have not met in its the East</td>
<td><strong>Recommendation 92:</strong> In consulting with a community on training requirements, that NTETA directly involves the school principal and the education board if that has been established in that region/community.</td>
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<td>Katherine region.</td>
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<td>Vocational, post-school, tertiary and</td>
<td><strong>Recommendation 93:</strong> There is a</td>
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<td>Specialist linguistic, broadcasting and arts facilities are not coordinated with secondary schooling in the East Katherine region.</td>
<td>permanently based adult education provider presence at community level where appropriate.</td>
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<td>None of the secondary school students in the East Katherine region have resources suitable for access to core subjects let alone to a range of suitable choices.</td>
<td>Recommendation 89: NTDE explores means of expanding the number of secondary courses that are available in remote areas and staffing them appropriately.</td>
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<td>Complete lack of application to the relevance of schooling for Indigenous students by the State.</td>
<td>Executive summary: The report established that there is a need for management systems in the Department of education to be organised to ensure that Indigenous education is a critical core business of the department.</td>
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<td>Aboriginal employment as Teachers Aboriginal Assistant Teachers, Aboriginal Resource Officers and Curriculum Resource Officers/Literacy Workers in schools is decreasing.</td>
<td>Recommendation 70: NTDE develops and implements a strategy to vigorously pursue an increase in the number of Indigenous teachers and Indigenous people involved with schools in an official and paid capacity.</td>
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<td>Indigenous representation on policy advisory, implementation and strategic committees is inadequate.</td>
<td>The new Indigenous Education Council of the Northern Territory, (page 171, Collins Report). The review is proposing the establishment of a new Indigenous peak body to develop policy parameters for Indigenous education across all schools, provide advice to the Minister and DETYA and oversee the budget for delivery of the self-Managing Schools Program. A number of proposals are made for consideration in the initial establishment and transitional phase of the Indigenous Education Council of the Northern Territory (IECNT).</td>
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<td>The majority of Northern Territory students are not exposed to Indigenous content in their courses.</td>
<td>Recommendation 107: It is recommended that NTDE examines options for producing high-quality curriculum material, which would add to the understanding by students everywhere of the value of our unique Indigenous cultures and languages and their interaction with Western culture.</td>
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<td>Based on 1997 figures, even though one in two students are Indigenous, only one in six staff attended a cross-cultural</td>
<td>Recommendation 65: That the option of outsourcing urban cross-cultural training is investigated and that</td>
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<td>awareness course. suitable training providers with an established track record be engaged to fulfil the mandated Northern Territory Public Service (NTPS) requirements to provide effective cross-cultural preparation</td>
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<td>The figures for teaching school-based (Indigenous) languages are meeting their target outcome levels. This does not correspond to the target outcomes for the policy requirement for Indigenous languages agreed to by the NTDE in 1990. Recommendation 10B: Options for extending the IAD Languages in Schools Program are explored. (For instance, the Institute for Aboriginal Development (IAD) currently delivers the Arrernte language program to a small number of government schools in Alice Springs).</td>
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<td>With respect to the criteria for enabling Indigenous students to have equitable access to facilities comparable to other Australian students, the NTDE appears to have:</td>
<td>Collins report; School facilities and infrastructure (p63): Since 1998 the Department of Housing has progressively replaced its transportable classrooms—or what were commonly referred to as 'silver bullets'—at a cost of $2.2 million with the result that facilities are now mostly adequate in terms of generic centres.</td>
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<td>- Not implemented its own strategic plans for improving the rate of facility provision for primary schools. - Not given priority to remote secondary students. - Not developed new Homelands Learning infrastructure - Not made available capital funding for local facilities.</td>
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<td>Five (5) hearing program staff were serving a total Indigenous student population of 13,062 in 1994, of which 8,599 students did not live in urban areas. Based on the eighty percent of total students perceived to being in need of a hearing program, a figure of 10,449; the actual service offered thus relies on approximately a ratio of 1:2000. Recommendation 129: Bench-mark standards for classroom acoustics for students with hearing disabilities and for all Indigenous ESL students are established in collaboration with Territory Health Services, the Australian Government Hearing Laboratory and the Menzies School of Health.</td>
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<td>Establishing an ESL profile for students with low literacy is not a standard evaluation by the NTDE for the remote area schools in the East Katherine region. Recommendation 10: NTDE issues a clear statement establishing the reasonable expectations for a student being tested in a language in which the student has limited proficiency: - When ESL students should be expected to be ready to undertake the same assessments as first-language English speakers</td>
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<td><strong>Allocations for curriculum materials. A necessary step towards diversity and alternative approaches to teaching requirements in remote areas.</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Recommendation 20:</strong> NTDE integrates the implementation and support of remote communications and desktop service provision to schools with other Northern Territory Govt. (NTG) agencies.</td>
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<td><strong>Recommendation 19:</strong> NTDE Harnesses the advancing wave. Of communications capacity with the new communications systems and services to network all schools including major remote sites.</td>
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<tr>
<th><strong>Approximately one half of all Indigenous students entering secondary education in a non-urban environment have not met the criteria for secondary education enrolment. Further, their chance of completing their secondary foundation studies is only a one in 32.</strong></th>
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<td><strong>Collins report</strong> <em>(p104)</em> Obviously, the education evaluation and further development of these (bridging) courses should continue, with attention paid to their relevance and applicability elsewhere. To this end, the review further recommends that the special category curriculum be reviewed to ensure students bridge into mainstream curriculum as quickly as possible.</td>
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<tr>
<th><strong>Initial enrolment figures show a huge overall thirty percent difference in attendance rates for non-urban Indigenous students and the average attendance of non-Indigenous students.</strong></th>
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<td><strong>Collins report</strong> notes low attendance rates as a symptom of a troubled education system. The review established that there is unequivocal evidence of deteriorating outcomes from an unacceptably low base, linked to a range of issues, led primarily by poor attendance which has become an education crisis.</td>
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<tr>
<th><strong>The Department has inadequate evaluation procedures in place for monitoring the progress and level of attainment for Indigenous students enrolled in secondary school studies.</strong></th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Collins report</strong> <em>(p39)</em> Schools and teachers are currently using a range of procedures to assess student academic performance and progress, through to individual subject area profiling and system-wide testing. Within some schools there is confusion about the application and purpose of the different forms of assessment. Such confusion is unnecessary and should be repeatedly clarified by NTDE.</td>
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<td>There is a lack of correlation between the level of English required for General Studies and the level required for Year 10 secondary studies.</td>
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<td>The percentage of certificates to enrolled students suggests that there are insufficient teaching resources, programs and facilities for Indigenous students studying English and other JSSC subjects to enable them to progress from meeting enrolment criteria to being awarded certificates.</td>
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<td>Questions are begged about the implementation of language instruction to students who are essentially regarded as learning English as a Second Language (ESL).</td>
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<td>The view of some (NTDE) staff employed to advise on VET in Rural and Remote areas stated that the current programs were set up or were set up for failure. The view expressed was that the VET program was a deficient model to begin with.</td>
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<td>Recommendation 91: as a transitional measure, NTETA should move to expand the funds available to the Flexible Response Funding Program from within its existing global budgets.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Recommendation 92: in consulting with a community on its training requirements, that NTEA directly involves the school principal and the education board if it has been established in that region/community.</td>
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<tr>
<td>The 1997 IESP (Indigenous Education Strategic Initiatives Program budget for the Northern Territory was $10.9 million. This money was underspent by the Northern Territory Department of Education in 1997.</td>
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</table>
Local education providers interviewed for the project are all dismayed that there is a total lack of co-ordination between the providers and that there is no regional co-ordination of educational and training needs in the East Katherine region. Existing facilities and resources are both under-utilised so as to appear as ghost facilities and also over-utilised to being stretched transparently thin because of a lack of evaluation, strategic planning, commitment and resource allocation.

Collins report (p173): It is recommended that NTDE negotiates with the Commonwealth to resource and establish pilot regional/community based educational partnerships in remote area communities, under the auspices of IECNT. The aim of the pilots would be to establish educational partnerships with appropriate community leadership. The pilots could be established in community schools, or in cluster schools within linguistically and culturally affiliated regions. Local area management of the pilots would be conducted by locally constituted community/regional education committees. These committees will require management training and support during their establishment phase.

The object of the (Collins) Review is 'to set the strategic direction for a five year plan in Aboriginal Education for a longer term twenty year program'. The earlier identified priorities were not specifically mentioned in the Northern Territory Review's Terms of Reference.

Wells' concern that the Collins report would be kept within narrow boundaries is well founded, given the number of past reviews on Indigenous education that haven't been all encompassing. However, the Collins report has directly addressed the concerns determined in the Wells report with few exceptions.

| **Table 3.1**  
**Comparison of Wells Report and Collins’ Review** |

**Discussion**
The recommendations of the Collins' (1999) Review of Indigenous education in the Northern Territory highlight the failure of the current education system for Indigenous people as a whole. This review was wide-ranging in scope, comprehensive and thoughtful. Its recommendations are well considered. Comparison of the results of the Collins (1999) Review with the Wells' (1998) report on the status of delivery of secondary education in the East Katherine region shows agreement at both state and regional levels on the major difficulties encountered in delivering suitable Indigenous education. The recently elected Northern Territory government committed to the implementation of all of Collins' recommendations. These changes will have a major positive affect on the Indigenous education process in the Northern Territory.
The resulting pressure on the family is accompanied by shame and the mixture of frustration and shame causes arguments.

There is cautious agreement from the parents that a regional Indigenous secondary school in the Barunga/Wugularr area would be a good idea. That it be built at Wugularr would be the first preference of the parents. This is because the Gulin Gulin/Weemol families have more close family in that community than in Barunga. The security of their children is uppermost in the minds of parents in Gulin Gulin and Weemol and they stated that they would be most satisfied by a school close to the police station at Marenboy. Though the people I talked with all agreed that the building of a regional school would be a good thing I feel that in their hearts they would be likely to adopt a 'wait and see' attitude.

There is a political suspicion amongst the people about the activities of the Jawoyn Association and the Nyirranggulang Agreement that affect their communities. One informant assured the writers that Black-fellows don't trust other black-fellows. This feeling is one that comes easily into conversations especially in Weemol who have recently experienced what they consider to be neglect from the Gulin Gulin Community Government Council.

The people of both communities believe it is time for Indigenous people to take more control of their own affairs. The suggestion that any new school could be governed by an Indigenous education board with members drawn from communities that used the school met with universal approval. The idea that their existing school be gifted to the community as a private school met with similar approval.

Wugularr
The overwhelming opinion of the parents at Wugularr is that they want their secondary aged youths to be educated on the community and they will not be satisfied until this outcome is achieved. This is in contrast to the fact of their sending even more of their children to be taught in Darwin in 2002 even though two secondary classrooms and teachers were recently made available on the community. The writers were informed that parents were not happy with one of the teachers at the Wugularr school and rather than act and shame anyone they were sending their children to Darwin. By sending their children to school in Darwin, the parents believe that they are sending a message to the teachers at Wugularr School, that message being that they are not happy with the current situation. As many people have commented, Aboriginal people vote with their feet.

The Wugularr parents said that they would like the secondary education system to include weekly or fortnightly residential blocks of learning specialized topics at a regional Indigenous high school. This desire would be fulfilled if a regional Indigenous hub school was made available.

The parents at Wugularr have had a history of struggle to achieve a secondary education for their young people. Sending students daily to Barunga CEC School has been investigated and found unacceptable. Bussing them to Katherine High School has been tried and abandoned. The latter experiment was costly financially and emotionally for the community.
The general feeling of the people of Wugularr is different to those at Barunga. The idea that Indigenous people should take more control of education was often expressed in Wugularr. This idea is possibly an outcome of the community's long interest in achieving a secondary education outcome for their youths. The facilities for secondary education in Wugularr stand in high contrast to those offered at Barunga. Though the number of potential secondary students at Wugularr are similar to those at Barunga no secondary provision existed at Wugularr for a long time while Barunga had the benefit of being a CEC school with good facilities and adequate teacher numbers.

Wugularr community has experienced recent problems such as the flood times and the suicide times. These events were additional to the already difficult conditions of poverty, high food prices, poor health, and inadequate housing. All these difficulties have contributed to many Wugularr youths having missed out on a good education. They are in great danger of being a generation that is lost to education.

At the moment the basic level of literacy and numeracy of Wugularr youths is low and the present secondary classes subsequently are being taught to the classes' lowest competency. More competent students will soon feel that they are not learning enough become bored and start to stay away. The NTDE are slow to provide facilities as the history of Indigenous attendance is that numbers usually fall off. This is a self fulfilling prophesy, students become bored and stay away so additional facilities are not provided. The outcome of this paradox is that parents feel cheated as they have been often told by the NTDE that if they send their children to school regularly they will be taught.

The Wugularr School Council have informed the State Education Minister that a new school is needed. Their argument is that the current building contains asbestos sheeting, the in-window air-conditioning is too noisy, there is inadequate provision for secondary students and the school is to subject regular flooding. The Minister has responded positively to the request and it is likely that a secondary facility will be provided at a new school. The final approval for the new school has yet to be received.

The strong desire of the senior people of Wugularr community is that the core business of their school is an education that reinforces the children's Indigenous identity. The way they see this being achieved is by Indigenous languages being taught, lifestyle skills such as identification of edible foods and native medicines being passed on and knowledge of country being built on. The necessity of learning English literacy and numeracy is accepted and often spoken of as essential secondary skills.

The long struggle of the Wugularr community to access secondary education for their young people is well recorded. The experiences of the community has shaped strong opinions. One firm opinion is that they don't wish to try to bus their young people to a secondary school again. If a regional Indigenous high school was built in the Marenboy area the Wugularr parents would prefer not to use it on a daily basis. Their desire not to send their youths to Barunga School's secondary facility is more to do with trouble between the communities than not wanting the students to travel daily.
At the moment Wugularr parents are adamant that they do not want their children to be educated at Barunga. The reasons given are that the Barunga kids get the Wugularr kids into trouble, there is too much drinking there and Barunga kids and parents tease and shame Wugularr kids.

Wugularr parents want their youths educated on the community but they are enthusiastic about the idea of a boarding hub school. This model is for the Wugularr secondary students to attend a regional Indigenous high school that is sited away from any other community. The parents would like their children to attend such a school for top-up schooling on specialist subjects that aren’t available at the community school. The ideal would be for the students to bus to the regional school and board for a period of one to two weeks. They would be accompanied by their class teacher and a community male and female parent.

The feeling is that getting the young people away from the community for a while would get them used to learning safely away from the community. The parents would want their kids to be there at the same time as other schools.

**Barunga**

The feeling of the parents of Barunga about secondary schooling are very different. They have a good school that is well resourced and well structured as a Community Education Centre. The grounds are green and clean. The buildings are permanent, adequate and well used.

The principal, Neil Williams, has been at the school a long time and the parents trust him. The community prefer that the principal and current teachers at the school remain and continue their good work. This goal heavily influenced the parents when talking of alternative schooling methods.

The school is a happy place that has the support of the Indigenous teacher and the teaching assistants. When schooling options were put to the Indigenous staff they were very vocal in their desire that there be no great change to the way that the school is governed. This feeling is also held by the old people in the community who didn’t want change if it meant that they might lose the current principal or staff.

The school has initiated new programs. One is the having of the eyesight of the students tested as well as their hearing. Another is a program initiated with the help of grandmothers. Studies have shown that Indigenous children have difficulty tracking with their eyes. It is thought that this might be a difficulty established by their lifestyle at an early age. Indigenous children are held and carried when they might be crawling. This child-rearing style is different to that for white babies. A reason for the difference is that Indigenous people prefer to hold their babies. This could be because of fears of the child crawling into a fire and, before houses, the baby would have had to crawl in the dirt or mud.
When a baby is crawling they have to use their eyes to track a path that they can crawl through. This use of the eyes to make judgements builds a tracking skill that isn’t needed when the baby is held. Using this theory grandmothers are bringing babies to the school where they are able to crawl and interact.

The additional and extraordinary care of the pupils is reflected in each student having a water bottle on their desk.

The school has an active Vocational Education Training scheme in place where students receive instruction from service providers in Barunga, Northern Territory University in Darwin, Mataranka and Katherine. Courses include automotive maintenance, construction, office administration, community maintenance and hairdressing.

The community feels that their school is doing a good job and the parents see no need for an alternative method schooling for their secondary students.

Manyallaluk
The secondary aged youths from Manyallaluk either go to boarding school in Darwin or bus to Barunga every day. There is no apparent worry amongst parents for the safety of their children while they are at Barunga.

Students being sent to Darwin is a reflection of the different ambitions of their parents because it is commonly thought that education is more mainstream there. This is itself an indication of how keen some parents are that their children get a good education white-fellow way.

The parents of Manyallaluk are interested in the establishment of a regional Indigenous secondary school close by and would bus their children there each day. Whether they continued to send their kids there instead of Barunga or Darwin would depend on the experiences of the students.

The parents of Manyallaluk would prefer that their secondary aged youths be taught on the community but similarly to the Gullin Gullin/Weemol experience they do not have the numbers to create a school on the community.

Views of Outer Communities
The problems of inadequate secondary access is shared by most of the Indigenous communities in the Top End and they are all concerned at what they perceive as an unwillingness by government to address their needs.

The communities that share family and friendship relationships with the communities of the inner East Katherine communities are Numbulwar, Ngukurr, Urapunga, Minyeri, Jilkminggan, and Mataranka. These communities experience broadly similar difficulties with many of their young people being unsuccessful after having attended boarding schools off the community.
Numbulwar
The community school teaches at both primary and post-primary level. Children's school attendance was uneven. Those who seek to continue full secondary education must leave the community, but few take up this option. Some people have family in the Gove area and have temporarily moved away from immediate family and community to be educated there. This is generally thought to be an unsatisfactory solution because access between communities is poor, especially in the wet season. Other families have sent their young people to Darwin or Alice Springs but this has proved to be generally unsuccessful. When Duppamin College was open, people sent their children there and they were happy with this arrangement, particularly with the Indigenous educational ethos. They said that if an Indigenous boarding school was established near Ngukurr they would consider sending their children to this school.

Ngukurr
The community school has a secondary class that is operating successfully but experiences the common problems of small student numbers which precludes the employment of specialty subject teachers. School attendance, however, is irregular. Similarly, students have to travel to Darwin for VET training. Any Ngukurr student who intends to study past year ten is expected to study at Kormilda College or St John's in Darwin. A positive interest was shown in a regional school being built closer to the community.

Minyeri
This community was visited by Ashley, Brown, Popple and O'Sullivan in October, 2000 and by Ashley and Jackson in March, 2002. It has around 90 primary students and 35-40 secondary students. There was a meeting attended by around 60 people, including the President and Town Clerk, when this community was visited by Ashley, Brown, Popple and O'Sullivan in October, 2000. At this time, the primary school children were crammed throughout the school, even in office space. There was no classroom space and teachers were sharing houses and even sleeping in the school itself. The community was seriously concerned about the rapid teacher turnover that resulted from these lack of basic facilities. The teachers at this school were angry and frustrated with the lack of support and facilities provided to the school. Since this time, the situation has eased somewhat but the pressure on teachers at this school is still enormous. Clearly, this is a situation that does not allow effective teaching. The NTED suggested the community pursue and cover the costs of correspondence education, but this was not thought to be a solution. The result here was a large group of secondary aged students who were at a loose end and community people were very concerned about their welfare.

The community is in a dilemma about secondary education. There is limited facility on the community and approximately fifteen students study at boarding schools off the community. A small number of students are enrolled in the secondary component of the local school. Another twelve students are living back on the community after having tried boarding school and failed to settle down. Homesickness was a reason given for this failure but the other reason was that it was said to be "too hard". The community expressed the view that they would be interested in having their children under a hub school that would provide specialist training to students and facilitate linkages between schools, especially if
integrated with information technology that allowed children to undertake some of their work from the community and minimize interruptions to their study if they moved within the auspices of the hub school. This would allow younger secondary aged children to stay in the community, and give older children the option of attending high school at the hub school if this suited their family. The community felt that the location of such a school in the Mataranka area would suit them, as this would be relatively close to their community. It was also said that the school should be located away from the main road because if the children were close to a main road they would be able to run away and hitch a lift to town.

_Urapunga_

This community has around ten primary students and four or five secondary students, all from one family. It was visited by Ashley, Brown, Popple and O’Sullivan in October, 2000. The opinion expressed on this visit was that they were reasonably happy with the current situation, and that their children were attending primary school every day. The mother of that family was the assistant teacher. While they sent older children away to secondary school, they were concerned about sending their children as far away as Darwin and if an Indigenous regional boarding school was established they would consider sending their children to that school. Location was an important factor here. They did not want to send them towards the Ngukurr area, but would prefer to send them towards Minyeri, where they have strong family and cultural affiliations. Ashley and Jackson made a further visit to this community in March, 2002, but were unable to find anyone in a position to discuss secondary schooling. We know, however, that this community is willing to consider sending their children to an Indigenous regional boarding school.

_Jilkminggan_

This community has around 15 secondary students. Despite two visits to this community, our understanding of the needs of this community’s need is limited. It was visited by Ashley, Popple and O’Sullivan in October, 2000. Ashley and Jackson made a further visit to this community in March, 2002, but were unable to find anyone in a position to discuss secondary schooling.

_Mungari community, Mataranka_

This community was visited by Ashley and Brown in October, 2000. A separate trip was made to this community by Sam Ashley a short time later. He conferred with the community about the location of a possible Indigenous boarding school and the opinion expressed was that the community would prefer the location to be outside of Mataranka. The opinion expressed on this visit was that they were happy to send their children to the Jilkminggan secondary facilities. Ashley and Jackson made a further visit to this community in March, 2002, but were unable to find anyone in a position to discuss secondary schooling.

_Discussion_

Indigenous parents showed a great interest in the question of their children's education at all times during the study and as expected their opinions were as diverse as those to be had in any white community. The one opinion that united all the people was that Indigenous youths have to be trained to a point where they are able to work in their communities themselves.
Nobody expressed a special preference to learn mathematics and nobody brought up the use of information technology such as the internet. However, when the notion of information technology was raised in terms of allowing students to move more flexibly between community and school this idea was received favourably. Our own observations and interactions with school aged children are that children are very keen to use computers in their learning. Both mathematics and the internet are tools for the empowerment of Indigenous people.

The young people feel that the new school should have:

- A basketball court.
- Football oval.
- Music instruments and recording materials.
- A recreation hall.
- Swimming pool.

The activities that resonated best with young people were travel for camping, for sport and for entertainment. It is clear that a transport system of school buses and Toyota's would be highly valued by students.

*Old people's views*

In the past, that is before the arrival of white people, the education system of East Katherine was structured by sex with the girls being taught by their mothers and aunts and the boys taught by their father and uncles. This sexual differentiation was an essential part of the process and boys were taken from the women's camp to live at the men's camp at an early stage of their education.

Teaching was done in the family. The girls were taught the skills necessary to look after their future husband such as how to gather food in different places in both wet and dry seasons. The boys were taught the skills of hunting such as spear making and maintenance and the habits of animals. Both girls and boys were taught the universal knowledge of social decorum and prohibitions. In time they were given secret knowledge - specific to each sex - at a time when the old people recognized that the individual was ready to receive it.

Though those skills are no longer the fundamental skills of survival for Indigenous people the old people want the young people to include the knowledge of the past in their modern education. This old knowledge is essential to the identity of Indigenous people and part of their title to their lands and should not be ignored.

Today the old people see the future for young Indigenous people as being bound in a two-way education system; Blackfellow way and Whitefellow way. The important point is that learning be two-way; That is two distinctly different cultural ways running in parallel - not a hybrid mixture of the two. The people consider it primarily important that young people look behind them to the law and culture of the old ways. But they recognize that an ability to understand the new ways is also important to the future survival of Indigenous people. The old people are confident that two-way learning and living is achievable.
The old people are not be interested in policing the white education system as they believe that it isn't their business. They don't want the two education systems to be mixed. Better to have two distinct systems unadulterated by other cultural influences. The old people's attitude is that the two education systems should be kept separate especially as far as cultural authority and law are concerned. An example given of this respect for cultural difference were the events surrounding the taking of a Toyota from Gulin Gulin. The vehicle was stolen from the council compound and driven to Wugurrarr where it ran out of fuel in the middle of the ceremony ground. Under Indigenous law the Toyota then became the property of the old men. The white policeman's acceptance of the old men's ownership demonstrates that an acknowledgement of the precedence of blackfellow law in determining rights is possible. Thus, two legal systems can work in parallel where mutual respect for differing laws occurs.

The parallel working of two education systems brings up the idea of precedence. The question is, if you were to have a business ceremony for young people and white school was operating on the same days which education system should take precedence? I put this question to Jimmy Wessan the lawman for the Wugurrarr community. He answered that his teaching could wait and ceremonies be scheduled for school holidays. Jimmy agreed that it would be more convenient if school holidays were in the dry season when ceremonies traditionally occur. This flexibility by Jimmy Wessan is a confirmation of the general feeling amongst teachers both white and black that education is more important than any convention about the timing of events.

Parents' views
Indigenous parents showed a great interest in the question of their children's education at all times during the study and as expected their opinions were as diverse as those to be had in any white community. The one opinion that united all the people was that Indigenous youths have to be trained to a point where they are able work their communities themselves.

There are as many ambitions for children as there are parents. Some parents want their children to be capable of running their own communities while others want their children educated so as to report to elders on what white-fellows are planning for the future of blackfellows. Irrespective of parental ambitions there is general agreement that literacy in English and numeracy is the basic essential. Some parents additionally wish their children to continue onto tertiary education but worry that the learning of high knowledge might take their children away geographically, culturally and intellectually.

For example, one difficulty for a young person, returning to the community as a medical doctor is that there are many people on the community that they shouldn't touch or see the naked body of. As a lawyer of white-fellow law it would be difficult to practice on the community because of family alliances. In fact any job that demanded that the professional act impartially would be culturally difficult because of the desire and cultural requirement that family be looked after first. The outcome is that a young professional working on their
own community must either forget their cultural rules or they must leave and work somewhere else.

Teachers' views
The teachers interviewed in this study were generally willing to support any initiative that had a real chance of improving the education of children in the region. The level of teacher stress in the region varied greatly, but their overall view was that it is time to implement positive changes. Several teachers pointed to a disjunction between the current NT government curriculum and the education standards of children, pointing out that it was unrealistic to expect these children who are being taught in a cross-cultural situation to achieve the same levels as children who are being taught solely within their own culture.

Teachers identified many weaknesses in the current system of teacher training. These include the lack of cross-cultural awareness training as identified in the Collins (1999) review, the lack of appropriate teacher training, the limited nature of existing teaching materials, and the need to develop culturally and socially relevant ways of teaching.

One difficulty teachers experienced was that of individual attention. Many Indigenous students when in need of help to continue with their work will wait for what seems a short time to teachers before they decide they aren't going to be individually helped. At this time the student would go home and not return for the rest of the day.

Teachers generally agreed that it was the commitment of teachers that determined what was a good school or a not so good one. It was also agreed that the teaching of Indigenous students is being done where English is a second language but this is not being reflected in teacher training, class sizes or resources.

Lorraine Popple of Wugularr School argued that teachers need specialist training in cross-cultural awareness as well as remedial teaching, and that there is an urgent need to develop specialist teaching materials. Popple pointed out that the current material that is available is severely limited both in quantity and quality. She pointed to the need for an abundance of material encompassing a wider range. The comments made by teachers highlight an urgent need to develop culturally and socially relevant educational materials for both primary and secondary teaching in the East Katherine region.

“A good school with good teachers”
The desire of Indigenous people from the East Katherine region for the schooling of their children is encapsulated in a statement by Jenny Kennedy of Wugularr community for "a good school with good teachers". This is not a simple thing to achieve, as evidenced by the history of Indigenous education in Australia. The failure of the Western education arises from fundamental difference in white/black teaching methods. White teaching happens in a different context to black education. This difference has not been given enough weight in the past in determining the model for the teaching of Indigenous youths.
European education occurs in a classroom and implies that there is one important truth which is the one found in their books. The class is structured so that the one-who-knows has their own territory, often in the front of the room and those who are to learn sit as a separate group. There is a profound physical differentiation between those that know and those that don't. This separation reinforces the knowledge that the teacher isn't family.

There is a hierarchy of contexts in the European education journey such as kindergarten, primary, junior and senior high schools but all education primarily occurs in a classroom.

The attendance at white schools is compulsory and it is expected that a student will attend classes though they may prefer to be somewhere else. There is no commitment made by the white student to the learning process before their attendance is allowed. In this situation a teacher can be teaching students who are reluctant students.

All learning in white schools other than sport happens in the same context; the classroom. The classroom is intended as a physical containment and a way of policing distractions. The classroom is a European cultural method. The confinement of the child's body as well as their minds in the classroom signals to the parents that their child is being taken away - actually and metaphorically.

In contrast the Indigenous education system occurs within family. Before houses everything happened in the outdoors and most teaching was a public event. If it wasn't a public event then the learner could infer that the information was secret. The context of learning was a sign post that indicated the importance of the information being transferred.

Jimmy Wessen said that the old people had a system to deal with young people who had gone 'too far white-fellow way'. Such a young person expecting to attend a business ceremony are told they had to wait. Thus, it becomes obvious to the youth that they have to show an interest in and a commitment to learning Indigenous law before being taught. This insistence on a commitment to learning is a major advantage that Indigenous teachers have over those in the white education system.

Jimmy Wessen feels that it is necessary that young people be given both black and white stories and then be allowed to make up their own minds about which cultural system they followed. This system brings benefits and problems. An example of this is when the old men drive around and tell young people that there is a corroboree happening that evening. It is an important part of the invitation to remind the audience that they must make up their own mind whether to come or not. Sometimes the young men will value other things such as television or drinking more highly than cultural law.

Any change towards a more Indigenous friendly context for teaching should look at a classroom design that suggests to the student that they are learning white-fellow way voluntarily.
Chapter 6
Education Options for the East Katherine Region

Introduction
The suggested models for secondary schooling of Indigenous youths in the East Katherine region are all valid options and deserve consideration before determining the most appropriate method or methods. The options are not mutually exclusive and any of them can be adopted and run concurrently. The premise behind looking at these options is the overarching one of Indigenous people wanting to take control over the education of their own children. The two main streams of the education options are the state system and the private system.

The State School system
Indigenous state schools are funded by the Northern Territory State Government through their Northern Territory Education Department administered by its Aboriginal Education Branch. The Collins review's first recommendation is that the Branch be renamed the Indigenous Education Branch to 'inclusively reflect both Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples'.

Advantages, black-fellow way
The advantages of the state school system from an Indigenous perspective are as follows:
The state:
- The state is something the people know because they have seen the way they do things for a long time.
- The state has lots of people you can talk to if something bad is happening.
- The state has a lot of teachers so if you get a bad one it is easy to get another.
- The state has good teachers already.
- The state has the power to close schools if they aren’t teaching properly.

Disadvantages, black-fellow way
The disadvantages of the state school system from an Indigenous perspective are as follows:

- The State wants to be boss.
- The State sometimes employs teachers who are too rough.
- The State sometimes hasn't got time to listen to Aboriginal views.
- The State doesn't always understand Aboriginal ways of thinking and learning.
- The State has to teach lots of different people: white-fellow, Chinese people, other ethnic groups and Aboriginal people. So they mix them up and find it hard to teach just for Aboriginal people.
- The State has bosses in Katherine and Darwin and everywhere. So it is hard to find out which person is responsible and who is the right person to talk to.
• The State has lots of teachers and keeps moving them around communities. So the teachers sometimes stay only a short time. If the teacher only stays a short time they don't get to know the parents well. They don't get to know the kids properly.
• The State looks after its teachers number one. If a teacher has been mucking around with the kids the bosses have a meeting. But they might let that teacher off because they don't believe Aboriginal people.
• The State has that law about what a school has to look like and be built. So the classrooms and the buildings always look white-fellow way.
• The State doesn't know black-fellow culture properly. So they can't teach that way.
• The State wants to make parents feel welcome to come to the school anytime but they don't know how.
• The State is a tied up with the Christian calendar so it can only have big holidays at Easter time and Christmas time. Christmas holidays are in the wet season when it is hard for the kids the go hunting and fishing or visit their family.

Advantages, white-fellow way
The advantages of the state school system from a European perspective are as follows:

• The state can be made accountable for Indigenous education failures through the electoral system. (This has proven to be an ineffective insurance in the past because Indigenous people are not a majority voting block in the Northern Territory. Also governments don't often appeal to the electorate for a mandate to improve Indigenous education outcomes.)
• The state has an education infrastructure and curriculum in place in the region.
• The state has a large pool of trained teachers to draw upon.
• The state has the systems in place to retrain teachers and keep their skills up to date.
• The state is an experienced education provider with access to a wide range of resources and partnerships with other education providers.
• The state has shown a concern for the declining Indigenous education outcomes and commissioned the independent review - the Collins Review.
• The state has additional funding arrangements with the Federal Government. The IESIP (Indigenous Education Strategies Initiatives Program) and SRP (Strategic Results Program) are examples of these.

Disadvantages, white-fellow way
The disadvantages of the state school system from a European perspective are as follows:

• The State is a branch of government and because Australian governments are democratic they have to try to please everyone or they get voted out. Therefore they like to change slowly so they don't upset people too much.
• The State creates the curriculum so there is a limited choice of what will be learned.
• Public servants employed by the State are very busy and are not quick to respond to new questions.
Discussion of the state school system
Past practice has been that Indigenous parent’s involvement in their children’s education has been limited in the main to their participation on the Community School Council. Any initiative from the parents for a change to, facilities, staffing or the curriculum moved through the bureaucratic channels of the Northern Territory Department of Education. The NTDE hold the power, and obligation, of endorsement of or refusal of any change to education provision. This situation is certain to change as a result of recommendations made in the 1999 ‘Learning Lessons: An independent review of Indigenous education in the Northern Territory’ more commonly known as the ‘Collins Review’.

The Collins Review is a sound document that is thorough in its scope and recommendations. One of its recommendations is for the establishment of a Self Managing Schools Program:

It is recommended that NTDE negotiates with the Commonwealth to resource and establish pilot regional/community educational partnerships in remote area communities, under the auspices of the IECNT. The aim of the pilots would be to establish educational partnerships with appropriate community leadership. Local management of the pilots would be conducted by locally constituted community/regional education committees. These committees will require management training and support during their establishment phase (Learning Lessons, p173).

The Collins review recommends that the IECNT (Indigenous Council of the Northern Territory) be restructured as ‘a partnership between NTDE, the Northern Territory Tertiary sector, ATSIC, and the land councils. All parties must be represented on the council at senior level’ (Learning Lessons, p175). This is intended to bring a stronger Indigenous voice into Indigenous education policymaking.

The Northern Territory State Government have indicated that they will be accepting and implementing all the recommendations of the Collins review. Therefore, decisions made by The Nyirrangkulang Council could accept that a new and better Indigenous outcome will occur as a result of the recommendations. Plans for the future of Indigenous education in East Katherine ought to be made presuming that the recommendations of the Collins review will be fully implemented.

The Self Managing Schools Program will bring extra players into the policy making process within the IECNT including the land councils which will give it an Indigenous bureaucratic voice. The Indigenous land council voice will be balanced by what may be the white-fellow voice of the Northern Territory Tertiary sector; the academics. It could happen that the academics choose an Indigenous person/s to represent them on the IECNT, which would be a good result and an empowerment of the Indigenous voice. Similarly the NTDE may choose to be represented on the Council by an Indigenous person/s. But the restructuring of the Council has yet to be confirmed thus the actual strength of the Indigenous voice is yet to be determined.
It can be safely assumed that the state Indigenous education methods will be vastly changed so any decisions on whether to remain with the state governance of Indigenous education should take account of the proposed changes.

The private school system
This section of this report outlines the advantages and disadvantages of the private school system from both an Indigenous and non-Indigenous perspective.

Advantages, black-fellow way
The advantages of the private school system from an Indigenous perspective are as follows:

- A private Indigenous school could make Indigenous education its core business.
- Private schools are more likely to be responsive to the needs of Indigenous parents.
- Private schools are less likely to employ teachers who are rough with the children.
- A private school can be shaped according to Aboriginal ways of thinking and learning.
- A private school can be structured so that it is more directly accountable to Aboriginal people.
- The organizational systems of a private school are less complex, so it is easier to find out which person is responsible and who is the right person to talk to.
- A private school can be more responsive to Indigenous ideas, in terms of its architecture, infrastructure, curriculum and teaching methods.
- The private school need not necessarily be tied up with the Christian calendar, so the school terms could be structured so that they are in line with the seasonal variations of Aboriginal people's movements.

Disadvantages, black-fellow way
The disadvantages of the private school system from an Indigenous perspective are as follows:

- The private school system is one which has not operated on these lands before. Therefore, to some extent it is an unknown quantity, and a gambling with children's future, for Indigenous people in this region.
- The running of a private school is a huge responsibility, with a concomitant fear of failure.
- Indigenous people will have to take responsibility for firing staff as well as hiring them.

Advantages, white-fellow way
The advantages of the private school system from a European perspective are as follows:

- Private schools are run by the government and do not have to try to please everyone. They are able to change more quickly.
- Private schools can be more creative in their curriculum, providing greater choice in what will be learned.
- Private schools tend to have a more personal relationship with parents, and are more likely to respond quickly to parents' enquiries.
• Because parents pay private schools feel they have a greater responsibility to fulfill the educational desires of parents.
• Private schools have greater status than state schools, in the eyes of most Europeans.

Disadvantages, white-fellow way
The disadvantages of the private school system from a European perspective are as follows:

• Private schools can not be made accountable for Indigenous education failures through the electoral system.
• There is no private school infrastructure and curriculum in place in the region.
• Private schools have limited systems in place to retrain teachers and keep their skills up to date.

Discussion of the private school system
The above discussion shows that the private school system has many more advantages than disadvantages for Indigenous people living in the Katherine East region. The most important factors here are that the private school system is inherently more flexible than the state school system and can be more easily shaped to meet the needs of Indigenous people. The private school systems is much more likely to meet the educational needs of students in a manner that is socially and culturally appropriate.

The private school system brings with it both freedom and responsibility. It gives Indigenous people in this region the opportunity to be bold and to take hold of their own futures, through the education of their children. Whilst the responsibility involved in this is great, it is not more than Indigenous people in this region are capable of.

The options available
The decision to build a regional Indigenous secondary school to service the youths of the East Katherine area should not be made in isolation. Considerations should account for the secondary education services now in place and changes that are likely to come from the Collins Review of Indigenous education, Learning Lessons.

The alternative models for improving secondary education in East Katherine are:

• Self managing schools as a pilot study with NTDE.
• The creation of a private secondary boarding school.
• The gifting of existing schools to the Nyirranggulung Association.
• The creation of a regional secondary hub school
• A mobile classroom and teachers.

These options are not mutually exclusive as it is likely that two or more of the models are accepted and run at the same time.
Option 1: Pilot self-managing schools
This model is recommended in the Collins Review of Indigenous education:

Recommendation 149 suggests that:

The pilot Self-Managing Schools Program be established under the auspices of the Indigenous Education Council of the Northern Territory.

In its preliminary argument the review suggests:

It is recommended that NTDE negotiates with the Commonwealth to resource and establish pilot regional/community based educational partnerships in remote area communities, under the auspices of the IECNT. The aim of the pilots would be to establish education partnerships with appropriate community leaderships. The pilots could be conducted by locally constituted community/regional education committees. These committees will require management and support during their establishment phase (Collins 1999:173).

The requirements for East Katherine's inclusion in the Self-Managing Schools Program would be met by The Jawoyn Association providing 'community leadership' and the Nyirrangngulung Committee providing a 'locally constituted community /regional education committee'.

The move to self managed schools is likely to be of great benefit for Indigenous communities. The vision presented in the Collins Review forecasts an education system where Indigenous parents will have a real role to play in their children's education through the management of their community school.

The crux of the change will be the 'locally constituted community/regional education committees'. These committees will manage pilots schemes where new directions are explored in Indigenous education. The implementation of the scheme as a pilot study allows the NTDE to revert to management of the pilot schools if the experiment is unsuccessful.

How much power the Northern Territory Department of Education is willing to hand over to Indigenous parents is yet to be determined. One firm principle that the Collins Review proposes is that the school's principal is to have greatly extended powers. For example, the review suggests that 'NTDE needs to allow principals the opportunity to be 'flexible and creative in the way they deliver and resource programs' (Collins 1999:173).

The Collins Review (1999:174) recommends that the community/regional education committee should negotiate agreements with NTDE to include these changes:

- A strategy to improve attendance and retention.
- Flexible school times and flexible school terms, e.g. meeting ceremonial obligations, based on community negotiation and commitment and meeting bottom-line system requirements.
• Negotiation with local agencies and organizations to secure conditions supportive of full attendance e.g. shop opening hours, sporting commitments.
• Clear goals for student improvement in English oracy, literacy and numeracy.
• Best practice in ESL teaching.
• Curriculum that is sequential, easy to follow and not cluttered with supplementary support material
• The establishment of multipurpose early childhood centres
• Strategies for ensuring an acoustically sound learning environment.
• A clear strategy for increasing the number of fully trained and effective Indigenous staff in teaching decision making and support positions in the school(s).
• An attractive teacher recruitment package which includes performance agreements.
• Performance agreements with the principal which acknowledge the role as senior representative of the NTDE in the community.
• Clear linkages between key service providers and employers in the community to ensure articulation into jobs and service coordination.
• The development of data systems that allows for aggregated and disaggregated data to meet the challenges arising from student mobility; performance information to track improvements; costing analysis to allow informed decisions on the range of educational choices the pilot puts in place.
• Agreement to resource the school(s) to enable achievement of the agreed target outcomes.
• Such resourcing to include a component for tightly focused professional development and/or recruitment programs to ensure that competent staff are in place.

Components that could be additionally considered for inclusion on this list are:

• Clear agreement on the responsibilities of the IECNT, the NTDE, the community/regional committee, the principal, the teachers and the parents.
• An independent grievance system that teachers and parents can access without fear of recrimination and which is endorsed by the Australian Education Union.
• A practice that ensures that teachers have regular informal contact with community members and parents.
• An agreement that ensures that teachers will not be disadvantaged by way of promotion or salary if they choose to remain at a community school for a long time.
• An agreement that education facilities are linked to the number of potential students in a community/region rather than based on attendance numbers.
• An agreement that cleaning, building maintenance and ground maintenance work should be contracted within the community where possible.
• An understanding that suitable texts will be produced and made available to enable two way learning and ESL instruction.

It would be most appropriate that the committee of the Nyirranggulung Agreement approach the NTDE asking that their organization be considered as managers for a pilot of Indigenous education provision in East Katherine. Such a request would be independent of any decision to build a regional Indigenous boarding school. This undertaking need not affect the acceptance of option 2.
Option 2: Private regional boarding school
The purpose in building a private high school in the region would be to give Indigenous students of the East Katherine region an additional option for their secondary education. Such a school would be of great benefit to those students who are unhappy at having to travel too far away from their community to be educated in Darwin.

It should be granted that any regional Indigenous secondary boarding school would need to be established as a private school as the Northern Territory Government having divested itself of the role of provider of secondary education in boarding schools. This convention does not preclude a request to NTDE that they build a secondary boarding school in East Katherine of course. Alternatively it would be necessary to obtain funding for the establishment of the school primarily through the Commonwealth’s Department of Education, Training and Youth Affairs. Following the methods explored by the Northern Territory Christian Schools Association additional funding could be sought through agencies such as Aboriginal Hostels Limited (AHL) to supplement boarding costs.

Option 3: Existing schools to be gifted to Nyirrangngulung
This model would have the existing schools at Gullin Gullin, Wugularr and Barunga moving from State ownership to private ownership. The ownership would include all land and buildings, employment of teachers and the right to create a curriculum. Teacher housing would also have to be gifted by the State Government. The governing body of the new private schools would be by elected members of a school board. The board could include people from the communities that form the Nyirrangngulung Agreement and other experienced education providers.

Precedents exist in the Northern Territory for the gifting of state owned schools to private organizations. The Indigenous boarding schools Vrrara at Alice Springs has been gifted to the Lutheran Church and Kormilda College at Darwin has been gifted to the Uniting Church. The difference being that the gifted schools were boarding schools and the schools of East Katherine are day schools.

This idea was mentioned to the parents in East Katherine and the response from communities was conflicting. The general feeling is that Indigenous people should be allowed to take more control over all aspects of their lives including the education of their children. A difficulty of asking whether the people of East Katherine should own their schools was the newness of the idea and the inclination of the people to give the 'pleasing' answer. The answers to the question can be directly related to the secondary education services that are currently being provided. Thus the parents from Barunga had a more clearly developed opinion than the parents of Manyallaluk, Wugularr, Weemol and Gullin Gullin.

Barunga
The Barunga community have a positive feeling about their children's secondary education. The ratio of teachers to pupils is better than the national average of seventeen to one and the school's facilities are adequate and modern. The school has a good library and plenty of
computer access for students. The principal, Neil Williams, and his staff has the support of the community and are valued for their responsible attitude to the teaching of the community's youths.

Gary Jackson attended the annual general meeting of the Barunga's School Council and discussed the idea of the school being gifted to Indigenous people and governed by an Indigenous school board. The parents had thought about the idea and gave an immediate decision through the Council's president. The decision of the meeting was that the idea be abandoned.

The reasoning of the meeting was that they have a school that respects the Indigenous people already. The recent problem of the Community Government Council where Barunga's town clerk had abandoned the community affected the mood of the meeting. The meeting felt there wasn't an education problem to be solved and if it wasn't broken then why try to fix it? The other element that affected the meeting was that the current white teachers might not remain if the school moved to a private school system. The most vocal speakers against the proposal were the Indigenous teacher and teaching assistants. The feelings of the Barunga School Council was also shared by the community though a few people showed mild surprise at the council's decision.

Wugularr
The proposal that the Wugularr school be gifted Indigenous government was put to senior people in the community and they were initially non-committal but after the Barunga rejection of the idea they admitted that the plan had worried them. The feeling of the people appears to be that white-fellow education is something that white-fellows know best. Asking Indigenous people to take responsibility for an education system that they have no knowledge of would be setting them up for failure. In spite of this community perception an Indigenous education committee that received 'management training and support during their establishment phase' (Learning Lessons, p173) would doubtlessly be best able to manage a regional education system that had an Indigenous focus.

Gulin Gulin and Weemol
The parents of Gulin Gulin and Weemol indicated that they felt that greater Indigenous control over their children's education is necessary and would welcome the gifting of the school to themselves. They showed a lesser inclination to have the school owned by the Nyirranguang Association.

Option 4: Creating a hub school system
This model is for each small community to enrol their secondary aged students at their local school. These students study English, mathematics and SOSE at the local school. Each community is attached to a hub school. The hub school provides science, technical and technology studies and other specialist courses including VET (Vocational Education and Training) through visiting teachers, small mini schools at the hub school and the provision of mobile classrooms. The hub school would be the secondary provider and be staffed through a new arrangement which takes into account the delivery mode (similar to current arrangements with NTOEC (Northern Territory Open Education Council) and the schools of
- Machine shop/welding.
- Performing arts.
- Food preparation/camping skills.
- Multi-media/Information technology.

The model might be funded by NTDE and the Commonwealth's AESIP (Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Strategic Initiatives Program) and managed by NTDE.

Conclusion

The reasons for building a regional Indigenous secondary school are many and complex but the need is apparent. The literacy levels of young people in the East Katherine region are declining and their parents are worried. Barunga has and Wugularr will soon have secondary education facilities on their community. Manyallaluk uses Darwin colleges or Barunga school and Gullin Gullin and Weemol parents use colleges in Darwin. Many of the secondary students from Gullin Gullin and Weemol prefer to use the Christian college of Marrara because of its Christian values. It is generally agreed that Darwin secondary schools are too far away; the students get homesick and parents usually don't have the resources to pick up their children to bring them home.

It is not intended that a regional secondary boarding school would compete with existing schools in the East Katherine region for student numbers. The intention is to provide a secondary education to students who for one reason or another are not attending school. All communities have secondary aged youths that are not attending school including those of Barunga and Wugularr. The reason for this in the case of Barunga and Wugularr is that some families are dysfunctional and the necessary healthy environment essential for successful schooling doesn't exist. In Manyallaluk, Weemol and Gullin Gullin some students have dropped out of school in Darwin. These young people live on their communities without any real direction to their lives other than to try to have fun. They show no interest in ceremonial life and are often outside the control of their parents and the community. The result is that they become bored and try to have fun in a way that often leads to trouble. This trouble is sometimes bad behavior but more often it is petrol sniffing or smoking gunja. Young girls are able to move from the control of their parents by getting married and having a baby before they finish their education.

These young people who are missing out on a secondary education are also present in Numbulwar, Ngurr, Minyerri, Jilkimgingin and Mataranka. The problems are either that there is no local secondary school, they are part of a dysfunctional family or a family that love their children too much to keep them unhappily in Darwin or Alice Springs. It is these young people who are in need of a second chance at finishing their education. They need good teachers at a good school. A teaching environment that is sympathetic to Indigenous parents and students is needed and it is an Indigenous organization that has the best positioned to make this happen.

The other purpose for building the school would be for it to develop into a hub school that taught specialist subjects and VET courses that are now taught at Batchelor College or by service providers in Darwin. It would be more efficient if specialist equipment and
machinery were available at the proposed Indigenous secondary school where teachers and instructors were bought to the school.

If the new school is to be a private school governed by Indigenous people and if the schools at Gullin Gullin, Wugularr and Barunga remain under state government management - that is if the Self-Managing Schools option is not taken up - there would have to be an agreement of co-operation between the private and the state schools. The state schools administrators would have to agree to have their specialist subjects and VET courses taught at the Indigenous school. This would be easier if the three state schools were part of a Pilot Self Managing Schools Program. This is because it may need the state school teachers agreeing to a rearranging of their school terms and a new annual holiday regime: holidays in the dry season rather than at Christmas time.

The proposal was put to teachers at Barunga that they might be asked to change the time of their annual holidays. Their response was extremely positive and co-operative and reinforced their genuine desire to provide the best education possible for their students.

Funding the school
The accessing of resources for the building of a regional boarding school is an involved process that has to be learned. As the process is not one that any one regional Indigenous organization is likely to do more than once it requires that the process of writing submissions to resource providers be learned from a zero knowledge base. This learning process is time consuming and therefore expensive. If it is possible to draw on the experience of another organization that has successfully learned the funding process the costs of acquiring funding an Indigenous school is greatly reduced.

The Northern Territory Christian Schools Association are specialist education providers who have adopted the improvement of Indigenous education outcomes as part of their charter. They have established schools that Indigenous children from remote areas now use such as Marrara College in Darwin. There latest venture is the creation of an Indigenous regional secondary boarding school at Woolaning which results from a partnership between Woolaning Community Inc. and the Northern Territory Christian Schools Association. This partnership came from the desire of the people of the Woolaning region for an improvement in education for their children and the knowledge and experience of the N.T. Christian Schools Association.

The product of this partnership is the approval to build a new regional college at Woolaning that has funding approval of approximately eight million, three hundred thousand dollars ($8,300,000) with recurrent costs of one million, one hundred and seven thousand dollars ($1,107,000) per annum.

The funding of capital costs:
Capital costs of non-government schooling in the Northern Territory is usually met from three sources:
Block Grant Authority (BGA)
NT Government Capital and Interest Subsidy Grants
Private borrowings

The NT Christian Schools Association made the following proposal to DETYA:

'In the interest of the early establishment of this important pilot project, the overwhelming need for secondary education provision in the region, and the high level of support from parents and communities it is proposed the Commonwealth fund the full capital costs of the College.'

The funding of recurrent costs is to be found as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Amount</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>NT per capita</td>
<td>$111,720</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commonwealth per capita</td>
<td>$278,160</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IESP</td>
<td>$180,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Abstudy</td>
<td>$180,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Remote Community Managed Education funding</td>
<td>$282,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To</td>
<td>$1,031,880</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The N.T. Christian schools Association have met with a range of government departments and other agencies to secure cross-agency support for the College and related developments. The outcome of these meetings include consultations with:

- Department of Aboriginal Affairs to ask for support for the building of the College.
- Department of Transport and Regional Services (DOTRS) for establishing networks in the region and for infrastructure funds to build a Multi-function Community Centre at Woolaning through their Regional Solutions program and from More Accessible Government (MAG).
- Department of Health and Aged Care for support for integrated health and education service delivery to Woolaning.
- Department of Family and Community Services for funding a family support officer to develop networks for support for parents and parenting education throughout the region.
- Aboriginal Development Corporation which has provided background information and introductions to a range of agencies and officers.
- Northern Territory University and Batchelor College in relation to the delivery of vocational courses and adult training through the new college.
- Fraynework Media to produce a comprehensive learning package for the Finniss-Cox/Daly region.
- Aboriginal Hostels Limited (AHL) have been approached in regard to meeting the cost of an anticipated recurrent deficit in the operation of the Supported Accommodation program at the College.

The consultations have been widespread and is an ongoing process as new avenues for educational support are identified. For example the N.T. Department of Health is to be approached seeking aid in teaching alcohol education to college students. The innovative search for a variety of funding sources is meeting with success and is looked on favorably by all funding agencies as an appropriate sharing of the education responsibility.

The N.T. Christian Schools Association have a proven record of achievement in the establishing of schools in the Northern Territory and have the support of the Hon Bob
Collins. They are specialist education providers and can concentrate on this aspect of Indigenous concerns. Therefore it is recommended the Nyrranggullung Association approach the N.T. Christian Schools Association to establish a partnership. The partnership would be one where that body were paid to undertake the processes of registration of the school, writing funding submissions to provide architectural and engineering plans for the school and for the costs and recurrent costs of establishing the school.
Chapter 7
Recommendations

Recommendation 1
The major recommendation of this report is that a private Indigenous boarding school should be established for students in the East Katherine region. We recommend that this educational program be implemented in two phases. The first stage is the establishment of a private regional boarding school. The second stage is the augmentation of this secondary school with a hub school which provides science, technical and technology studies and other specialty subjects, including VET courses.

Recommendation 2
The challenge for an Indigenous school is in making the curriculum meaningful and relevant to Indigenous cultural perceptions and values. This may require the establishment of a Education Development Group whose work is the collection, creation and production of education resource material coming from the activities, stories and history of the immediate locality of the school.

Another way of solving education needs and poor attendance is to make education a part of the events the young people like to attend. Thus a further task for the Education Development Group would be the development of methods for incorporation of formal education goals into activities such as religious performance, dance, sport and music.

Recommendation 3
It is recommended that a register be established specifically for the recording of funding resources from both public and private sources. The sources should be traditional and unconventional with an emphasis on imaginative jumps of matching needs with providers.

Recommendation 4
It is recommended that a knowledge sharing partnership be formed between the Nyirranggulung Agreement on Education and the Christian Schools Association of the Northern Territory. This would be an extension of the idea of the two-learning process where an Indigenous group and a Christian group learn from each other.

Discussion
Recommendation 1, Phase 1: A private regional boarding school
The urgent need for people in the Katherine East region is for a regional boarding school. The principal advantages of this school include:

- The school being governed through an Indigenous Education Board which gives Indigenous control over every aspect of the school's curriculum, structure and identity.
- A school structure that is shaped by Indigenous cultural values, providing greater relevance to students and a greater likelihood of academic success.
• The reinforcement of cultural values through location of the school on land that is controlled by Indigenous law.
• Funding that now derives from the Northern Territory State Government could be sought from the greater economic resources of the Commonwealth government, with the possibility of providing lower student/teacher ratios and higher quality facilities.
• The inclusion of facilities for student families to camp at the school so that problems can be worked out at the school with the help of parents.

The structure we envisage would place control in the hands of Indigenous people, allowing them to facilitate non-Indigenous expertise without undermining Indigenous cultural values. This school would provide a second chance for students in communities without secondary schooling facilities, or with limited facilities, who have dropped out of education at a secondary school in Darwin or Alice Springs. The regional school would provide a secondary education option that is relatively close to the home community for those students who have no community secondary education provider. The usual problems associated with boarding schools, as outlined in section 3.x, could be minimized by providing accommodation for visiting parents. Students from communities in close proximity to the school would be able to commute daily.

Advantages of a private regional Indigenous boarding school
For people in the East Katherine region there are many advantages in having a regional private Indigenous boarding school, irrespective of whether it is on or off community. These advantages include:

• The private school being governed through an Indigenous Education Board which gives Indigenous control over every aspect of the school’s identity. The management of the school for the NTDE under the Self Managing Schools Program translates into important decisions remaining the NTDE’s prerogative.
• Funding that now derives from the Northern Territory State Government would be sought from the greater economic resource of the federal government.
• Building a school that is new, never having past associations with white-fellow values.
• Building a school that is designed by Indigenous people for Indigenous needs.
• Building a boarding school that isn’t in a city or town and is on land that is still controlled by Indigenous law.
• The possibility of appointing an Indigenous principal and teachers.
• The possibility of using the boarding school as a hub school for the East Katherine region in the future.
• Providing a second chance for students who have dropped out of education at a secondary school in Darwin or Alice Springs.
• Providing a secondary education option close to the home community for students who have no community secondary education provider. The communities of Numbulwar, Ngukurr, Urapunga, and Minyerri have voiced interest in sending students to the proposed school.
• The opportunity for students from close communities to commute to the school daily. At this time moment parents at both Barunga and Wugularr have stated that they would not be happy to bus their children every day.
• Being able to provide accommodation for visiting parents.
• The majority of students will be Indigenous, which will minimize tensions between Indigenous and non-Indigenous students.
• Being able to draw upon the expertise of other private secondary boarding school education providers. The Christian Schools Association and the principal of Kormilda College, Mr Stephen Kinsella, have offered to help in advisory capacities.

Disadvantages of an off-community private regional Indigenous boarding school
This report recommends that the regional boarding school be established off-community. However, it is important to recognise the disadvantages associated with this. These disadvantages include:

• The school's inability to cater for adult education, especially for young mothers wanting to complete to year twelve. This problem would be addressed when the school turns into a hub, with mobile classrooms and community outreach facilities.
• The parents of Barunga and Wugularr have indicated that they would not be prepared to use the school as a boarding facility nor would they want to bus their children to the school every day. However, their needs could be met once the school became a hub school.
• It may be difficult to recruit high quality teachers who stay a long time.

Phase 2: Development into a hub school
Phase 2 involves development of the regional secondary school into a hub school which provides science, technical and technology studies and other specialty subjects, including VET courses. This model assumes that secondary education delivery would continue in those community schools where it already exists, under the auspices of the hub school, as well as in the regional high school.

This model is a preferred option for teachers and parents from Barunga and Wugularr as it would supplement their schools by being a VET provider closer to the community. Current student numbers at these schools would not warrant the building of a hub school in these communities but the regional secondary school could be developed to provide these facilities to these communities. The hub school would be a useful adjunct to core secondary education through the teaching of skills that make a young person employable. Development into a hub school is essential if secondary education is going to reach the target students. This should be done as soon as possible, with a maximum timeframe of three years.

Implementation
The next section of this report addresses the core issues involved in the implementation of Phase 1 of the regional educational program. It considers issues such as the philosophy that might guide the establishment and governance of the school, possible models and curriculum as well as practical issues such as the location, size and infrastructure of the school. This section of the report also considers the resource implications of establishing an Indigenous secondary school for the Katherine East region.

Registration of schools in the Northern Territory
• The school would be on land that remains under the control of Aboriginal law.
• The school would be governed by an Indigenous School Board and therefore would be more aware of and respond more quickly to the cultural needs of the students and their parents.
• It is proposed that facilities be built on the school grounds to accommodate visiting parents that will give alternatives other than the student leaving the school when they have problems.
• The school would be situated closer to the student's communities which would make both parents and students feel more comfortable.

Possible models
The ideal is to have a two-way teaching system where both knowledge systems are respected and given equal weighting. Two secondary schools whose aims are two-way learning are Yipirinya School at Alice Springs and the proposed Woolaning College at Daly River. Their aims are similar but have different emphases. Yipirinya school places more importance on the teaching of Indigenous culture than Woolaning does. Woolaning College emphasizes the school's role as a transitional school that will empower young Indigenous people to understand and operate in both the Indigenous and mainstream cultures. For purposes of comparison the philosophies of the two schools are:

Yipirinya School
Yipirinya School aims to:
• Enable its students to move freely with knowledge and confidence in both Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal societies.
• Teach students English and other non-Aboriginal knowledge as well as maintaining and reinforcing Arrernte, Luritja and Walpiri knowledge.
• Develop and extend children's oral language and literacy skills as well as reinforcing their Aboriginal identity, cultural values and spirituality.
• Provide a familiar and open environment that fosters control of Yipirinya by the school community.
• Promote management of the school that reflects traditional structures.
• Promote Aboriginalisation of the school's teaching, administration and other staff.
• Produce vernacular literature and integrates language teaching into a number of curriculum areas including mathematics, arts, crafts, cultural studies and science (From Wells 1999: 88).

Woolanning College
The goals for Woolanning College are:

In relation to students
• To provide a supportive and nurturing environment for schooling that contributes to the development of the student's sense of self-worth, enthusiasm for learning and optimism for the future.
• To provide a quality secondary education program for students of secondary age in the region that improves the learning outcomes in the areas of literacy and numeracy to, over time, match the outcomes of other students.
• To develop a two-way educational program that respects the student's family and culture and provides access to full participation in the life of the nation.
• To achieve flexibility in delivery of education by provision of supported accommodation.
• To provide positive learning outcomes for students free from the effects of discrimination and discrepancies arising from students' socio-economic background and geographic location.
• To improve participation in secondary schooling across the region.
• To improve attendance of secondary students across the region.
• To enable students to complete secondary education providing clear pathways to employment and further education and training.

In relation to parents and community
• To build on the initiative of parents and communities in this region to develop a college that they shape and manage to match the specific needs of young people in this region.
• To develop effective community governance and management of educational provision in the region.
• To deliver education within a setting where community mentors are working and undergoing training providing students with positive role models.
• To achieve genuine two-learning involving members of the community in the school program and involving the school in the life of the community.
• To provide community access to education and training, information/communication technology and the other resources available through the College.
• To achieve flexibility in the timing of educational provision by harmonising the school calendar and timetables with local requirements.

In relation to the whole community:
• To channel co-operative effort between Commonwealth, Territory, NT Christian Schools and the College Council toward the achievement of shared goals.
• To deliver education in a cohesive manner alongside health, social, enterprise and employment services.
• To provide access to vocational learning and development related skills and an understanding of the work environment, career options and pathways to meet the untapped potential for local enterprise and employment in mining and tourism industries.
• To focus resources constructively and deliver effective secondary education and training to young people in the region (The Northern Territory Christian Schools Association report to DETYA 30/6/01).

Location of school
There are limitations on where the proposed school could be built and these are:

• It should be a safe place away from where people traditionally drink.
• It should be on neutral ground; not too close to any one community and preferably a place where different communities traditionally met or lived in the past.
• Adequate water supply for residential purposes and for irrigating sporting fields
• Reasonable closeness to a power supply.
• A hill for locating a water-tank for gravity feeding the school.
- School teachers may prefer to own their own house in Katherine and commute to the school daily therefore the closer to that town the better
- It should be on Indigenous land where Indigenous law prevails.
- Communities of the outer East Katherine such as Numbulwar, Nugkurr and Minyerri would prefer the school to be accessed from the Stuart Highway.
- The site must be accessible in wet weather and not swampy.
- There should be local cultural sites and available bush tucker as resources for the old people to teach culture.
- Large open flat areas for locating sports fields.
- Lots of mature shady trees.

There was no general agreement about where the school should be built. Each community thought it should either be on their own community or close by. Many people said it should be on the road into Manyallaluk. This is because it is quiet place and there isn’t too much drinking. Some children want the school to be at Manyallaluk because there is a lot of fun things to do at the community. The people of the Manyallaluk community are not keen that it should be close-bye because they want their privacy and a lot of outsiders would be visiting if a school was built there.

King Valley
Some parents felt strongly that it should be a long way away from any road because they know from their own memories that the youths will often walk away from troubles. One preference was that it should be at King Valley which is approximately fifty kilometers from Katherine and can be accessed from the Stuart Highway or by a shortcut road from Manyallaluk. King Valley has in the past been used as a cultural learning place for young people and the old people say that it has many elements such as bush foods and cultural places where they could teach the young people. It was also suggested that King Valley might lend itself to becoming a mini-rural college at a later stage.

King Valley has two rivers so fishing and swimming could be easily done. There are flat areas of land for building a football field. But it is thought by some people that there is no underground water available and this may be a problem if water is needed to irrigate sporting fields in the dry season. The river water would probably not be sufficient supply for this purpose.

The people of Gulin Gulin and Weemol were not keen on King Valley as a place for the school and this is probably because it is thought to be private land owned by the Jawyon Association. The ownership of the land by one language group would make the voices of other language groups less legitimate. The only way that King Valley would be acceptable to everyone as a place for the school is if the property or portion of it was gifted to an independent Indigenous school board. The grounds of the school need not be big. The Commonwealth approved size of school grounds are:

- Up to 100 students - 3.0 hectares
- 100 to 200 students - 4.8 hectares
- more than 200 - add 0.4 hectares each additional 100 students

A good school with good teachers
Maranboy
Maranboy is a thought to be a good place for the school because it has a history of settlement by both white and black people. It is crown land that was once a tin mine, a saw mill, a lemonade factory, a police station and Joe's garden in the area. Many people thought that if the school was built behind the current police station that it would be a safe place for their children. There is access to water and power and it is easily accessible from the Arnhem highway.

There is a lot of culturally significant sites and bush tucker in the area so it would suit the educational needs of the old people. Water is in ample supply and there are many mature trees. There are also flat areas for sporting fields.

The area is well known to the people of East Katherine and there are no known limitations to the use of the area as a site for the Indigenous boarding-school.

Broophysme (Robinson Hole)
The general area is often known as the Four Mile, named after the turn-off from the Arnhem Highway four miles before Maranboy and close to the turn-off to Manyallaluk. It is traditional hunting area with many self-made hunting roads crossing the locale. The area is seen to be neutral land where anyone can hunt and no one group feels possession over it because of past exclusive usage. This is not to forget that the land is Jawyon land and owned by the family of Phylis Wiynjorroc who is the present senior traditional owner.

Two visits were made to this area by Gary Jackson, once with Peter Manabar and Jimmy Wessan and a second time with Peter Manabar alone. These old men are the junggaye for this country. They both recommended the area as a place for the new high school because of its cultural significance.

There a lot of surface water at the site including Maranboy Creek, Roper Creek and Broophysme spring. Both creeks are dry in the winter and feed water into the Waterhouse River. Broophysme Spring is a permanent spring fed water-hole which is culturally significant because it is the dreaming place of the late Gordon Bulumbarah and the site of the wild wind dreaming. It is here that a whirlwind that originated at Bishop's Bore entered the ground after traveling there via Mataranka. The area is not a place frequented by devils and is spiritually safe.

There is a hill in the area suitable for a water-tank. It is named on the Maranboy topographic map series R621, sheet 5468, edition 3-Aas as providence Knoll - 171. There are several large billabongs in the area that are largely dry in the winter which are a good education resource for teaching on animal and bird-life. The majority of the area is dry and flat ground well covered by many mature shade trees.

Access to the site would be along the traditional hunting roads in the dry and by the Stuart Highway in the wet. The site is located two kilometers north of the Stuart Highway on the reserve known as Beswick Aboriginal Land. Access from this direction is troubled by having
to cross the Roper Creek but a small bridge or causeway would overcome this difficulty. In the case of the Roper Creek being flooded for several days the school might be accessed from the north by the hunting roads.

Power is accessible from the line that follows the Stuart Highway to supply electricity to the township of Mataranka.

It is the favoured site for the Indigenous boarding-school by people in the outer East Katherine region because of its proximity to the Stuart Highway.

Size of school
The need for a transitional junior secondary school that prepares young Indigenous people to for senior secondary school and for the European dominated tertiary institutions is urgent. The example of how Woolaning school is tackling this problem is to plan for a school of sixty students but to advance towards that aim in increments. Thus, Woolaning will open with room for twenty students, 10 boys and 10 girls in two cottage style accommodation units. The student population number will double in the second year when another two accommodation units are built. A further twenty students and two cottages will be built in the third year giving a total population of sixty boarding students.

Provisional approval has been granted for this growth pattern by DETYA (Department of Education, Training and Youth Affairs) and funding agreed to provisional on the success of the school at each stage.

This model of measured increase allows time for the school to develop and the administration and government to take on larger tasks as Indigenous education skills and experience increase. It is a model that would most easily satisfy funding agencies as it allows a control by incremental annual expenditure and therefore its use at the proposed school is recommended.

Infrastructure and school architecture
The school buildings are the material manifestation of the European teaching method. In the old times Indigenous people didn't need buildings for teaching because life itself was learning. The open country, rivers and caves were the places where teaching took place. Education processes are different and it is generally expected that formal Indigenous education will take place primarily inside a building.

The question of what style of building would be most conducive to the education of Indigenous children has not given answers that have translated into buildings that are noticeably different to those of traditional European schools. There are elements in all schools buildings that tell the observer that that building is a school.

The most economic manner of accommodating boarding students is the dormitory system where large groups are housed in large single rooms. This is not the most culturally appropriate method for Indigenous children as it groups those who are not kin and not the same language speakers. This thoughtless grouping of students can lead to friction which
One possible improvement to the Woolaning design is to have the exterior walls made out of perspex so that classroom proceedings are open to view. These walls should also have doorways so that visitors can gain classroom access without having to pass through corridors.

**Classroom design aimed at promoting a feeling of Indigenous ownership**

Cultural elements could be incorporated into the building such as traditional motifs being tiled into the flooring or painted directly onto a concrete floor and protected by a clear lacquer. Walls could be decorated with woven mats and other cultural arts.

Sport is an enjoyable part of learning for most Indigenous children and their preferences in this respect will need to be taken into account when designing the school.

the young people feel that the school should have:

- A basketball court.
- Football oval.
- Music instruments and recording materials.
- A recreation hall.
- Swimming pool.

**Transport and machinery**

Activities that resonated best with young people were travel for camping, for sport and for entertainment. All of these activities require the use of special purpose vehicles. These vehicles should include:

- A 4x4 transport bus to seat say 20 students for wet weather transport to communities with unsealed roads.
- Two troop carriers for cultural excursions into the bush.
- A small coach of say 22 seats for transporting a sporting team and support personnel to fixtures in Darwin and Katherine.
- One tray table truck for transporting goods including food from Katherine.
- A 4x4 utility for rubbish collection and garden waste and for collecting fire-wood for camping visitors.
- And possibly a 4x4 twin cab utility for a community police aid.

Also a tractor with attachments for grass mowing of sporting fields.

It is clear that a transport system of school buses and Toyota's would be highly valued by students and a essential part of the school's infrastructure.

**Curriculum**

The Indigenous people of East Katherine are experiencing a time of cultural flux. The young people are not showing an interest in attending ceremonies and are not making the effort necessary to receive knowledge of the law. At the same time these same young people
aren't attending school regularly. They are in danger of becoming lost to all forms of education.

The parents of East Katherine want their children to be strong in culture, be happy and to also understand the white-fellow way. These three elements of parental desire are linked to empowerment of the next generation of young people. But these desires are in opposition; the time necessary to learn culture is limited because time taken up going to white-fellow school and going to school can cause unhappiness.

Several of the well educated middle-aged Indigenous people have commented that white-fellow education is a hard business and young people have to understand this. They also say that modern parents are too soft on their children when the children should be made aware that they should work hard at school. This attitude is in contrast to the general feeling of parents that their first priority is the happiness of their children. Home life and hunting trips are much better when your young people can be with you to help and learn. Thus parents would like their children educated in principle but in fact they have difficulty in getting them to attend. This dilemma would be better resolved if the parents could see a better success coming from the education process and if the curriculum was more relevant to their lives.

The white-fellow education system is new. The universal education of European children is approximately one hundred years old and the methods of instruction are constantly in a state of flux as the search for the best way of passing on information continues. The rapidly changing world of information technology and globalization demands that new approaches to passing on information be constantly found.

In this arena of constant change the Indigenous parents find that what they were taught at school is now being surpassed by their children's experience. The difficulty for the parents is that they don't know what information is essential for the empowerment of their children. Are their children being taught too high? Will they ever use the stuff they are being taught? An example of this dilemma came from a young white girl working at a community shop. She said that the parents of the community were complaining because their children were being made to learn difficult things at the school and those things would never be of use in the future. The subject referred to was Legal Studies which includes workplace relations. The informant said that parents wanted more relevant things taught at the school; things that would enable the students to eventually run the community. Knowledge of the law and workplace relations is of course essential to the proper running of a town council. This perception of their children being taught hard things with no good purpose indicates that the parents must trust the teachers as they lead the students into new and unfamiliar areas of knowledge. This need for trust restates the need for a relationship of friendship between parents and the teachers.

In the classroom the Indigenous students want to please. They want to do well and make the teachers and their parents proud of them. The most important thing though is to avoid shame. That is not to be shamed by the teasing of the other children because they are doing well and not shamed by not understanding the lessons and not doing well. The
Indigenous student is culturally sensitive to shame in all its forms. This means avoiding shame for yourself and also shame for other people. Thus, students will often take on the shame of being ignorant rather than have the teacher shamed because they are not able to pass on information in a way that a young indigenous person can understand. This shame avoidance in the classroom becomes a lesson itself in how not to draw attention to yourself which is best done by being quiet and invisible. The other way is by not going to school. The method that the best teachers use to overcome this cultural imperative is to produce a safe learning environment where the feelings of each student is valuable and protected. This method is difficult and requires a particularly committed teacher and curriculum. The teacher who has built up a trusting relationship with parents will succeed best and should be kept at the school where possible.

The Indigenous education system is one that does not foster curiosity. In Indigenous culture it is thought to be presumptuous to ask questions. This is because knowledge was a capital good held by the old people and apportioned by them. The Indigenous student learned at a time not chosen by themselves nor by asking questions. To assume a right to knowledge would be frowned on and challenged. Thus the curiosity that it is hoped will drive the education system of the dominant culture is frowned on in Indigenous culture. The teaching of young people the different cultural ways should be done in a manner that does not lead to confusion. Thus the shaping of the curriculum should be done jointly by Indigenous and non-Indigenous educators. The Indigenous educator would have to be a person with special attributes such as the ability to get white educators to listen.

Living arrangements for students
The common method of providing meals at boarding schools is for food preparation and dining to take place in one common area. The cottage residential system allows for a different way of doing it. In the cottage the cooking and eating is done at the same place as leisure and sleeping. This is similar to what the students have experienced at home. The benefits of the cottage system is that students can learn home making skills such as helping in the kitchen, setting the table and clearing up in a familiar atmosphere. The student can also influence the menu by a friendly relationship with the house-parents who also cook and shop. This ability of the students to influence the food served is an important feature of the system as it empowers the young people, making the school more friendly and less like an institution.

The question of whether the house-parents should be white-fellows or black-fellows is a particularly difficult one. The expressed desire of the parents of East Katherine is that house-parents be a husband and wife team drawn from each community represented at the school. The initial student population of twenty bodies ten males and ten females, will be drawn from many communities and this will make it impossible to have house-parents drawn from each and every community. Additionally it may be necessary to employ house-parents from outside the East Katherine area so that parents will perceive them as being impartial in their treatment of the students under their care.

The house-parent system planned for Woolaning is that white house-parents will be used. This is part of the two-way learning method where students experience the different way
that Europeans cook and live. The teaching of food and personal hygiene would be a further responsibility of the house-parent and could be done by either Indigenous or white house-parents.

Facilities for visiting parents
The student problems of trouble and homesickness at boarding school is usually resolved by the student running away or the parents being called to come and pick up the student. This is a continuation of the method of Indigenous people voting with their feet. There is a different answer to this problem that might be tried but this involves the parents becoming part of the school community.

There are family associations and links throughout East Katherine that reach as far as Numbulwar. The parents from communities closer to the proposed school such as Barunga, Wugularr, and Manyallaluk have agreed to visit the school and help troubled children of related families that live a long way away.

If parents come to the school when they first enroll their child and if they could stay at the school for say the first week of their child's stay then both parent and child would feel more comfortable at the school. The introduction to school and the separation from parents could then be a gradual one. This method could be used again when the student is having trouble with others at the school or from homesickness. When the parents came to pick up their child they could be encouraged to stay for a while and help their child overcome their problems.

The idea of encouraging parents to come and stay at the school is untried and therefore the results are unpredictable. One way of trialing the method without the financial burden and investment in expensive motel type accommodation is by supplying large tents for the family. The tents could be used in conjunction with permanent ablution blocks which have the additional use as sports ablution facilities. One advantage of tents are that they are mobile and the visiting family could erect them in a place where they could look onto the activities of the school and their child. The tents could also be erected as close to or as far away from other visiting families as is socially comfortable. The method of using tents could eventually grown into the use of permanent accommodation if the experiment proved to be successful.

It is expected that the visiting parents should bring their own food. The building of a covered communal barbeque area that had lockable refrigerators should be considered.

Safety of students
The establishing of a new system where parents are encouraged to camp on the school grounds will possibly bring with it problems of inter-group tensions. The likelihood of such developments plus the expressed concerns of family for the physical safety of their student children highlights the need for an effective security system. Security of students, teaching staff and visitors to a school is normally the responsibility of the school principal but as the number of visitors to the school will be larger than normal and their visits for a long time this usual method would be inadequate.
be shaped so that they are socially and culturally appropriate for Indigenous people in this region and that its day-to-day operation as well as its administration be under Indigenous control. It is the opinion of the writers that such a school will significantly increase the educational outcomes of secondary students in the inner and outer East Katherine regions.
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“A Good School with Good Teachers”:
Educational Aspirations of Indigenous People in
the East Katherine Region, N.T.

APPENDICES
"A Good School with Good Teachers": Educational Aspirations of Indigenous People in the East Katherine Region, N.T.

Appendix 1
Interviews with community members
Community Interviews
(compiled by Kirsten Brett)

Sam Ashley (old man) 4/12/01
Said there are two things he would like here. A swimming pool and a college (high school) for all the kids. 'Well now is a good time for the high school so he says do that first.' The college would be for Bulman, Beswick, Barunga and Manyallaluk kids. 'Jacko is here so that all the community people can tell their story of what they would like' 'Its going to be between that Manyallaluk turn off and Manyallaluk. There are springs there.' (note should have a good look at the water maps that Mick Pearce has produced this year for Jawoyn, to determine the water in various regions.)

Clara Bush (old lady) 4/12/01
The mention of the new high school, brought the following advice and suggestions from old Clara:

The kids don't want to go to Barunga because all the kids there tease them. They don't want to go to high school there. They want to go to school here. They don't want to go away to school because they miss their family. They want to stay by their family. They get homesick if they go away.

There needs to be two high schools. One that is for Barunga and Manyallaluk. One that is for Beswick and Bulman. The Bulman kids have a lot of family here and can stay with them while they go to school. The school at Beswick needs to have one room for boys and one for girls, because the boys and girls tease each other.

In the morning teach European way and in the afternoon teach Aboriginal way.

Inquiring about one big college where all the kids from Beswick, Barunga, Bulman and Manyallaluk could go brought the following suggestions from Clara:

That should go on the road between Beswick and Barunga by the big tower. The kids can stay there all the time. Although the Barunga kids might walk back to Barunga. Its too far for the Beswick kids to walk back. They are close to springs there. Close to places where they can be taken too - Dodlu, Druphi. Also close to Tandangal. I used to live there. We lived there and then afterwards we went to Barunga. It was Bamyilli then. They should make a shop outside for drinks for all the kids.

Have aboriginal people beside them to keep all the kids friendly, so that the kids don't tease. Will need two people from each community.
I worry about all the drunks that come along that highway though. There are a lot of drunks that walk around on that highway. They might pick up the kids and bring them home.

The school should be away from those drunks. It should be at Manyallaluk, that's a quiet area. There is lots of water there and places for the children to walk around. It's not too far away so their family can go and visit them.
Two people from each community should go there to look after the kids. Male and female from Bulman, male and female from Beswick, two female from Manyallaluk and a male and female from Barunga. Duck Creek mob can come and see them too. They can go there.

Black and white teachers can work there together. They can work together and become a family.

The kids have to learn so that a child of 12 can be level with other kids of the same age. They need to learn so that they can work in the shop, office, health clinic or in big city work. So they can become level with Europeans, maybe even go to university.

Peter's camp at Barunga 4/12/01
(Peters son?) When the kids are away at boarding school we don't know what's happening. My daughter used to go to boarding school in Darwin but the house parent was getting too cheeky with my daughter so I took her away. We don't want our kids to go a long way to school.

At a big school here we could have a husband and wife stay with the children from each community. All the kids from the other communities can learn their stories from them. They can learn about the other communities and how people live there.

Peter Manabaru - the kids can learn black fella and mununga way together.

Christine Camfoo (assistant teacher Barunga CEC & elder) 4/12/01

The school should teach English and maths, because some of the kids can't read properly yet. They are still behind.

Barunga CEC principal Neil Williams 4/12/01

See Jacko's notes

Glen Wesan (old lady) 5/12/01 & 7/12/01 & 10/12/01

Glen says the big school should be at Barunga. The kids have no family in Katherine but they have family at Barunga. Barunga, Beswick, Bulman and Manyallaluk can work together. Not where the school that is there at the moment is, but in another area there. A new big building for the high school. All the kids can stay there together. All of Phyllis's family, her daughters and grand daughters can look after the kids. The kids can stay there near Phyllis.

But all the Beswick kids don't like to do away. They miss their mum and dad. They want to go to school here.

The girls and boys should be taught separately.
The girls should be taught weaving. Old Jimmy and old Peter can take them and show them business side. Men can do drawing/painting.

_Gloria Lane (teaching assistant at Beswick School) 5/12/01_

A lot of kids from Beswick went to Marara school in Darwin. But they would get homesick. They missed their family. One child would get homesick and come back to Beswick and then all the kids would want to come back to Beswick.

_The new school_ - The kids should go to a big school and stay there for a while and then maybe come back to a smaller school in their community. They would have somewhere to sleep at the big school during the week and then come back to Beswick on Friday. The boys and girls should be kept separate in the dormitories, but they can learn together. They should have a couple from each community who goes there and stays with them. Old Sam and Nancy used to go with the kids into Katherine when they were going to Katherine High, and they used to come back every afternoon.

If kids don't want to go to the big school then they can stay back in Beswick in the little school. Some kids worry and want to be with their parents all the time. They might not want to go away for schooling. A teacher should stay at the community high school when the other kids go to the big high school for a while to teach the kids who want to stay in the community.

_Location_ - some people say at the turn off to Manyallaluk. Some people say it should be on the highway between Barunga and Beswick.

_Teaching_ - The kids need to learn for:
  - Shopkeeper
  - Health worker
  - Ranger
  - Police aid
  - Carpenter
  - Mechanic
  - Anything!

So that afterwards they can work in the community.

The school needs to teach European side and culture side. White teachers teach European side and elders teach culture side.

_Important ladies to talk to are:_
  - Pam Weston
  - Nancy Weston
  - Kathleen Lane
  - Loretta George
  - Sarah Ashley
  - Glen Wessan
  - Vera Lane
  - Vera Cameron
Vera Cameron (old lady at Beswick - Her daughter Janice and her husband also gave input). 6/12/01

Some history of other schools.
(Janice and her husband used to get a bus from Beswick to Barunga. A long time ago before there was a school at Beswick. They would take the bus in the mornings and come back in the afternoon.)

Some kids have gone to Marara. They liked it there. But they worried for their parents. Its too far away.
Some kids have gone to Komilda. But its too strict. If you run away you are grounded for one or two weeks. You can't go shopping or too disco. People are smoking and drinking there. We don't like Komilda.
Some kids have gone to Wangiri school in Queensland. But its too far away. That school is just for Aboriginal kids.

When kids have to go away they miss their family and get homesick. Its too hard to send them away.
Possible Locations:
The other side of Dook Creek, near the Bishop's Bore road is a good spot. Its high up so when the flood water comes, it won't be a problem.

Maranboy, is a good place. There used to be a tin mine there. But the kids might fall down some of the holes that are still there from the mining times.

Near Tandangal is a good spot. There are lots of springs there, and lots of pandanas. But the drinking spot might be moving close to Tandangal now, so it might be best not to have it there.

Manyallaluk could be a good spot because that is a dry area. Barunga and Beswick are drinking areas. The Manyallaluk president is strict too and won't let any grog come in. If its there you'll need a Christian person like Anderson or Ralph to drive the kids there because they won't let any grog on the bus or into the school.

The school should have:
- A hostel there for kids to stay at
- A games area for the kids to use at night times
- Pool tables
- Swimming pool
- Big library
- Big kitchen
- Big fence around it.

Separate boys and girls dormitories. Rooms of about 4 girls. Rooms by family groups, so girls from the same family would go together. (After the kids knock off from school they can do homework together).

Aboriginal people from communities staying with the children so they don't get too homesick (The house parents can swap every night, i.e. Take it in turns so that they have a rest).

Boys and girls can learn together.

Have cooks there to give everyone breakfast, lunch and dinner.

Who is the school for:
The school is for all the Jawoyn families. The communities that are on Jawoyn land. Its better not to bring the kids from the Roper, Hudson Downs etc. because those kids tease too much. They have a different language there.

(It was also said though later on that maybe visitors can come and it didn't matter that they spoke a different language.)

The local mob can come back for weekend but the visitors could stay at the school.

What the kids should learn there:
Mostly the kids should work for European school work. Vera saw this as an important part of the kids learning so that they can take over from the older community people and be able to speak for the community: 'Well when meeting time they can talk then, because we're all older now!'
The school should get old people on the weekend to help teach the children language, and to teach about getting bush tucker.

The school should teach things so that the children can grow up to be able to work as:
- Mechanic
- Office worker
- Nurse, doctor, sister
- President
- Teacher

And teach various job type skills, like what the high school kids did when they went to Katherine for work experience.

Sarah Ashley and Debra 6/12/01

Teasing - At the mention of the new high school Sarah straight away started talking about her concerns of teasing there. She said she is worried that when the communities come together that there will be a lot of teasing. (Note: Experience teaching at Beswick has shown the huge repercussions of teasing. Indeed it seems to be stopping many kids excelling at anything). She said it is something that a lot of people are worried about. She suggested that due to teasing it may be better not to bring the 4 communities together. That if they did there would be a lot of teasing ad swearing. Rather Barunga and Manyallaluk should have school together and Beswick and Bulman should have school together. If the kids fight while they are at school they might walk back and might go the wrong way. This could affect the location... if there are too many hills.

Whites teasing - She pointed out that worse than the teasing that the children get from people in other communities was the teasing which they have got at times when they have gone to school with white kids. in Katherine High for example. She spoke about the way that white kids had teased the black kids, and said that because of this it is a good idea that they create a high school for just black kids.

Language groups - It is okay for the different language groups to work together. Sarah spoke about the various language groups within the four communities. She spoke about how the Mialli mob in Beswick were all like one big family. And pointed out that while the kids might all speak different traditional languages, that their languages captured things which they all understood, e.g. Bush potato and bush Tucker. She thinks having the children of different language groups together could have positive effects since they would all be able to hear each other talk in their languages and would then be able to learn other languages.

Location -
- Have it on the way to Barunga near Barunga at that old station there. There are lots of springs there. Or near Dodiluk. However she is worried about having it at these places because if the kids walk back there are lots of hills. She mentioned that if they walked along the road they would be okay, but if they walked the back way there would be lots of bushes.
Could have it near Dolum dolum on the big bit of flat ground there. That way if the kids are going to walk back they will be okay.

Stay or not

Could go to school during the week and then come back home on the weekend. Debra said that the girls would have fun if they stayed but that the boys would get bored. Sam and Nancy Ashley could stay with them in the dorms. Have a boys dorm and a girls dorm.

Or could catch a bus each day to the school. Debra thought that would be better. Catch the bus on Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday and then on Friday they could stay there for the weekend and have a good time. She said that they wouldn't have a good time in Beswick because there are too many drunks. Two men and two women could go there and stay to look after them. Sober people such as Anderson and Serena, or Kathleen.

Learning - Sarah thought the kids should be learning for European side and culture side. But she said that European side was most important. Black and white teachers should work together at the school. She want the kids to learn so that they can talk English well. They will know their own language too, they can learn that at their camp, but they need to learn so that they can talk to Europeans and work in jobs in the community that need English. They should learn the skills at the school so that they can work in Arnhem Land as:

- Police aids
- Office worker
- Teacher
- Ranger

Facilities - Recreation Hall for disco. So that the kids can have a sober disco. Because when they have a disco in Beswick all the drunken people take their problems to the disco. Basketball court
Football oval
Music instruments and recording materials

History - Sarah used to get a bus from Beswick to Barunga to go to school. She would stay down there with family and come back to Beswick on the weekends. Or sometimes the bus would come back every night. Sometimes she would tell the driver that she was going to stay at Barunga for the weekend with family, but really it was just because of boyfriend. A lot of the boys and girls used to do that.

The last word - The last word was that the kids like to go to school here in Beswick. That its better not to mix all the communities together. We want to make the kids so happy.
**Tina (Beswick mother) 6/12/01**
Initially thought it would be a good idea to have the school near the creche/ womens-centre but changed her mind and said don't have it there because it's a ceremony area. She said don't have it away from the community because those places are too far away. The kids want to stay here. She said that the kids don't like to go to Barunga, Bulman and Katherine.

A new school could be put where the new suburb is being built.

She says how Christine Kennedy always says to her 'I don't want to go to Barunga or Katherine, I want to stay here.'

It should teach language and culture.

**Barry Weston (traditional owner) 6/12/01**

Said that the school should be built in the middle of the four communities. It should be put in a high place.

It could be put in the new suburb near the round about. Wherever its going to go we'll have to get Old Jimmy to check that it is okay.

The school should teach 2 ways - Aboriginal way - traditional way, bushtucker and everything

European way

It should have some Aboriginal teachers from the community

**Vera Lane (Beswick old lady and school council member) 6/12/01**

Suggests that the school is near Beswick, but not in the community because of all the drunken people. Said it could be on the highway out of Beswick. She thought Maranboy or Manyallaluk sounded good. She later thought that perhaps there were too many drunks around Beswick and Barunga and that it would be better to have it somewhere between Barunga and Manyallaluk.

She suggested that the kids should go to school by bus in the mornings and come back in the afternoon, but that if they have a big school house then the kids could live there for about 1 week periods.

She said that there would need to be a big meeting with the other communities and too see what Phyllis had to say about it.

She thought that all the high school kids should be learning culture there some of the time. Vera would like to teach how to make baskets. They should also learn bush tucker. Vera thinks it is important that languages are taught as well as English. Perhaps teach English half of the time and language half of the time.
Wayne Johnson (Besswick man who likes footy) 6/12/01
Keen on having a lot of sport at the school. Have football competitions between kids from the different communities.

Samantha ? (Clarrie’s mum - Besswick mother and school council member ?) 6/12/01
Thinks that it would be best to put the school near the police station at Maranboy. She said that the kids mother and father won’t humbug them if they have it there. Also that there were a lot of pandanas and colour there that they could learn about.

She thinks that the kids should all stay there together so that they can learn properly. Some of the kids don’t speak English very well. Have a boys and girls dormitory, and have house parents from the respective communities that don’t drink to look after them. She thinks the kids will get along okay and will make friends with one another. School days they should stay there and come back on the weekend. It they don’t want to come back on the weekend then they could go out on bush trips to the waterfall or black rock.

They should learn:
- English
- Reading and writing
- Cooking
- Sewing
- Music
- Sport

They should learn both English and culture side. She pointed out that if there were any white adopted kids going to the school that the kids could teach them culture side. She thinks that it would be best for the boys and girls to learn separately, because when the boys and girls learn together they tease and eye each other.

There should be white teachers so that they can learn English and community people there teaching as well.

She said that the school should have a big football ground. It should also have a no smoking rule. It would need people to keep an eye on them to help them stay healthy.

She thinks that they should go to school so that they can be educated and maybe go to a school (university / tafe) down south.

Friday 7th December High school brainstorm about high school (some upper primary kids were present)

Method: Drew basic map of area on, with visual illustrations of the 4 communities whiteboard and talked everyone through the map to ensure that they understood it. Also wrote some keywords of the community names and high school in big letters on whiteboard, and drew some illustrations of possible ideas such as basketball, books, computers, football oval, boys and girls dorms, school bus, guitars. Told the kids that I’m helping to write a big
book for the government on what everyone in the 4 communities would like for high school for all the kids, and that it was really important to hear what all the kids would like. Later people would look at all the ideas and work out the best thing to do to make a good high school/s. The kids just did a brainstorm of the things they would like. After the brainstorm I spoke a bit about some ideas that the community had given on the high school so that they could think about them. Following this as many high school kids as possible have been spoken to individually about what they would like. This methodology helped to ensure that kids that wouldn’t be heard above the more authoritarian kids were given an opportunity to say what they thought. The private nature also helped for them not to be influenced by other kids.

Results of brainstorm:

Don’t worry about Barunga because they already have a good school at Barunga.
I’m going to go away to a big school because I want to learn more. (Aaron Mardi)
Darwin is too far, I’m going to go to Katherine so that my dad can come on Friday to give me money. (Jenny bush)
Go for the week and sleep there and come back on the weekend.
There should be a bitumen road between Bulman and Beswick, also between Beswick and Barunga so that the school bus can go fast.

The things that we would like at our high school are:
- Garden - with us kids doing the raking and mowing and looking after the plants
- Computers
- Football
- sports - basketball, soccer, netball
- School excursions
- 2 troop-carriers for excursions and bush trips
- bush trips
- High school band
- To do work experience
- A big recreation Hall (with Cheryl and Mena Bush in charge of it)
- Air conditioning
- New shoes - sandals, boots, masuers
- It to be kept clean
- String instruments (guitars, bass) and all the other instruments eg. Flute, clarinet.
- Tables, chairs, pencils
- A library room
- Computer room
- Video room
- Music room
- Tae Kwon Do room
- Working room
- School Bus (will need 2 or 3 to pick up all the kids from the 4 communities) and for excursions.
Excursions to visit the city. Go to Melbourne to visit Stephen and to Adelaide to visit Kirsten.

A fence around the school
Green grass for soccer
Basketball court
Swimming pool
Football oval

Some of the kids indicated on the map where they would like the school to be
Location -
Chantelle - Beswick
Tasha - Beswick
Jenny - on top of the jumpup by the tower because there will be no worries in flood time.
Harry - on top of the jumpup by the tower.
Roberta forbes - on top of the jumpup by the tower.

Tuesday 11/12/01 Wugullarr Upper primary children brainstorm. (methodology) as above

The group was divided about whether they would like to go to school in Beswick with just Beswick kids or go to school nearby with other kids.

They would like their high school to have:
Football oval
Swimming pool - big one with separate areas for boys and girls
Workshop
Recreation hall for indoor activities
Canteen
Arts and crafts room
Music and Dance room
Stage and assembly area
2 troopies
school bus
computer room
home economics room
Excursions
Tae kwon do room

Should learn sport - basketball, soccer, football, softball and volleyball
Learn culture
English and maths.

All the kids agreed that boys and girls should learn separately.

Kids input, pre and post brainstorm.
Elijah (high school boy 13) 4/12/01
We want a big school. 2 storeys like everyone else.

Monica Mandabul (Beswick high school girl 14) 6/12/01
Monica went to Mararra Christian School in Darwin for between 1-2 years. She went there after going to Bulman primary school because her big sister went there. Her big sister told her that when she turned 12 years old then she could come there too. Monica liked it there but missed her family. Every ten weeks she went home for a holiday. She had a fight with a friend there who told her that she should leave... so she went to Ramingingy for a while and then moved to Beswick to go to school.

Monica says that she likes a big school more.
Roberta Forbes (Beswick high school 13) 5/12/01 & 7/12/01
Roberta would like one big good school. Roberta says that she likes to learn so that when she grows up she can do whatever she likes. She says that it should teach:
  Reading
  Writing
  Sports
  All sorts of subjects.
She would like it to be at Beswick because that is closer to family, but otherwise have it at Barunga or Katherine. All the kids can go there.

Chantelle Doctor (Beswick High Girl 13) 6/12/01
Does not want to have to go away for school. Says that if they have a big school somewhere like Manyallaluk that she doesn't want to go. She'd rather stay here. Chantelle says that she might get 'homesick for Beswick' if she went away.

Chantelle says that she likes going to school because she likes learning. She likes doing basketball (but not football), maths, writing stories and drawing/colouring.

Clarrie Ashley (Beswick high boy 15) 5/12/01
Clarrie would like to learn at school so that he can work as a stockman in the cattle-yards or maybe at Nitmiluk or as a mechanic. He says he doesn't want to use a lawnmower at school because it might cut his hands off.

Clarrie would like to stay at a big school. He'd like to stay there for about 5 weeks and then come back. He suggested staying a a big regional school for a long time (5 weeks) and then coming back to one at Beswick for a long time.

Clarrie suggests having a big regional school away from the communities. Perhaps at Maranboy or the Manyallaluk turn off.

Mena Bush and Nicola Brown (Beswick High girls 17 and 15) 5/12/01
Would like to have separate classes for years 8, 9, 10, 11, 12 at high school. They would like to have the school at Beswick, and suggest that Bulman kids can come here as well. They are worried about having Barunga and Manyallaluk kids at the same school because they don't like the Beswick and Bulman mob. They told the story of how when they had to go to Barunga school when Beswick community was cut off during the flood that the Barunga kids were teasing them all the time.

If they make a big school they suggest having it at the jump up.

Tyronna Manyita (Beswick high girl 14) 5/12/01 and 7/12/01
Tyronna's school history - Tyronna has been attending Beswick High since it began in July. Prior to that she attended Katherine High School and stayed in Katherine. Tyronna is from Weemol community (she started going to Katherine High after finishing at Bulman primary). She thinks that she would like to become a police officer. She says that when she was at
If they make a big school here she thinks it should have:
  Maths
  Science
  English
  Reading
  Homeroom (for when you finish all your work)
  Music
  Art
  Cooking
  Woodwork.
She said she isn’t so interested in work, industry-based skills.

She says have it close to Beswick because the kids here don’t want to leave their families.

**Samual Wesson (Beswick high school boy 16) 5/12/01**

Samual has been coming to Beswick high School since it started, but plans to go to St. Johns school in Darwin next year. He said if they make a good school here then he’ll stay here but if they don’t then he will go to school a long way away. If Bulman, Beswick, Barunga and Manyallaluk kids are meant to go to school together he’ll still go.
He says that he’ll go to the school if its at Barunga, Beswick or Manyallaluk, or in-between.
He says he has a lot of family in all the communities. But that he would stay in the dormitory, and come home to Beswick for the weekend.

The school should teach:
  Reading
  Writing
  How to drive a car
  Play football
  How to do different types of work
Katherine High School that she was worried about her family and would cry for them a lot and felt sick. She thinks its better going to school at Beswick.

Tyronna is sad that after finishing at Bulman primary she had to go to different schools to her friends from Bulman and Weemol. She explained how she keeps in touch with her cousin Debra who she lived with in Bulman. Debra now goes to Marara. She said that if there was a good high school at Beswick or nearby that she would call her cousins and friends from Bulman and Weemol that were at school in Darwin so that they could all go to school together at the new school. She says that there are a big mob of high school kids at Bulman. They go to Marara, Komilda, St. Johns and some go to Queensland.

Location - Tyronna has many ideas of what the school should be like. She thinks that it should be near Maranboy station, by the creek area there.

Accommodation - It should have an Aboriginal Hostel and all the kids from Barunga, Beswick, Manyallaluk and Bulman can go to school together. There should be two girls dorms, and two boys dorms. One dorm for each gender should be for Barunga and Manyallaluk kids, and one should be for Beswick and Bulman kids. Each room in the dorm should have two bunk beds, so four people can stay in each room. She suggests that married couples mind the girl’s dorms and perhaps some single men mind a boy’s dorm.

Subjects - Big school should offer:
- Science
- SOCE
- Physical Education
- English
- Technical Studies
- Maths
- Cooking
- Culture
Bridging courses to help the kids that are having trouble with their studies. Once they improve they can join in with the other classes (When she was in Katherine they put her in the bridging class and then when they saw that her work had improved she joined in with year 8/Mainstream.)

Teachers - There should be white and black teachers. The black teachers would help the kids doing the bridging course.

Facilities -
- Library
  Recreation hall with a stage. Use for a dance class.
- Sick room
  Computer room - use to write important stories and send email.
  Science room - have it a bit further away because the liquids and gas may cause a fire; have a walkway to it.
Cooking room
English classroom
Tech studies room

See Tyronna’s map of how she would like it to be.

Aaron Mardi (Beswick high boy 13) 5/12/01 and 7/12/01
Would like there to be a big school at Beswick because if they had it elsewhere he would miss his family. Aaron is planning to go to Marara School in Darwin next year. Aaron has cousins there. He says that he wants to learn, to learn properly.

He would like to have one big school, and to learn:
   English
   Science
   Cooking
   Art
   Reading
   Music

Aaron suggests that Pat Curtis and Ralph could look after the Beswick kids at a big regional school. They could make sure that all the kids brush their teeth. Bulman people could look after the Bulman kids, Barunga people look after the Barunga kids etc.

Aaron suggests that the school has a lot of sport such as volleyball, cricket, football, basketball and soccer. That it plays a lot of team sports.
Aaron thinks that kids should plant trees at the school and make a garden there. The kids should also pick up all the rubbish and sweep and vacuum the school.
Aaron thinks that they should sometimes learn English and sometimes learn culture and language. Old women should come to the school and teach language.

Kirsty and Evangeline (Beswick upper primary girls) 5/12/01
Think that high school should be in an community so that they can go to the shop and buy some cold water and so that if there is no recess they can go home and eat it. They would rather that if there was a big regional high school that it was at Manyallaluk than Barunga because Barunga kids tease all the time. They mentioned that Katherine High School was not good for Beswick kids. They would rather that there was a high school at Beswick and that kids just went away to the regional high school for a short while and then came back to Beswick.

They would like the school to be at Manyallaluk because there is lots of fun things to do there.

The girls told stories of how Darwin schools are not good because they don’t let the children who go there visit their family in Darwin.
Kirsty and Evangeline think the school should teach European side (Maths, Reading, Writing and Science) and culture side.

**Dawn Grace Billy** *(Beswick High girl 16) 5/12/01*

Says that high school should be at Beswick because she doesn't like to leave Beswick for a long time. Dawn says that it should teach Reading, Science, language and English.

**Anton Plummer** *(Beswick High Boy 13) 7/12/01*

Anton went to Barunga High until late August 2001, at which stage he returned to school at Beswick (where he had gone to primary school) and started going to the high school here that had recently started. Next year he plans to go to Komilda in Darwin. He says that he wants to see Darwin, that is why he is going to Komilda.

Anton says that Barunga kids are fine because they have a school. That they should build a good new school in the new suburb at Beswick. Anton said that kids didn't tease him at Barunga, and that Barunga is a good school but it sucker for him!

The new school should teach:
- How to drive a motorcar, helicopter and bus.
- To be able to work in the office, shop and school.

Anton likes learning:
- Drawing
- Science
- Tech studies
- Cooking

Anton suggests that kids sleep at the school in boys and girls dorms that have four people in each room (2x bunks). There should be a fence around the school.

**Tasha** *(Upper primary girl 11) 7/12/01*

She wants high school to be at Beswick, just the Beswick kids. She doesn't want to go anywhere else because of teasing that may happen. She says that she will go away to a school if it is only for a short time eg. 1 week.

The teachers at high school should be black and white together. She thinks that you should be able to learn:
- Painting
- Writing
- Art
- Computers
- Maths
- Language
- And play with friends
Tasha says that she comes to school to learn so that when she grows up she can go to Batchalar College and learn there.

Alisha Kennedy (Beswick high School) 7/12/01
Alisha has been to high school in Lake Evala, Katherine High and now at Beswick. She wants to go to school in Beswick and stay with her family.

Alisha says that it should only be Beswick kids at the high school. She says that it would be okay to go away to a regional school for 1 week at a time. Black and white teachers should work there together.
High School should teach:

- Maths
- Writing
- Reading
- Spelling
- Computers
- Art

**Taurean (Beswick High boy 13) 7/12/01**

Would like to stay in Beswick to go to school. He says it's good like this.

**Justin Fuller and Clayton Manyita (Beswick upper primary boys) 7/12/01**

Justin and Clayton think that all the kids from the communities should go to school together in Manyallaluk community because it's a quiet place there with no drunks. The kids should sleep there in dorms.

The school should have:

- School bus
- Excursions to Katherine and Darwin
- Football
- Soccer
- Tennis
- Table tennis
- Pool table
- Cricket
- Games room
- Girls dorm and boys dorm
- Big kitchen
- TV room
- Big fence around it
- Shop with healthy food and take away
- Big gym for fitness, sports and gymnastics

Justin and Clayton suggest that there are house parents who are also good teachers, such as Pat Curtis and Ralph Forbes, who stay with them to look after them.

At high school they should learn:

- Reading
- Aboriginal Painting
- Music
- Boys do mechanics
- Do work experience
- Science
- Cooking
- Singing
They would like to learn so that when they grow up they can get a job.

Raven (upper primary student) 7/12/01
School should stay at Beswick. He would like to go to high school so that he can play guitar.

Jenny Bush (upper primary student) 7/12/01
The school should have good teachers who are nice to everyone. In it everyone should be nice to each other. Kids should be nice to the white people. She suggests that Bulman and Beswick go to school together and Manyallaluk have high school together.

There should be
  - Big assembly area
  - Rewards for good work
  - Recreation Hall with air conditioning for basketball, netball and gymnastics
  - Cold water
  - Fences around it
  - Uniforms for basketball and football
  - Good plants
  - Grass for soccer and the football oval
  - Dormitory with the living area down stairs. The boys and girls can share the kitchen and lounge TV area but have separate bedroom areas.
  - A sign on the gate
  - Good toilets and showers that no one is allowed to grafitti.

Jenny suggests that the school is out of the community to help prevent drunk people or anyone breaking into the school. She thinks that it should be looked after and kept clean so that if white people visit it they can see that it is a good place.

She says if white people who work in the community have children then they should go to the school too.

Boys and girls should learn together because the girls can help the boys since they don't know much.
During assembly time the high school band should play.

Sasha Ashley (upper primary student) 7/12/01
Says that all the kids from all the communities should go to school together and that they should put the school in the new suburb.
There should be white and black teachers at the school. There should be a hostel there for the Bulman, Barunga and Manyallaluk kids to stay at.
School should teach /have:

Maths
Sports
To listen to teacher
To keep the community clean
Grow a garden - all the kids
Do work experience

**Cheryl Bush (Beswick High student) 11/12/01**

Cheryl would like the new school to be at King Valley, and for all the kids to stay there together. She says that will be good and that they can get away from family and it will be close to town so they can go there.

She thinks that there should be a dormitory / hostel there. Have 2 bunk beds per room. Boys and girls sleep separately.

The school should have:

- Horses to ride
- Bull buggies to drive
- Indoor Recreation Hall, with air conditioning and 3 pool tables.
- School bus
- Football oval
- Tuck shop (in the rec hall)
- Separate classes for year 8,9,10,11,12
- Tech studies / wood work facilities
- Big swimming pool
- Sport facilities eg. Soccer, football, netball
- Video room
- Art room

It should have proper classrooms - not like the demountable classroom at Beswick because that is too loud.

She suggests not getting a teacher from Katherine, because they are all smart (mean) teachers there. Should have mununga teachers.

**Patricia Curtis / Forbes (Assistant teacher at Beswick School and mother of 3 high school age kids) 9/12/01**

Patricia thinks that it would be better if the kids could go to school in their community.
She thinks the best option would be to have a good school here for Beswick kids and that Bulman kids could go there too, stay with family in Beswick or stay at the school, and have
specialist teachers come out to the community for block of time with specialist equipment to teach the kids extra stuff.

She feels that it is important that the kids go to Katherine and Darwin more often so that they can get confident in the town and city environments ie. in the European environment. She suggests doing more things like work experience.

If there was to be a big regional school Patricia suggests having it at five mile which is near Barunga. It’s a flat fenced in area away from the community. She says there used to be a piggery there and that it is still fenced and has a water bore. She thinks that having it at Mataranka and King Valley is too far away, that the Jump-up is too close to the highway. She thinks Manyallaluk wouldn’t be too good because people still take grog in there. Maranboy would be okay though.

Boys and girls should learn separately. They are more confident with their own kind. If they have a boyfriend / girlfriend they feel ashamed of speaking. They can mix in the playground.

The kids will likely end up working in the:
  Office
  Shop
  Clinic
  School
  As a mechanic.

The school should teach:
  Drawing
  Arts and crafts - making didjeridoo & weaving & other arts and crafts
  Trips into town
  Bush trips with old ladies
  Painting
  Health workers should come in and talk to the boys and girls.
  Driver education
  Sex education
  Performing arts - music /drama. Should do performances in Darwin.

She is worried because they are getting into too much drugs and that is taking over their lives

Selena (Beswick community mother and health worker) 10/12/01

Thinks that it is fine for all the kids from the different communities to go to school together. She suggests that the school gets built in the new suburb. It should have accommodation with house-parents from each community. Selena thinks that the boys and girls should learn at the school separately.
Selena and her husband will be sending her daughter Sasha away to a boarding school next year. They had sent her too St Josephs in Katherine for a while before. They think that it is important that she go away to get a proper education. She says that when she goes to school in Beswick that they don't listen to the teachers, muck around and don't learn much.

If they built a new school she wouldn't send her daughter there straight away. She would check for a while and see what it is like and if it's a good school they might send her there afterwards.

**Lyn Ashley** (Beswick community mother and school council member) 10/12/01

Says that they should build the new school up on the hill past the graveyard, that's what they had said at the meeting last year. She thinks that the communities can go to school together there. That the boys and girls should learn separately.

**Lorraine Bennet** (Beswick community mother and school council member) 10/12/01 (Note many of these opinions were shared by Matha, her sister and other ladies sitting nearby - Allison and ?)

Lorraine pointed out that the education is something that people around the community will have many views on, and that it would be a slow process and would need to speak to everyone. Also that the new school should be shaped by what the children want and the parents supporting the kids in what they would like.

One of Lorraine’s boys, Tyronne attends Komilda and has been for a few years. Her son Aaron will join Tyronne next year as well as her sisters children Anton and Tyronna whom she looks after with regards to education. She is thinking of having her son Justin and Michael do school of the air.

She sees it as important for her boys to go to Komilda to get a proper education. It has given Tyronne many opportunities with regard to football and interstate travel. Tyronne will have the responsibility of looking after his brother and cousins when they go there. (Note at present think that Tyronne is the only high school person from the community going to school at boarding school in Darwin - many others have tried but are now going to school in Beswick or have finished. Maybe because kids saw them go away and come back and not find work and wondered what the point was.)

Best place would be at King Valley because it is away from the highway and far enough away from places that they wouldn't walk off. Also there are lots of things that the kids could do there e.g. swimming, horse-riding, motorbike riding, fishing etc. They wouldn't need to build a swimming pool there because there are two big rivers.

The kids would stay there. Have house parents there from each community. The house parents could talk to the children if they are homesick or sad. The kids would be alright because the house parents are their own family. They should have separate dorms for girls and boys, but learn together in the classroom.
Suggest that there is also a flat there where parents can stay if they come to see their kids, or where they can stay if the need to stay there to keep an eye on or support their child if it’s being naughty.

On the weekends they could go out bush, or go on excursions to Katherine for movies and shopping. Parents could come and visit them and go fishing. They could learn culture stuff on the weekends.

Matha and Lorraine commented on how when they went to school there were boys there with beard and moustache who were 18, 19 year old. They saw getting up to the older years at school as a goal and were proud of working through the years. Nowadays kids finish school young, or just get married straight away when they finish school. They think their parents and the community needs to support them to study more if they want to, and to see this as an option rather than get married straight away. Perhaps go to Batchelor or NTU or do an apprenticeship. Lorraine is thinking of doing a degree, and thinks that this will help the kids think that they can achieve higher because they will have a role model. Would like to think that they would be in a position to do apprenticeships such as carpentry and mechanics after school so that they can do these jobs in the communities. Also to have done sufficient study to be able to do jobs such as Mike’s and Lisa’s at the council.

Lorraine and Matha would like there to be bush survival courses at the school, perhaps with some old people teaching. Also canoeing, horse-riding and outdoor stuff.

Matha Bennet (Beswick community mother) 10/12/01

Should be at King Valley. The kids should all stay there together.

It should teach:
  Cooking
  Woodwork
  Science
  Computers
  Health
  Sport
  Art
  Music
  Maths
  Driver education

It should teach everything that the kids would get if they went to school elsewhere. They need to learn lots of different things so that they don’t get bored.

(Agreed with Lorraine on all of the above.)

Allison (Beswick community mother) 10/12/01

Have it at King valley. It’s a good idea to have a big school.

Other un-introduced lady
When Weemol and Bulman kids are at school in Darwin they miss their family, especially when someone passes away. It would be good if they didn’t have to go so far away to go to school.

Irene Kelly (wife of traditional owner Victor Hood) 10/12/01

Suggested could have it at the Jump-up. Thinks that the kids should just catch a bus there and come back in the afternoon. However stressed that it is really for Victor and old Phyllis to decide where it is put. She said that the Bulman kids would be fine to stay at Bulman because they have a lot of family there. The Barunga and Manyallaluk kids could just bus there as well.

Irene thinks that after a while the kids will all get along.

They should have a teacher for each of the languages at the school and also a teacher for English.

Irene thinks that it is a good idea. She would ask for her niece who is in Emu Springs to come down to go to school there. She said that Weemol and Bulman parents worry about their kids in Darwin because it is so far away and would be happier if their kids were going to school closer. The kids who are away also worry for their parents.

Irene kept reinforcing that Old Victor and Phyllis would need to say where it should be and that really should wait until people in the other communities have been spoken to until more is said.

(Note: There is a trend of the old people in the communities seeing the school as a way for culture to be taught as well. Especially language.

Audrey, Bernadette and Cecilia Wesan (community mothers) 11/12/01

These ladies suggested having a regional school at four mile near Maranboy. They suggest having two schools. One here where the kids who don’t like going away can go to school and the big one where some can stay at to learn and others can go to for a little while.

They told how the kids that go to school in Darwin don’t like to stay there because they get homesick and say that ‘They want a good school in Beswick so they can stay there.’ (Audrey’s daughter Martina is at Marara.)

They feel that the school should teach a lot of bush tucker and bush medicine, weaving and artifacts. The girls should do this with the old ladies such as Old Glen, Chris and Vera. The boys should do this with the old men (do didg painting).

They think the school should teach practical vocational stuff to prepare the kids for the jobs which they will do in the communities i.e.
Mechanics
Office / computer skills
Carpentry
Nurse / sister / doctor
Nursery work

Also should improve their English.
Do more work experience.

The school should be training the kids up so that the kids can have these jobs.

The kids would probably be happy to stay at the regional school for a week and then come back and have most of their schooling at Beswick. They think that some kids might want to go to the big school all of the time.

*Jenny Kennedy (community mother) 11/12/01*

Jenny’s initial reaction was concern because the kids don’t like to leave Beswick. She was also concerned because of teasing between the Beswick and Barunga kids. She was also worried about the kids going to school somewhere away from the community because they would walk around and not go to the school. She used experiences at Katherine High School to highlight this. When the kids were going to Katherine High the bus would pick them all up and take them into town but when they got to town they would just hop off the bus and walk around town all day rather than going to school. Then the school would ring up the community about the kids. Everyone was worried about this because they didn’t know what the children were up to because they were away from the community. If they are at Beswick and don’t go to school then everyone still knows where they are.

Jenny suggests that the children should have the choice. If they have a big regional school then they can try it out. If they like it then they can keep going, otherwise they can come back to Beswick and keep going to school here. She thinks that it is worth trying the regional school.

She thinks that Maranboy is a good location for the regional school and that the new Beswick school should be built on top of the hill by the new suburb. Having the regional school at Maranboy would also give the option of busing the kids there from Barunga and Beswick each day and the Bulman and maybe the Manyallaluk kids stay there in dormitory accommodation. Alternatively everyone could stay at the school in accommodation.

The accommodation should have house parents from each community and somewhere for parents to stay if they want to visit their children. The house parents can help the kids and help if white people are too rough to them. She pointed out that if the white people are too rough then the kids won’t want to come to school.

The boys and girls can learn together. It is important that the English literacy and speaking level increase amongst the kids. She also thinks that it would be good to have one day a
week for culture stuff. On that day a lot of old people could come and teach artifact stuff, and singing and dancing.
“A Good School with Good Teachers”: Educational Aspirations of Indigenous People in the East Katherine Region, N.T.

Appendix 2
Young and time poor
An interview with Bobby Nunggumabarr, NLC representative at Ngukurr.
Young and Time Poor
An interview with Bobby Nunggumabarr,
NLC representative at Ngukurr.

Bobby commented that 'The young people don't have any time now', 'And it is Indigenous culture that is being left behind'. He explained that Indigenous youths are expected to learn two cultures though European youths only need learn one. This is another reason that young Indigenous people aren't keeping up at high school.

European educators assume it is primarily important that Indigenous youths are competent in written and spoken Australian Standard English. This is often done with little appreciating that English is a second or third language for many of them. Also they have to learn mathematics, in a context of European cultural values. In contrast Indigenous parents expect that their children will primarily learn their own culture including language, the law and life skills. On top of this their peers expect that they will primarily know modern international youth culture such as basketball, dance, television and computer games. All this while they have a personal desire to have fun while they are growing up. The sum of these expectations is excessive demands on their time and attention. These demands are much more onerous than those put upon European youths who don't all do well at school.

These great expectations are expected to be achieved from a different base to their European counterparts. Many Indigenous families and their relatives live in poverty. Some homes or those of their friends are disturbed by alcohol abuse and domestic violence. The youths were likely to have suffered hunger and ill health when they were young if not at the moment. This is not the common experience of the majority of Australian youths.

Time poverty for Indigenous students is worsened in the European class room. Many of the European teachers at community schools have little or no experience of the culture of that place. They are often first year teachers or have recently transferred from another community school. The Indigenous students become familiar with the routine of teaching the teacher the cultural norms of their community only to have the teacher move on. Then a new teacher comes and the teaching of culture begins again. This instruction takes more education time away from the already time poor. This difficulty is one that Australian students largely avoid giving them more time to learn the set curriculum.

Indigenous culture in the past has been time rich. The chief activity of survival was the hunting and gathering of food. This left a lot of time for enjoying life, learning the intricate social system and taking part in song and dance. The task of the European educator is to convince Indigenous students that being time poor and pressured during the years of their schooling will have real benefits for them in the future. This is one of many challenges that face the teachers at an Indigenous high school and for all Australians.
“A Good School with Good Teachers”:
Educational Aspirations of Indigenous People in the East Katherine Region, N.T.

Appendix 3
Neil Williams’ model for a hub school
Concept Proposal
Secondary Education delivery through Hub school model

Model

Each small community enrols their secondary aged students at their local school. These students study English, Maths and SOSE at the local school. Each community is attached to a hub school. The Hub school provides science, technical and technology studies and other specialist courses including VET through visiting teachers and small mini-schools at the hub school. The hub school would be the secondary provider and be staffed through a new arrangement which takes into account the delivery mode (similar to current arrangements with NTOEC and the schools of the air)

Assumptions

- Most secondary aged students on communities do not attend school
- Most secondary students and their families would prefer to have secondary education at their local community
- Sending students from small communities to boarding schools has very low rate of success as most become homesick and return to their community before completing secondary education

Partnerships to be built for this to work

- NTDE - base funding provider
- NTOEC – initial secondary course provider
- Hub school - needs to have the facilities for specialist areas (workshops, computer labs, science rooms, etc)
- Community schools
- Community Government Councils
- DETYA - funding for travel, tutors etc
- Other interested organisation eg Jawoyn Association, Land Councils, ATSIC

Resource implications

Capital Equipment

- Community schools need secondary study rooms with access to phones, computers, internet
- Hub schools need specialist facilities including buildings and vehicles

Personnel

- Community school staff generated through secondary staffing formula
- Hub school specialist staff generated through new arrangement which takes into account travel component and areas to be delivered
Challenges to the model

- NTDE would need to find additional funding to support this mode of deliver, this would be a cost to recurrent funding above the level generated by the additional students enrolled in the system. This may be offset by the increased enrolment of secondary students and the decreased need for dual enrolment of students with NTOEC
- Students from various communities may feel uncomfortable working with students from other communities during mini-school
- High need for co-operation between various stakeholders

Benefits

- Utilises a similar approach to deliver as Batchelor College through their RATE program and by NTDE through the schools of the air
- Provides the bulk of secondary education at the student’s home community
- Allows for some economy of scale in the delivery of some courses eg VET
- Potentially allows for the use of existing under-utilised facilities at hub school in some locations
- Has the potential to deliver secondary education to many remote students who are currently not receiving any form of schooling
"A Good School with Good Teachers": Educational Aspirations of Indigenous People in the East Katherine Region, N.T.

Appendix 4
Architectural plans for Woolaning College
PROPOSED EDUCATION FACILITY TO CATER FOR
UP TO 60 MIDDLE SCHOOL STUDENTS

WOOLANING PROPOSED REGIONAL COLLEGE
Accommodation House Model 2 - Plan View

WOOLANING PROPOSED REGIONAL COLLEGE
"A Good School with Good Teachers": Educational Aspirations of Indigenous People in the East Katherine Region, N.T.

Appendix 5
Draft budget for the establishment of a new school
Establishment costs for New School
Draft Budget

**Site works and services**

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<td>Contingency and Insurance</td>
<td>30,500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Sub-total</strong></td>
<td>1,501,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Consultancy

(12.5%)

Total Establishment costs

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Component</th>
<th>Cost</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Consultancy</td>
<td>187,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>(12.5%)</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Establishment costs</strong></td>
<td>1,856,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Education Facility**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Component</th>
<th>Cost</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Education Complex</td>
<td>1,031,805</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contingency and Insurance</td>
<td>12,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Sub-total</strong></td>
<td>1,043,805</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Consultancy

(12.5%)

Total Education Facility

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Component</th>
<th>Cost</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Consultancy</td>
<td>103,476</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>(12.5%)</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Education Facility</strong></td>
<td>1,291,709</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Student Accommodation Housing**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Component</th>
<th>Cost</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Houses</td>
<td>2,208,984</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contingency and Insurance</td>
<td>25,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Subtotal</strong></td>
<td>2,233,984</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Consultancy

(12.5%)

Total Student Accommodation Housing

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Component</th>
<th>Cost</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Consultancy</td>
<td>279,248</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>(12.5%)</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Student Accommodation Housing</strong></td>
<td>2,2764,555</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Staff Accommodation**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Amount</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Houses</td>
<td>$840,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contingency and Insurance</td>
<td>$15,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Sub-total</strong></td>
<td>$855,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Consultancy (12.5%)</td>
<td>$106,875</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Staff Accommodation</strong></td>
<td>$961,875</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GST</td>
<td>$96,188</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>$1,058,063</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Mobile Education Units**

Purpose: To provide specialist education facilities in a flexible way - at Woolaning and in remote locations.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Amount</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mechanics and small tools</td>
<td>$25,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nutrition and Health</td>
<td>$33,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Desktop publishing</td>
<td>$62,500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Science and Environment</td>
<td>$30,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Performing Arts</td>
<td>$39,100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Mobile Units</strong></td>
<td>$189,600</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GST</td>
<td>$18,960</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>$208,560</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Vehicles**

Purpose: To serve accommodation houses and travel to and from communities. Vehicles will form a pool for use as: Accommodation houses family vehicles; student travel to and from home communities; liaison visits to communities; class exclusions; remote area based learning; pick-up and delivery of supplies to the college and; landscaping and maintenance within the College Campus.

Vehicle mix:
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Quantity</th>
<th>Cost (RRP)</th>
<th>GST</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Commuter buses (14 seats)</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>$44,520</td>
<td>$89,040</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coaster bus (22 seats)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>$109,710</td>
<td>$109,710</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4x4 Transport (20 seats)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>$240,000</td>
<td>$240,000</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Troop-carriers</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>$54,350</td>
<td>$108,700</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4x4 Tray truck</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>$70,000</td>
<td>$70,000</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tractor with forks</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>$100,000</td>
<td>$717,450</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GST</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>$71,745</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>$789,195</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Workers Camp**

The intention to train and employ a team of workers from the region in the construction of the College requires that adequate accommodation is provided to this workforce.

A workers camp is required to house the construction team of tradesmen, trainers for the three-year projected building span. The cost of this camp is estimated to be $300,000 (+$30,000 GST). A proportion of the expense can be recovered by sale of the assets at the completion of the project.

| Cost of worker's camp          | $300,000 |
| GST                           | $ 30,000 |
| Total                         |          | $330,000 |

**Summary of Costs**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Cost</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sites works and Services</td>
<td>1,688,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education, staff and Student Accom. - Buildings</td>
<td>4,549,388</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mobile Education Units</td>
<td>189,600</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vehicles and Machinery</td>
<td>717,450</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Worker's Camp</td>
<td>300,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>7,544,438</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GST</td>
<td>$754,443</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grand Total</td>
<td>8,298,882</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Recurrent Costs:

#### Income

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Amount</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>NT Per Capita</td>
<td>111,720</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commonwealth per capita</td>
<td>278,160</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IESEP</td>
<td>180,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Abstudy (Fees)</td>
<td>180,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Remote Community Managed Education Funding</td>
<td>282,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Total Income** $1,031,880

#### Expenditure

**Staffing Costs**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Amount</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Administration</td>
<td>38,600</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teachers</td>
<td>246,400</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aides</td>
<td>115,800</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ESL support</td>
<td>57,500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Visiting Teacher</td>
<td>28,700</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nurse</td>
<td>60,700</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Counselor</td>
<td>24,800</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Drug Proofing Teacher</td>
<td>28,700</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community Liaison</td>
<td>44,100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enterprise and Career Educator</td>
<td>28,700</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Driver/Maintenance</td>
<td>38,600</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Total Staffing Costs** 712,400

**Teaching Costs**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Amount</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Classroom Materials</td>
<td>15,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Library</td>
<td>3,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Music</td>
<td>9,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sport</td>
<td>9,600</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Magazine</td>
<td>1,200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Principal's Fund</td>
<td>3,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Remote Area Education And Excursions</td>
<td>45,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Total Teaching Costs

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Amount</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>$</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NTCSA Admin support</td>
<td>19,400</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NTCSA RCME support</td>
<td>19,400</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bank Charges</td>
<td>900</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recruitment</td>
<td>6,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Photocopying and Stationery</td>
<td>2,400</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Postage</td>
<td>600</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Telephone</td>
<td>3,600</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Advertising</td>
<td>1,200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Computer Expenses</td>
<td>4,200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Travel</td>
<td>3,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>First Aid</td>
<td>1,200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Freight</td>
<td>3,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Admin Expenses</td>
<td>1,500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Subscriptions</td>
<td>2,400</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Insurance</td>
<td>19,200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Staff Training</td>
<td>5,400</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Depreciation Expense</td>
<td>150,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total Administration: 243,400

## Facilities and Buildings

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Amount</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>$</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maintenance - Buildings</td>
<td>3,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maintenance - Equipment</td>
<td>1,500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maintenance - Grounds</td>
<td>3,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Electricity</td>
<td>24,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vehicle repairs, Maintenance</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>And Registration</td>
<td>6,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fuel and Oil</td>
<td>9,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Operating Leases - Equipment</td>
<td>6,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cleaning Expenses</td>
<td>9,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Waste disposal</td>
<td>2,400</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rates</td>
<td>1,200</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Total Facilities 65,100

Total Recurrent Expenditure 1,106,700

Operating Deficit 74,820
SCHOOL OF EDUCATION STUDIES

♦ Preparation for Tertiary Studies (Education)
♦ Introduction to Child Care Training
♦ Certificates II and III in Community Services (Children's Services)
♦ Certificate III in Indigenous Education Work
♦ Certificate IV in Assessment and Workplace Training
♦ Diploma, Advanced Diploma and Bachelor of Teaching (Early Childhood)
♦ Diploma, Advanced Diploma and Bachelor of Teaching (Primary)
♦ Diploma, Advanced Diploma and Bachelor of Adult Education (ALBE)
♦ Bachelor of Education (Early Childhood)
♦ Bachelor of Education (Primary)
♦ Graduate Diploma of Adult Education

For more information about these courses contact:
The Batchelor Institute of Indigenous Tertiary Education
Post Office BATCHELOR NT 0845

Freecall: 1800 636 071
Facsimile: (08) 8939 7130
Email: ses@batchelor.edu.au
or visit our website http://www.batchelor.edu.au
Concept Proposal
Secondary Education delivery through Hub school model

Model

Each small community enrols their secondary aged students at their local school. These students study English, Maths and SOSE at the local school. Each community is attached to a hub school. The Hub school provides science, technical and technology studies and other specialist courses including VET through visiting teachers and small mini-schools at the hub school. The hub school would be the secondary provider and be staffed through a new arrangement which takes into account the delivery mode (similar to current arrangements with NTOEC and the schools of the air)

Assumptions

- Most secondary aged students on communities do not attend school
- Most secondary students and their families would prefer to have secondary education at their local community
- Sending students from small communities to boarding schools has very low rate of success as most become homesick and return to their community before completing secondary education

Partnerships to be built for this to work

- NTDE - base funding provider
- NTOEC - initial secondary course provider
- Hub school - needs to have the facilities for specialist areas (workshops, computer labs, science rooms, etc)
- Community schools
- Community Government Councils
- DETYA - funding for travel, tutors etc
- Other interested organisation eg Jawoyn Association, Land Councils, ATSIC

Resource implications

Capital Equipment
- Community schools need secondary study rooms with access to phones, computers, internet
- Hub schools need specialist facilities including buildings and vehicles

Personnel
- Community school staff generated through secondary staffing formula
- Hub school specialist staff generated through new arrangement which takes into account travel component and areas to be delivered
Challenges to the model

- NTDE would need to find additional funding to support this mode of delivery, this would be a cost to recurrent funding above the level generated by the additional students enrolled in the system. This may be offset by the increased enrolment of secondary students and the decreased need for dual enrolment of students with NTOEC
- Students from various communities may feel uncomfortable working with students from other communities during mini-school
- High need for co-operation between various stakeholders

Benefits

- Utilises a similar approach to deliver as Batchelor College through their RATE program and by NTDE through the schools of the air
- Provides the bulk of secondary education at the student's home community
- Allows for some economy of scale in the delivery of some courses eg VET
- Potentially allows for the use of existing under-utilised facilities at hub school in some locations
- Has the potential to deliver secondary education to many remote students who are currently not receiving any form of schooling
Woolaning Christian School

Registration Application

The Northern Territory Christian Schools Association

September 2000
1. **Name of School:** Woolaning Christian School  
2. **Site Address:** Litchfield Park Road, via Batchelor.  
3. **Postal Address:** PO Box 1215, Palmerston, NT 0831  
4. **Name of body/organization responsible for the establishment and conduct of the proposed school:**  
   The Northern Territory Christian Schools Association (NTCSA)  
   
   The Northern Territory Christian Schools Association operates schools in and around Darwin (Litchfield, Marrara, NT Christian College and Palmerston) and regional schools at Alice Springs (Araluen) and Nhulunbuy. The Northern Territory Christian Schools Association has over twenty years of experience in the establishment and management of non-government schools in the Northern Territory and currently has around 900 students in its six existing schools.  
5. **Incorporation**  
   (a) The NTCSA is an incorporated body.  
   (b) The NTCSA was incorporated in 16th June 1977  
6. **Method of Management**  
   
   The Woolaning Christian School is a member school of the NTCSA. Each NTCSA school is managed on a day-to-day basis by a local school council. The NTCSA Board has responsibility for liaison with government, setting broad financial parameters and managing financial records. The Woolaning Christian School will comply with all prescribed requirements. The Middle School curriculum programme will reflect the programmes that already exist in our Marrara and Palmerston Schools. The prescribed requirements will be met as determined through the NT Department of Education Board of Studies. The following are specific responses to the Draft, 28 June 1999, Regulations under the Education Act:  
   (a) **1,000 hours of instruction per year** –  
       School hours for instruction will be, 8.30 am to 10.40 am, 11 am to 1.05 pm, 1.50 pm to 3.10 pm. A total of five hours and thirty-five minutes per day with one hundred and seventy nine instruction days required meeting the prescribed one thousand hours.  
   (b) **Assessment of students** –  
       The Woolaning Christian School will comply with student assessment approved by the Northern Territory Board of Studies and national standards of education agreed to by the Minister and the Minister of the Commonwealth in regard to measuring student achievement.
(c) **Register of enrolment** –
A register will be maintained by the school principal containing the following information:
- Student's name and address
- Student's date of birth
- The date on which the student enrolled at the school
- The names of the parents or guardians of the student or any other person who has the care and control of the student
- The name of the person enrolling the student
- Details of the immunisations the student has been given, including the date of each immunisation
- The name and address of the last school where the student was enrolled
- The level of education of the student at the date of his or her enrolment

(d) **Keeping of annual accounts etc.** –
The Woolaning Christian School will keep proper accounts and records of transactions and its financial affairs; it will maintain adequate control over all grant monies ensuring that their allocation is to that for which it was granted; it will provide a copy of audited annual financial statements to the Secretary within 6 months of the end of each calendar (financial) year.

(e) **Record of attendance** –
The Woolaning Christian School will maintain a record of student attendances showing each morning and afternoon of instruction and each student's attendance.

(f) **Records of educational performance** –
The Principal of the Woolaning Christian School will maintain a record of assessment of each student and will provide a copy of that record to the Secretary upon request. The principal will also maintain a record of assessment of each student of achievement in national standards of education and will provide a copy of that record to the Secretary upon request.

7. **Qualification of teachers**

The Woolaning Christian School will comply with employment of only teachers who meet with the Secretary's satisfaction regarding their qualifications.

8. **Curriculum**

The curriculum used by Woolaning Christian School will meet all requirements of the Board of Studies and follow the pattern of study of the middle school programme at Marrara Christian School.
9. Student population

(a) Current: Male: - Female: -

(b) Anticipated for the next three years of the school's operation:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Male</th>
<th>Female</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2001</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2002</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2003</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(c) Age range:

Minimum: 12 years (approx)

Maximum: 17 years (approx)

(d) Grade Range:

From Year 8 to Year 10.

10. Description of buildings and other facilities to be used:

The Woolaning Christian School will develop facilities that comply with Design Guidelines for Secondary Schools in the Northern Territory. Some specialist facilities may be accessed from time to time at our Marrara and Palmerston campuses.

11. Proposed Sources of Funding:

As a registered school Woolaning Christian School will be eligible for Commonwealth and Territory recurrent funding. This, in addition to some fee income will provide sufficient funds for the day-to-day operation of the school at Woolaning. Discussions are underway with the Commonwealth in relation to those additional funds (in the areas of educational and management support) necessary to sustain schooling in remote communities.

12. General statement of reasons for establishing the proposed school:

(a) Background

Indigenous families, communities and students have always had a presence in NTCSA schools. In 1997 an Indigenous Learning Centre was established at the specific request of Indigenous parents, to support remote area students at Marrara Christian School. This centre, and its services, has continued to expand and now also support indigenous students in our other schools. In February 2000 a non-institutional, supported accommodation programme was commenced to
provide a secure and supportive home life and so assist student learning. The supported accommodation programme has grown from fourteen (24) students to forty (40) students in third term. The accommodation programme has had spectacular success when measured on all performance indicators for indigenous education. Nearly all students who commenced the programme have continued in it.

In 1998, both Marrara and Palmerston Christian Schools developed and established year 7-9 Middle School programs. Staff and parents in these schools have acknowledged the value of these programs to their students. Furthermore, these programmes have developed as a bridge for the inclusion of indigenous students in mainstream programmes.

The NTCSA has had a long-standing association with the Woolaning community. The community is located about 80 Km West of the township of Bachelor. Students from Woolaning have attended Marrara Christian School over the past twenty years staff members have been drawn from that community for both teaching and residential relief positions.

The NTCSA, in partnership with the Woolaning community, intend to establish a Middle School (year 8 to 10) based at the Woolaning Community. This partnership is fundamentally, no different to the partnership that we have with our school communities at Alice Springs, Nhulunbuy or any of our other schools.

(b) Consultation and consideration of submission

The impetus for this initiative comes from the Woolaning Community. They approached the NTCSA through the Indigenous Education Coordinator with a vision for a middle school with supported accommodation to serve the needs of young people in the region.

The possibility for the project was presented to NTCSA staff at their annual staff conference. The Board and staff of the NTCSA are fully supportive of developing this new venture. Bob Collins has been consulted about the project and its development; he has assessed the project as a worthy pilot for implementing many of the recommendations detailed in his report “Learning Lessons”.

The possibility of a Middle School at Woolaning has been extensively flagged at Department level. Specifically the project has been discussed with the Secretary, Mr. Peter Plummer, and the Director of Indigenous Education, Mr. Ken Davies. Furthermore, funds for planning have been approved through the cross-sectorial steering committee NIELNS funding. Through this forum other independent school organisations have also been made aware of the proposal for a middle school at Woolaning. A formal discussion of the proposal has also taken place with the Assistant Secretary for the Department of Indigenous Education (Federal), Mr. Peter Buckskin. Throughout all of
these consultations, there has not been any opposition to the establishment of the school.

Consultations have been held with parents throughout the area, from Belyuen to Port Keats, to gauge the demand for the school. These consultations indicated that it would not be difficult to conduct a school with in excess of sixty (60) students. These are largely students who are presently not engaged in formal schooling.

The following communities, families and individuals have indicated their support (in writing) for the establishment of a school at Woolaning:

Woolaning Community Inc: Joan Growden (President)
Belyuen Community: Leslie Nilco (President)
Bulgul Community: Victor Moffat (President)
Darlu Darlu and Red Creek Community: Mary Anne Winton (Treasurer) – enrolling nine students
Nauyu Community: Miriam Rose Baumann (President)
Palumpa Station: Robin Waditj (Director)
Wadeye Community: Bonaparte Pendjent (Traditional Owner)
M. Higgins: Principal – Woolaning Primary School
Lucia Carlingung and Diane Tchmut: (Daly River) – enrolling six students
Debra Burr Burr, R Spicer (Woolaning) - enrolling two students
Dinahyarnjrarrun (Daly River) – enrolling one student
Valeriannudjulu (Port Keats) – enrolling three students
Anna Narjic (Woolaning) – enrolling one student
Mary Elizabeth Dala – (Port Keats) – enrolling one student
Keith and Cecily Petherick (Woolaning) – enrolling two students.

(c) Assessment of impact on existing provision

Near zero impact is envisaged on other education providers. Marrara Christian School is more likely to be affected than any other school. Most students will come from situations where they are not in any formal education programme.

Signed ___________________________ Date __________

Designation ___________________________

Please forward completed application to:

Secretary
NT Department of Education
GPO Box 4821
Darwin NT 0801
"A Good School with Good Teachers": Educational Aspirations of Indigenous People in the East Katherine Region, N.T.

Appendix 6
Registration Application for Woolaning School
Woolaning Christian School

Registration Application

The Northern Territory Christian Schools Association

September 2000
1. **Name of School:** Woolaning Christian School

2. **Site Address:** Litchfield Park Road, via Batchelor.

3. **Postal Address:** PO Box 1215, Palmerston, NT 0831

4. **Name of body/organization responsible for the establishment and conduct of the proposed school:**

   The Northern Territory Christian Schools Association (NTCSA)

   The Northern Territory Christian Schools Association operates schools in and around Darwin (Litchfield, Marrara, NT Christian College and Palmerston) and regional schools at Alice Springs (Araluen) and Nhulunbuy. The Northern Territory Christian Schools Association has over twenty years of experience in the establishment and management of non-government schools in the Northern Territory and currently has around 900 students in its six existing schools.

5. **Incorporation**

   (a) The NTCSA is an incorporated body.

   (b) The NTCSA was incorporated in 16th June 1977

6. **Method of Management**

   The Woolaning Christian School is a member school of the NTCSA. Each NTCSA school is managed on a day-to-day basis by a local school council. The NTCSA Board has responsibility for liaison with government, setting broad financial parameters and managing financial records. The Woolaning Christian School will comply with all prescribed requirements. The Middle School curriculum programme will reflect the programmes that already exist in our Marrara and Palmerston Schools. The prescribed requirements will be met as determined through the NT Department of Education Board of Studies. The following are specific responses to the Draft, 28 June 1999, Regulations under the Education Act:

   (a) **1,000 hours of instruction per year** –
   School hours for instruction will be, 8.30 am to 10.40 am, 11 am to 1.05 pm, 1.50 pm to 3.10 pm. A total of five hours and thirty-five minutes per day with one hundred and seventy nine instruction days required meeting the prescribed one thousand hours.

   (b) **Assessment of students** –
   The Woolaning Christian School will comply with student assessment approved by the Northern Territory Board of Studies and national standards of education agreed to by the Minister and the Minister of the Commonwealth in regard to measuring student achievement.
(c) Register of enrolment –
A register will be maintained by the school principal containing the following information:

- Student's name and address
- Student's date of birth
- The date on which the student enrolled at the school
- The names of the parents or guardians of the student or any other person who has the care and control of the student
- The name of the person enrolling the student
- Details of the immunisations the student has been given, including the date of each immunisation
- The name and address of the last school where the student was enrolled
- The level of education of the student at the date of his or her enrolment

(d) Keeping of annual accounts etc. –
The Woolaning Christian School will keep proper accounts and records of transactions and its financial affairs; it will maintain adequate control over all grant monies ensuring that their allocation is to that for which it was granted; it will provide a copy of audited annual financial statements to the Secretary within 6 months of the end of each calendar (financial) year.

(e) Record of attendance –
The Woolaning Christian School will maintain a record of student attendances showing each morning and afternoon of instruction and each student's attendance.

(f) Records of educational performance –
The Principal of the Woolaning Christian School will maintain a record of assessment of each student and will provide a copy of that record to the Secretary upon request. The principal will also maintain a record of assessment of each student of achievement in national standards of education and will provide a copy of that record to the Secretary upon request.

7. Qualification of teachers

The Woolaning Christian School will comply with employment of only teachers who meet with the Secretary's satisfaction regarding their qualifications.

8. Curriculum

The curriculum used by Woolaning Christian School will meet all requirements of the Board of Studies and follow the pattern of study of the middle school programme at Marrara Christian School.
9. Student population

(a) Current: Male: - Female: -

(b) Anticipated for the next three years of the school's operation:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Male</th>
<th>Female</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2001</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2002</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2003</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(c) Age range:

Minimum: 12 years (approx)

Maximum: 17 years (approx)

(d) Grade Range:

From Year 8 to Year 10.

10. Description of buildings and other facilities to be used:

The Woolaning Christian School will develop facilities that comply with Design Guidelines for Secondary Schools in the Northern Territory. Some specialist facilities may be accessed from time to time at our Marrara and Palmerston campuses.

11. Proposed Sources of Funding:

As a registered school Woolaning Christian School will be eligible for Commonwealth and Territory recurrent funding. This, in addition to some fee income will provide sufficient funds for the day-to-day operation of the school at Woolaning. Discussions are underway with the Commonwealth in relation to those additional funds (in the areas of educational and management support) necessary to sustain schooling in remote communities.

12. General statement of reasons for establishing the proposed school:

(a) Background

Indigenous families, communities and students have always had a presence in NTCSA schools. In 1997 an Indigenous Learning Centre was established at the specific request of Indigenous parents, to support remote area students at Marrara Christian School. This centre, and its services, has continued to expand and now also support indigenous students in our other schools. In February 2000 a non-institutional, supported accommodation programme was commenced to
provide a secure and supportive home life and so assist student learning. The supported accommodation programme has grown from fourteen (24) students to forty (40) students in third term. The accommodation programme has had spectacular success when measured on all performance indicators for indigenous education. Nearly all students who commenced the programme have continued in it.

In 1998, both Marrara and Palmerston Christian Schools developed and established year 7-9 Middle School programs. Staff and parents in these schools have acknowledged the value of these programs to their students. Furthermore, these programmes have developed as a bridge for the inclusion of indigenous students in mainstream programmes.

The NTCSA has had a long-standing association with the Woolaning community. The community is located about 80 Km West of the township of Bachelor. Students from Woolaning have attended Marrara Christian School over the past twenty years staff members have been drawn from that community for both teaching and residential relief positions.

The NTCSA, in partnership with the Woolaning community, intend to establish a Middle School (year 8 to 10) based at the Woolaning Community. This partnership is fundamentally, no different to the partnership that we have with our school communities at Alice Springs, Nhulunbuy or any of our other schools.

(b) Consultation and consideration of submission

The impetus for this initiative comes from the Woolaning Community. They approached the NTCSA through the Indigenous Education Coordinator with a vision for a middle school with supported accommodation to serve the needs of young people in the region.

The possibility for the project was presented to NTCSA staff at their annual staff conference. The Board and staff of the NTCSA are fully supportive of developing this new venture. Bob Collins has been consulted about the project and its development; he has assessed the project as a worthy pilot for implementing many of the recommendations detailed in his report "Learning Lessons".

The possibility of a Middle School at Woolaning has been extensively flagged at Department level. Specifically the project has been discussed with the Secretary, Mr. Peter Plummer, and the Director of Indigenous Education, Mr. Ken Davies. Furthermore, funds for planning have been approved through the cross-sectorial steering committee NIELNS funding. Through this forum other independent school organisations have also been made aware of the proposal for a middle school at Woolaning. A formal discussion of the proposal has also taken place with the Assistant Secretary for the Department of Indigenous Education (Federal), Mr. Peter Buckskin. Throughout all of
these consultations, there has not been any opposition to the establishment of the school.

Consultations have been held with parents throughout the area, from Belyuen to Port Keats, to gauge the demand for the school. These consultations indicated that it would not be difficult to conduct a school with in excess of sixty (60) students. These are largely students who are presently not engaged in formal schooling.

The following communities, families and individuals have indicated their support (in writing) for the establishment of a school at Woolaning:

Woolaning Community Inc: Joan Growden (President)
Belyuen Community: Leslie Nilco (President)
Bulgul Community: Victor Moffat (President)
Darlu Darlu and Red Creek Community: Mary Anne Winton (Treasurer) – enrolling nine students
Nauyu Community: Miriam Rose Baumann (President)
Palumpa Station: Robin Waditj (Director)
Wadeye Community: Bonaparte Pendjent (Traditional Owner)
M. Higgins: Principal – Woolaning Primary School
Lucia Carlingung and Diane Tchmut: (Daly River) – enrolling six students
Debra Burr, R Spicer (Woolaning) - enrolling two students
Dinahyamjarrun (Daly River) – enrolling one student
Valeriannudjulu (Port Keats) – enrolling three students
Anna Narjic (Woolaning) – enrolling one student
Mary Elizabeth Dala – (Port Keats) – enrolling one student
Keith and Cecily Petherick (Woolaning) – enrolling two students.

(c) Assessment of impact on existing provision

Near zero impact is envisaged on other education providers. Marrara Christian School is more likely to be affected than any other school. Most students will come from situations where they are not in any formal education programme.

Signed ___________________________ Date ___________

Designation ___________________________

Please forward completed application to:

Secretary
NT Department of Education
GPO Box 4821
Darwin NT 0801
“A Good School with Good Teachers”: Educational Aspirations of Indigenous People in the East Katherine Region, N.T.

Appendix 7
Suggested location of new school
Woolaning Community-managed School Project

A Pilot project funded by the Department of Education, Training and Youth Affairs

A partnership between Woolaning Community Inc. and the Northern Territory Christian Schools Association

Final Report
Northern Territory Christian Schools Association

Woolaning Community-managed School Project

A Pilot project funded by the Department of Education, Training and Youth Affairs

Final Report

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This report proposes a regional residential community-managed college to serve parent and communities of the Finniss-Cox/Daly catchment area.

Executive Summary:

The establishment of a regional residential College to serve the families and communities of the Daly/Cox-Finniss region is a project of national significance. The College fulfils the Government’s commitment to practical reconciliation and to radical improvement in educational outcomes for Indigenous students in the region.

The Woolaning Homeland Christian College provides a comprehensive solution to the urgent need for secondary education in this important region where currently there is no such provision. Further it provides a model for government and for communities in other regions facing the same challenge.

The planning team has drawn on the aspirations of local families and communities and the most recent and relevant research in assembling the educational plan. The business plan flows from sound educational planning and involves careful costing and verification.

A high priority has been given to extensive consultations to assemble the best advice and information and prepare the way for a prompt implementation of the project.

The College is to begin operation in July 2002. In order for this timetable to be achieved agreement will need to be reached by mid-September with resources available by mid-October for site works to proceed in advance of the wet season.

Partners in the project, Woolaning Community Inc. and Northern Territory Christian Schools, commend the report to the Minister and his Department.
Critical issues relating to the project and its implementation are summarised in Chapter 8.
The class of 2002
(See Appendix 7 for full details of prospective students)

1. Introduction:

The Woolaning Community-managed School Project involves a partnership between the Woolaning Community and the Northern Territory Christian Schools Association to establish a school for adolescent Indigenous students in the Daly – Cox/Finniss-region. The project has been successful in receiving a grant to pursue negotiations and consultations and develop a comprehensive business plan toward the establishment of the school and associated accommodation for students and teachers. This report has been developed to fulfil the requirements of the project agreement.

Name: Woolaning Homeland Christian College

Woolaning Homeland – traditionally, prior to European occupation, Woolaning was the meeting place for some 20 Indigenous clans that belonged to the Litchfield Park and Finniss & Daly River Districts

Homeland refers to the fact that these 20 clans are now dispersed as far as town camps around Darwin to Port Keats South-South-West of Woolaning. The College will bring many students back to their traditional homeland. This necessitates that the college is a “home away from home” for these students – it needs to be a residential college. Students attending this college will be living at a place that is “their land” with uncles, aunts and other relatives near by.

Christian College – Christian by the nature of its founding impetus. The founding families for the College were moved to begin this work because of their Christian beliefs. Fundamental is the belief that parents have responsibility for the education of their children. The Christian perspective that is brought to bear is one that recognises the validity and historical significance of the Indigenous culture and beliefs and sees them fulfilled in the Christian message.

Vision:

The intent of this project is to contribute to reconciliation in a practical way by delivering opportunities for education to young people who currently have none. The regional residential College can bring reconciliation between families of the region, reconciliation between clans, reconciliation with the land, reconciliation with all others who share their lives with the people of the region. Above all, the intent is to share in reconciliation with God through the work of his Son Jesus Christ.

The College is a practical example of reconciliation at work. It finds expression in building a school. Here, reconciliation will be a process providing renewal for individuals, families and communities through their access to education, training, enterprise and employment. The College is based on a foundation of reconciliation that will be reflected in the school’s programmes, culture and life.

"We need the school because it is a work of reconciliation. It will bring families and clans that belong to this area back together, it will bring people back to their homeland, it will put behind us the arguments about land. We need to stand shoulder to shoulder with our non-Indigenous brothers and sisters so that we can do this work together."

"There are kids out there that are dying. They need to hear the message of life in Jesus Christ. They need to have hope for the future."

Joan Growden (President Woolaning Community)

"What has it been now? Twenty-five years since the government took over (education) from the missions. You (government) people have been spending a lot of money. For what? Nothing... We need doctors, lawyers, pilots, accountants and auditors... Other indigenous people around the world have done this, why can’t we?"
“You need to get a vision, a vision for reconciliation so that we can take our place alongside other Australians.”

Rev Geoffrey Dhalanga (NTCSA Reference Group member and Associate Executive Officer – Northern Australia Uniting Church Congress)

The College Vision is:

“Woolaning Homeland Christian College fulfils the aspirations of the people of the Daly–Cox/Finniss region by providing, for their children, an engaging and successful education toward a fruitful future life.”

1.3 College Goals

Planning for the Woolaning Homeland Christian College grows out of the hopes and aspirations of the people of the region and draws on a range of important reports and research papers. The College goals are:

In relation to students:

To provide a supportive and nurturing environment for schooling that contributes to the development of the student’s sense of self-worth, enthusiasm for learning and optimism for the future.

To provide a quality secondary education program for students of secondary age in the region that improves the learning outcomes in the areas of literacy and numeracy to, over time, match the outcomes of other students.

To develop a two-way educational programme that respects the student’s family and culture and provides access to full participation in the life of the nation.

To achieve flexibility in delivery of education by the provision of supported accommodation.

To provide positive learning outcomes for students free from the effects of discrimination and discrepancies arising from students’ socio-economic background and geographic location.

To improve participation in secondary schooling across the region.

To improve attendance of secondary students across the region.

To enable students to complete secondary education providing clear pathways to employment and further education and training.

In relation to parents and community:

To build on the initiative of parents and communities in this region to develop a college that they shape and manage to match the specific needs of young people in this region.

To develop effective community governance and management of educational provision in the region.

To deliver education within a setting where community mentors are working and undergoing training providing students with positive role models.

To achieve genuine two-way learning involving members of the community in the school programme and involving the school in the life of the community.

To provide community access to education and training, information /communication technology and the other resources available through the College.
To achieve flexibility in the timing of educational provision by harmonising the school calendar and timetables with local requirements.

In relation to the wider community:

To channel cooperative effort between Commonwealth, Territory, NT Christian Schools and the College Council toward the achievement of shared goals.

To deliver education in a cohesive manner alongside health, social, enterprise and employment services.

To provide access to vocational learning and develop employment related skills and an understanding of the work environment, career options and pathways to meet the untapped potential for local enterprise and employment in mining, pastoral and tourism industries.

To focus resources constructively and deliver effective secondary education and training to young people in the region.

2. Global view of project

International Issues and Goals in relation to Indigenous Education

The report, Emerging Themes: National Inquiry into Rural and Remote Education, produced by the Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission in March 2000 draws on a range of International Conventions in establishing the principal human rights to be investigated. The report identifies the following principal rights relating to the provision of education to rural and remote areas:

The right to an education which is non-discriminatory and which develops the child’s abilities to the fullest. The right to a curriculum, which develops respect for human rights and for the child’s own family and culture as well as for national values. The right to educational decision-making, which makes the best interests of each child a primary consideration as, advised by the child’s parents and by the child him or herself.

As signatory to these conventions our nation guarantees its citizens these basic rights. In relation to Indigenous education this involves access to an education anchored in family and tradition that provides the knowledge, skills and opportunity for people to transcend inequity and discrimination to shape their own vision and life.

The North American experience of colonisation and cultural domination has many parallels with Australia. In both the US and Canada Indigenous communities exist geographically isolated from mainstream society. Until recently education in these communities has been provided by outside authorities and education outcomes have mirrored the Australian experience. However, over the last decade the community management of schooling has been adopted as a major strategy to overcome the deficit of educational opportunity suffered by Indigenous young people.

In Canada almost all First Nation children living on reserves are educated in schools that are managed by their community. The Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development Secondary education program has as its objective

"...to ensure that eligible Indians have access to the education programs and services available in public schools in the province in which the reserve is located."

This objective has resulted in 478 out of a total of 485 schools being under First Nation management in 2001.

Under Gathering Strength-Canada’s Aboriginal Action Plan, funds are available to First Nation schools and education authorities to introduce reforms aimed at improving the quality of education in First Nation schools and increasing the retention and graduation rates of First Nation learners. Initiatives introduced focus on four major themes:

Strengthening First Nation education management and governance capacity;
Improving the effectiveness of classroom instruction;
Supporting community and parental involvement with schools;
Aiding the "School to Work" Transition.

In the US, Indigenous education is the responsibility of the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) and its Office of Indian Education Programs (OIEP). The OIEP's vision and long range goal is to unite to promote healthy Indian communities through life long learning. This is implemented through their mission:

"...to provide quality education opportunities from early childhood through life, with consideration given to the mental, physical, emotional, spiritual, and cultural aspects of the person served. OIEP will continue to encourage parent participation and tribal control of school programs, to support the inclusion of American Indian languages and cultures in teaching and learning, to support local control, and to involve others, including tribal leaders, in consultations on all matters pertaining to education."

Since 1995, there have been more schools on reserves operated by tribes through grants and contracts than operated by the BIA. In school year 1995, 98 of the 187 schools were tribally controlled schools. Since 1995, the number of tribally controlled schools has increased to 120. This trend is actively support and fostered by the Bureau. The process includes the training of local boards, considerations of two-way education and ongoing training and employment of graduates.

In association with these schools an accommodation model known as "Therapeutic Residential" has been developed for adolescents attending schools on reservations. Of the 70 residential Schools six have been chosen as demonstration therapeutic residential schools for 2001 to trial this new residential model which supports positive changes in attitudes, behaviour and academic performance. The therapeutic residential model shares many features with the supported accommodation planned for the College at Woolanbing. An effective residential model is central to the academic success of students.

Community management of schools for Indigenous students in both Canada and the US is seen as a central and essential element in the achievement of participation, attendance and academic goals.

National Issues and Goals in relation to Indigenous education

The key programme of the Commonwealth in relation to Indigenous education, the National Indigenous English Literacy and Numeracy Strategy (NIELNS), encompasses the following:

The involvement of local communities, schools, parents and students;
Cooperative action between the Commonwealth and the States and Territories (which have primary responsibility for schooling); and
Coordinated action within the Commonwealth government across relevant portfolios.

The following goals of the Adelaide Declaration on National Goals for Schooling and the Twenty - First Century, inform the development of the College:

Goal 1.2 Students should have self-confidence, optimism, high self-esteem and a commitment to personal excellence as a basis for their potential life roles as family, community and workforce members.
Goal 1.5 Students should have employment related skills and an understanding of the work environment, career options and pathways as a foundation for, and positive attitudes towards, vocational education and training, further education, employment and life-long learning.
Goal 2.2 Students should have attained the skills of numeracy and English literacy; such that, every student should be numerate, able to read, write, spell and communicate at an appropriate level.
Goal 2.3 Students should have participated in programs of vocational learning during the compulsory years and have had access to vocational education and training programs as part of their senior secondary studies.
Goal 3.1 Students outcomes from schooling are free from the effects of negative forms of discrimination based on sex, language, culture and ethnicity, religion or disability; and of differences arising from students' socio-economic background or geographic location.
Goal 3.2 Students should have the learning outcomes of educationally disadvantaged students improve and, over time, match those of other students.
Goal 3.3 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students have equitable access to, and opportunities in, schooling so that their learning outcomes improve and, over time, match those of other students.

Goal 3.6 All students have access to the high quality education necessary to enable the completion of school education to Year 12 or its vocational equivalent and that provides clear and recognised pathways to employment and further education and training.

The following recommendations from the “Positive Self-Identity for Indigenous Students and its Relationship to School Outcomes” research project are especially relevant to the project:

Recommendation 1(a) Delivery of education in a cohesive manner alongside health and social services. Various Recommendations, (Matching delivery of education to the needs and aspirations of the local community.)

Recommendation 8(b) Mentoring by role models from the local community

Recommendation 9(b) Schooling should play an integral part in the life of the community

Recommendation 9(d) Flexibility in delivery, organisation, curriculum and structure of education

The following recommendations from the research project “Better practice in School Attendance: Improving the school attendance of Indigenous students” are especially relevant to the project:

Recommendation 1 Use of individual targeted programming to minimise the effect of absence due to cultural and social obligations.

Recommendation 2 Negotiations of annual calendar and daily timetable to achieve best fit with community.

Recommendation 9 Extend learning options for young men to provide practical studies and opportunities for workplace training.

Recommendation 11 Develop curricula in conjunction with parents and community members.

Recommendation 12 Genuine two-way learning with the involvement of local community members in the life of the school.

Recommendation 13 Computer facilities accessible to students and community on a flexible basis.

The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission (ATSIC) in its submission to the Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission National Inquiry into Rural and Remote Education noted three basic principles that should form the basis for progress for Indigenous people in education:

Community self-determination within the education system is integral to realising education outcomes for Indigenous children. This is necessary to ensure acceptance and involvement of Indigenous people in the education system.

Respect for Indigenous knowledge and recognition of the need for cultural maintenance should be apparent in education provided to Indigenous people. This would provide a foundation and make the education system relevant and appropriate.

Education needs should be seen in relation to and integrated with other requirements of the community such as health, housing and general community infrastructure. This will ensure the effectiveness of educational strategies by taking into consideration the range of other factors impinging on educational participation and achievement.

The most recent wide-scale body of research and reflective practice in Indigenous education was completed as part of the IESIP Strategic Results Project. The outcomes of 83 projects have been analysed and reported by the IESIP SRP National Coordination and Evaluation Team. Their report includes the key strategies that were effective in achieving the goals of: functional levels of literacy and numeracy; improved participation and; pathways to future training and work. These strategies have formed the foundation for the College educational planning principles and strategies (see Section 3.3 & 3.4)

Territory Issues

The College is being established at the initiative of local Indigenous communities and is to be managed by
these communities. Recognising the primary responsibility for education resides at the Territory level the planning team has liaised with senior Territory officers from the inception of the project. Both Commonwealth and Territory departments have been involved in each of the project monitoring group meetings and have given valuable input to the planning process. Planning toward the College at Woolaning reflects the overall objective of the Northern Territory Department of Education (NTDE) Indigenous Unit:

"to ensure that all Indigenous students achieve the level of skill necessary for participating in society and undertaking tertiary and vocational education; and that the entire community, including parents and students, places a high value on education."

During 2000 the NT NIELNS Steering Committee involved NTDE, Catholic and Independent school sectors in the development of a comprehensive plan for Indigenous education. This committee identified planning toward this project as a priority within an overall implementation plan for Indigenous education in the Territory.

The NTDE Indigenous Education Strategic Plan identifies 6 key elements all of which are reflected in the goals of the Woolaning Homeland Christian College:

Students go to school regularly
Students are fit and able to learn
Students have good schooling
Students are tracked and their educational outcomes measured
The program is managed with full accountability
Indigenous families and communities share responsibility with schools and government for educational outcomes

The independent report on Indigenous education in the Northern Territory: "Learning Lessons" has been pivotal in shaping the development of planning toward the College. The following recommendations are especially relevant:

In relation to secondary provision - Expanding the number of secondary courses available in remote areas (Rec. 87&88)
In relation to Community Partnerships - Pilots of "self-managing" schools to be implemented. (Rec. 145, 146, 150&151)
In relation to two-way learning - Support for two-way learning and a rigorous analysis to ensure its effective delivery. (Rec. 98, 99,100,101)
In regard to Adult education - Permanently based adult education providers in communities (Rec. 93)
In relation to health issues – Integration of health and education delivery (Rec. 125,126,127,128,129&130)

Regional Issues

The region to be served by the College covers approximately 4000 square kilometres and has within it seven substantial communities and many more outstations. The largest community is Wadeye (Port Keats) with a population of 2,200. Three other communities have populations in excess of 300 persons. The people of the region have been subject to intolerable pressure from the dominant Western culture in many forms including massacres, disease, misappropriation of land, paternalism, neglect and discrimination. It is also a region with a proud history of culture, enterprise and independence.

The needs of Indigenous students in the Northern Territory are similar to those nationally. However, a degree of isolation and the sociology of remote area communities have exacerbated some aspects of the problem.

Dysfunctional communities

Decades of welfare and physical dependence have brought a high degree of social dysfunction to remote community life. Richard Trudgen
relates the story of his friend’s description of the Yolnu term for hell, “wulula”:

“...living in the community is like wulula. We sit with sad faces, with nothing to do except watch Balanda (white people) running around doing everything for us. ... We just sit around with nothing to do. That’s what wulula is like.”

And further, he quotes the Reverend Dr. Djininyindi Gondarra as saying, “Dependency is the biggest disease that is killing Yolnu (Indigenous people) today.”

It seems that traditional skills such as cooking and health care have been deserted. This is evident in the larger communities. Claude Najic, planning team member who works as an Indigenous interpreter at the Darwin courts says, “... youths that are accused of breaking and entering mostly say they did it because they were hungry. Families don’t have food in their houses and the shops are not open at night.”

In short, large communities are not good environments for young people to be educated. They lack good role models both in western and traditional frameworks. Nutrition and a lifestyle that would support effective learning conditions are sadly lacking.

Breakdown of traditional authority structures

A direct result of a lack of social order in community life, is the disablement of traditional authority structures. Children no longer respect their elders and life becomes divorced from the previously accepted authority structure. This causes young people to roam the streets at night and to become prey to a culture of hopelessness and drug dependency. Claude Najic is concerned that parenting skills have been lost and he is insisting that his own children take this responsibility seriously; “they are your responsibility, I can teach you how to look after your children, but I will not do it for you any longer.”

Provision of secondary education on homelands and close to family

“Without doubt, most parents would prefer their children to be able to access well-supervised and stimulating secondary schooling in their home communities. This theme was reiterated in all communities visited by the review and in a number of submissions.”

We have found that elders, who speak on behalf of a family or clan group, say that they want their primary aged children to be educated in the small clan group’s home community and not in larger communities. Their secondary aged young people however would be better educated at a site that maintains links with their traditional lands and where there is substantial contact with family members.

Failure to provide a learning stimulus through available job pathways and working role models on local communities

Students living on many remote communities see little evidence around them that schooling will lead to a fulfilling life. There are few local work opportunities and people from outside their community generally fill those positions that do exist. Without adult role-models students see no hope that they might overcome the barriers to achieving at school, training and employment. Schooling that is delivered alongside training, enterprise and employment is likely to be supported by the students and their families.

Miriam-Rose Baumann, Principal of St Francis Xavier School, Daly River emphasises the connection between education and employment:

“Few young persons without encouragement in education at an early age can accept positions such as the community building manager or the town clerk which is often the European ideal. Yet such positions of responsibility are achievable if they have reasonable and realistic level of education. Reintroduce some intermediate positions in areas such as schools, add a dash of local encouragement and return a measure of responsibility to families for their own destiny and the present trend of dependency on others may be reversed.
A recent report prepared by the Kardu Numida community council at Port Keats describes their present
predicament:

“Domination by another culture
Little or no conceptual education on the workings of the dominant culture
Forced centralised refugee camp living against small groups living on their own land
The introduction of a hand out system to a practical people used to working for their living
The effect of concentrated domination by a new religious group for some fifty years followed by a sudden withdrawal some fifteen years ago
The enforced acceptance of a self management, self-determination policy for a people with little understanding of the workings of or their own role in a contemporary society
The introduction of contemporary incorporated associations as supposed new authority group as against recognised traditional management structures”
This same report highlights a number of positive developments particularly in relation to growing community management of various aspects of the community life. Many critical issues are noted in relation to the youth:

1,500 people under the age of 25 out of a population of 2,200 indicates a very high proportion of school age children (this proportion would be indicative of the whole region)
Young offenders incur costs of up to $4mill per annum for this community alone
Disaffected youth grow up with an absence of discipline and exhibit a high rate of anti-social behaviour
Many men no longer know their place in life

Increasing use of alcohol and marijuana by young men in an attempt to gain self esteem and peer acceptance, replicates the lead up to high suicide incident rates seen in other communities

Mothers are worn out in their attempts to cope with the needs of demoralised male family members and a community acceptance of domestic violence.
Young people have not benefited from role models in either a system of traditional family life or in a system of contemporary social ethics

School attendance in the region varies with some communities strongly supporting the local primary school while in other communities only a small proportion attend regularly. There is no provision of secondary education within the region although some correspondence courses are offered for students of high school age and there are a number of small-scale innovative education and training programs for young adults. A small number of students attend boarding schools in Darwin (estimated to be about 30-40 students) but retention rates are not high and parents express considerable reservations about this option for secondary schooling.

Governance

The community management model of governance is fundamental to the Woolaning Homeland Christian College for the following reasons:

The College is the initiative of families in the region
The College planning has been undertaken by people in the region
Overseas experience confirms the importance of community ownership and control as a basis for improved educational outcomes
All recent National and Territory strategies and reports in relation to Indigenous education highlight the need to engage Indigenous families and communities in the education of their children.
The strategic partnership between the families and communities in the region, and the NTCSA brings together complimentary experience and expertise to secure the College’s future.
Parents have primary responsibility for the education of their children.
The College is a means by which families and communities can regain control of their lives.

Responsibility for remote education provision for Indigenous students in the NT currently resides almost entirely with the Northern Territory Department of Education (NTDE). The outcome after twenty years of
effort falls well short of the expectations of families, communities and the Department itself. The difficulty of bringing about effective reform and a reversal in the outcomes for students should not be underestimated.

Efforts to involve parents and communities have to date concentrated on the formation of parents' councils and the promotion of attendance at school. However, the best attempts of community leaders, school principals and government have failed to secure the participation of a high proportion of families in remote communities. The end result of this is poor participation, attendance and the attendant unsatisfactory progress toward satisfactory educational outcomes.

The following submission to the report Learning Lessons insists that control is a key issue in the provision of effective schooling to Indigenous communities:

"The quickest and surest way to achieve change in this system is for the people most affected to take action to change it themselves, employing the full range of legal and political remedies available nationally and internationally to people whose rights are being denied. This is unlikely to occur unless the immediate and primary focus of those seeking reform is placed not on the schools, or on the children attending or not attending them, but on the parents and community leaders and organizations who have primary responsibility for the welfare and education of their children and young people. In other words, Indigenous people and their organisations must become more empowered in relation to the education system before real change will occur in this system. (Submission to review)" (p. 163)

Trudgen draws on the work of Alvin Toffler in defining the contemporary situation of Indigenous people as one where,

"future shock is a daily reality, and the adaptational breakdown of their society is massive and rapid." (p.183)

Trudgen locates the core of the problem as unrelenting and extreme future shock accompanied by total lack of control over their daily lives. The solution is:

"For Yolnu (Indigenous people) to regain control of their lives, all present programs need reassessing to see if they are part of the answer or part of the problem. Where programs do not return responsibility and control to Yolnu and their communities they must be modified or replaced with programs that do." (p.224)

Delivery of schooling to remote communities by the government in the NT has to date not involved effective community management. Indeed a hierarchical and complex government department may be poorly situated to conceive and develop an effective partnership with a small, remote Indigenous community.

The partners in this project believe that the governance and control of Indigenous education institutions by Indigenous people is central to implementing effective reform. The implementation of community management of schools, where undertaken with careful planning and support has the potential to:

- Build community commitment to schooling and further training;
- Give expression to a community vision for education and for life; Shape programmes to meet community priorities;
- Integrate thorough and effective two-way education;
- Build in shared accountability for educational outcomes and;
- Build community capacity for renewal.

Returning responsibility and control to the local community should be supported in the following ways:

Mutual responsibility in the form of a compact that clarifies the obligations, tasks and responsibilities of each of the partners – parents, students, communities, NTCSA and government – and summarises the expectations each should have of the others should be negotiated and agreed. Regular reviews need to be
undertaken regarding the performance of each of the parties to the compact and the appropriateness of the compact given changing circumstances.

Community capacity needs to be developed to ensure that the responsibilities of each of the parties are matched with appropriate knowledge, skills and experience for their task. Building capacity will involve access to information and networks, specific training and opportunities to work alongside mentors. The report of the Commonwealth Grants Commission Indigenous Funding Inquiry warns that resources need to be invested over time to increase capacity, before full community control will be workable.

Strategic partnerships that listen to, learn and take direction from Indigenous people; that flow through into teaching practice and; are a whole community effort involving new types of school management and community leadership. Ken Boston

outlines the above as "nationally agreed" principles governing partnerships with Indigenous communities.

Strategic Partnerships for realising community managed schools

The strategic partnership between the Northern Territory Christian Schools Association (NTCSA) and the communities and families of the region brings together the aspirations and energies of local people with an experienced education provider that operates on the principle of community control.

A key finding of the IESIP Strategic Results Programme was that the establishment of good personal relationships and mutual trust were fundamental to a project's success.

"One or more 'bi-cultural figures' appeared frequently in most successful projects. These people had a capacity to operate comfortably in both white and Indigenous societies, interpreting each to the other with the respect of the members of each. They were frequently but not always Indigenous.” (p. 7)

A close and trusting relationship was the catalyst for the original approach by the Woolaning Community to the NTCSA and has been fundamental to the ongoing development of the partnership. The Woolaning Community has among its members a number of key “bi-cultural figures”. Indeed the Community has functioned corporately in this capacity within the region connecting families and communities (their extended family) with the opportunities available in the wider community.

The partners share a complementary set of strengths and limitations. Indigenous communities and people bring their passion to see the situation change for the better, their knowledge of the region and its people and, their unique set of experiences and aspirations that can shape an effective educational programme for their children. The NTCSA contributes experience in advocacy, governance support, resources for financial planning and accountability and educational programme support.

The College will be managed by a regional council representative of the families and communities in the region as a member school of the NTCSA. The Board of NTCSA is representative of all member schools and undertakes financial accountability, government liaison, an educational support services on behalf of member schools. The constitution of the NTCSA is included as Appendix 1 and sets out the respective roles of the NTCSA's Councils and Board. These management principles are also reflected in the lease agreement (Appendix 4).

Community management places the responsibility for the operation of schooling firmly within the communities served by that schooling. This responsibility encompasses the delivery of agreed schooling outcomes in relation to participation, attendance, literacy, numeracy, and Indigenous employment as well as accountability for Commonwealth and Territory capital and recurrent funds.

The strategic partnership between the NTCSA and the families and communities of the region ensures that education is provided within a comprehensive community development perspective that includes parenting, early childhood, training, enterprise and employment programmes. Through improved access to the government and private resources that are available generally to communities and regions elsewhere in Australia the development of the College can be complemented by the essential training, enterprise and employment to ensure its success.

2.7 Siting a Regional College
The College is to be located in Woolaning Community. Access to Woolaning from Darwin is via an all weather road through Batchelor or by a combination of sealed and unsealed roads through Berry Springs. The College has access to an airstrip some five kilometres from the community on Labelle Station providing all season access to all communities in the region. At first glance, Woolaning may appear to be an unlikely area for a regional secondary college. It is not well serviced in terms of infrastructure and is at least 80km from the townships of Batchelor to the east and Berry Springs to the North. However, throughout the Daly-Finniss region, there is a surprising consensus that Woolaning is the best place for such a college.

Elders and parents have made it clear that the first criterion for a residential college is that it offers a "safe" environment. Woolaning is seen as such an environment – it is free from drug and alcohol abuse and has a small community population. In addition the "supported accommodation" residential model to be used at the College as developed at the NTCSA's Marrara Christian School has proven to be highly acceptable and trusted as a safe and healthy environment for students.

The second consideration is that people throughout the region identify the Litchfield Park area as part of their "dreaming". Hence Woolaning is seen as an area where traditional law is operative. Ray Petherick has documented the origin and movement of some twenty clans that were, prior to European occupation, represented in the area. This work identifies the Woolaning area as a traditional meeting ground.

From a contemporary sociological viewpoint, the area is within reach of Darwin and accessible, both by communication and road throughout the year. It is an area that is rich aesthetically and in terms of traditional lifestyle requirements for food and water. Furthermore, the development of Litchfield National Park as a tourist destination places the community in a situation abundant with development potential. An enterprise-rich environment that provides students with access to career opportunities and training is considered as essential to achieve healthy employment outcomes for students.

From a physical, bio-geographical point of view, the site is most suitable. It is generally open monsoonal forest indicative of the region. Unique flora and fauna are mostly found in the nearby less abundant rain forest areas rather than the extensive monsoonal forest areas.

The community has a natural water supply that is adequate to cater for the college population and the local community. Currently a "NT Department of Housing" initiated study is investigating the best means whereby the water resources can be accessed to avoid contamination by feral animals and other activities. The Department of Lands, Planning and Environment study suggests that the land capacity is adequate to sustain on site effluent treatment and disposal systems for the population projected for the College.

The suitability of the siting of the Woolaning Homeland Christian College is perhaps best summed up by the response of Bob Collins who on visiting the site and meeting with the Woolaning Community declared,

"....this is the very best place to undertake a pilot of community managed schooling in the Territory."

3. Education Planning

3.1 Students and their needs

Students residing in the Finniss-Cox/Daly region face many of the same barriers to achieving adequate educational outcomes, as do most Indigenous students. The following are commonly agreed issues in relation to Indigenous education that have been assembled from Learning Lessons: an independent review of Indigenous education in the Northern Territory, our experience to date and from other research studies:

Consistent attendance
Consistent attendance at the same school for the duration of secondary education
English as a Second Language (ESL) programmes
Numeracy programmes
Holistic approach to pedagogy
Adequate pre-testing, reporting to parents and documenting progress
Ability to resist involvement in substance abuse

Students in the region face additional barriers to completing their education which require:

The disadvantages of isolation be overcome in order to transcend cultural and economic barriers and secure the same opportunities available to others
A genuine cooperation between school and community to build in opportunity for effective two way learning that promotes the transmission of community and cultural knowledge and values
Education articulated with future training and employment prospects
Melding learning patterns with an ability to fulfill cultural obligations
Development of mentorship and networks for personal development
Feeling of security and a closeness to family and friends
Close and positive relationships linking students and school staff, through a close relationship between community and school, building commitment to each other and to the shared experience of schooling
Establish a team of staff who have a long term commitment to the school and to participating in the life of the community and learning the local language
A well maintained diet and regular sleep to match the routines associated with effective schooling
Medical assistance to address health issues including the resources and programmes to overcome hearing loss

Desired educational outcomes

Educational outcomes are to conform with the scope and intent of the Indigenous Education Strategic Initiatives Programme (IESIP) including:

accelerated progress against benchmarks in Reading for Year 9;
accelerated progress against benchmarks in Reading for Year 9;

improved school attendance;
improved retention of students to Year 10;
improved retention of students to Year 12;
improved grade progression ratios across the secondary years;
successful completion of Year 12 studies;
successful transition from schooling to work;
increased enrolments;
employment of Indigenous staff;
training of Indigenous staff
college governance by Indigenous people;

improve professional development of all staff involved with Indigenous students and;
expand culturally inclusive curriculum;

Education Principles

The IESIP SRP report which draws on the experience of 86 projects for improving outcomes for Indigenous students (discussed already in Section 2.2) provided an important research base for the planning group. The report found that the following elements were vital to secure successful outcomes (p. 164 – 179).
The establishment of good personal relationships and mutual trust
Flexibility in content, pedagogy, structure, organization timetable and calendar
Local control
High levels of involvement by Indigenous people in management and delivery of programme
Building, for students, a community of “peers” and a “home” within the institution
Recognising and teaching Indigenous languages
Cultural reference and expression
Focus on literacy
Relevance of curricula to student's lives, interests context and culture
Small class sizes and opportunity for intense teaching and learning
Cooperative learning
Use of a range of media including artistic and multi media presentations
The presence of Indigenous teachers and education workers
A "culture-friendly" climate which parents find welcoming
Personal planning and goal setting
Mobile delivery
Improved student engagement through closer and less formal relationships with teachers and flexible school routines
Opportunity for negotiation of curriculum
Regular milestones that provide encouragement to students through achievement and success

Drawn from this research base, consultations with families in the region and an accumulation of experience working alongside remote communities, families and students the following principles inform the development of the educational plan:

Two way education

Two way education grounds the student in the living and dynamic traditions of their own culture and community. Secure in this foundation students explore the terrain of the dominant culture becoming equipped to evaluate and to participate in all the opportunities available to others in society. Two way education means that the school needs to be part of the life of the community and the region. Federal Minister, Dr David Kemp states:

"...addressing the educational impact of the often wide scale disadvantage that Indigenous communities experience requires us to turn upside down the traditional model of community involvement in education. We need to put the school in the community, rather than the community in the school." Two-way education involves professional educators from both Indigenous and western traditions working together to provide the connections that students need to be grounded in their tradition, to transcend barriers to equity and opportunity and to become proficient and confident participants in the life of the nation. Each tradition strengthens the other. Traditional concepts can be employed in the classrooms to link to new ideas. By writing and illustration students can record and organise community knowledge deepening their understanding and appreciation of their traditions.

Claude Najic, member of the project planning team has made the point that,

"white people need to teach our children to be good at English and Western culture. We will teach them traditional culture ... our children need to be good at both cultures so that they can survive and still learn the aboriginal ways (that we are losing)."

Literacy and Numeracy

It is recognised that for students to become competent in any area of life, western or traditional, education needs to be underpinned by a substratum of literacy and numeracy. Literacy and numeracy in this case is understood to be operative in both traditional and western worldviews. It is therefore necessary for students to be proficient in those aspects of both world-view settings.

Richard Trudgen makes the point that Indigenous people have a complex system of language and number that requires well articulated teaching programmes to pass them on at a sufficiently technical level. He notes that the difficulty of past attempts at utilising a two-language programme was that neither was taught well and as a consequence proficiency within both western and traditional society has become difficult.
The College educational programme is specifically designed to accelerate the acquisition and application of literacy and numeracy. Structured classroom sessions, acquiring new skills, practical explorations, recreation and home life will combine to form a 24-hour literacy and numeracy learning environment.

Middle School

Middle school principles match the delivery of education to the specific needs of emerging adolescents. Adolescence places demands on students of any background. Students at this stage of development have new abilities to critique and deal with complexity, their bodies are changing rapidly, and they are confronted with the need to discover who they are and to develop their own values and aspirations. Indigenous students in remote areas face many more challenges. They often struggle with a shortfall in educational achievement, and many have not had the benefit of stable parenting and dependable adult models.

Middle school structures enable students to bond with a “core” teacher who has key responsibility for their academic progress. Timetables are flexible allowing negotiation of timing and content of curriculum. Teachers work in teams delivering an engaging and cohesive educational experience. The NTCSA has long experience with middle schooling at both Marrara and Palmerston Christian Schools. This experience includes the professional development of staff, collaborative development of curriculum programmes, redesign of schooling structures and the integration of sound literacy and numeracy approaches. Middle school development has proved to be a successful model for progressive integration of Indigenous students from remote communities in mainstream programmes at Marrara.

Integral Curriculum

Integral curriculum takes as its starting point “whole” aspects of human experience. It includes topics or themes explored using tools of language, science, social science and ethics to gain a comprehensive understanding of a situation. The curriculum programme includes opportunities for students to experience directly the phenomena being studied, to learn the necessary background information, to assess and appraise and to determine their own response to the questions and dilemmas that arise.

Integral curriculum begins with those issues that are important to the student and then extends to broader issues beyond their present experience. In this sense integral curriculum encompasses the entire College programme

Meaningful Learning

Meaningful learning requires that the student see the reasons for the things they are learning. Meaningful learning connects the present experience of the student with wider situations and issues so that each new study can be integrated within the student’s emerging world and life view. The curriculum choices made need to be strategic assembling the most relevant, engaging and useful topics and experiences. Opportunity is also important for negotiation between student and teacher as to content and delivery of the curriculum. In this way the curriculum programme is owned and valued by students and invites their participation and commitment.

In order to be committed to the considerable effort required to complete schooling, students and their families need to see clear pathways to a fruitful future life beyond schooling. While beyond the scope of this report, College planning involves the development of vocational and enterprise programmes for senior students integrated with a range of locally owned and operated businesses. Education that makes sense to the student, both now and as a pathway to the future, has potential to marshal their cooperation and commitment.

Supportive and Nurturing Environment

The educational programme must support and encourage students to develop the confidence and resilience necessary to meet the considerable demands of formal study and living in community. The policies and
practice of the College need to support conflict resolution and provide a climate of empathy and affirmation between students and staff. Students need to be actively involved providing for the needs of others and enjoying the benefits of a mutually supportive College community.

The supported accommodation programme places students within a close family context with mutual responsibilities and benefits. In this environment a high standard of care results in students being well nourished, well rested and well prepared for their studies at school. House parents get to know students and their families well ensuring that the aspirations of the parents and communities are translated into life in the home. A close link is maintained between the school, house parents the student's family and community.

In this 24-hour educational setting students take on significant responsibilities as members of a family group. Cleaning, cooking, washing and shopping are all part of a total educational experience that fits them for living at the College and back in their communities. A high standard of care results in students being well nourished, well rested and well prepared for their studies at school.

3.4 Education Strategies

a. Literacy and Numeracy Instruction (forms a substratum supporting all aspects of learning in the College – see Table 1)

Education planning places literacy and numeracy at the centre of the College programme. Effective, routine methods will be employed drawing on the best research available to accelerate the acquisition of skills. Every aspect of the educational programme will draw on proven principles of ESL teaching to take advantage of opportunity for literacy and numeracy reinforcement.

A scaffolding approach to literacy is proving to be an effective tool in accelerating competency in literacy and an ability and desire to read. The teaching method employed in scaffolding involves a careful and intensive exploration of language choices, and the part language plays in building meaning, in specially selected texts. Literacy tasks stretch the students' limits as they engage with texts matched to their interest and chronological age.

Scaffolding is well suited to the integral curriculum approach proposed as it promotes a deep engagement with relevant and foundational text. This approach to literacy acquisition gives access to concepts that assist students to understand the complex issues dealt with in the curriculum themes.

The communal activities and living skills (see Table 1) are more applied in nature. However students will need to acquire competency in language and number manipulation to experience successful mastery in these areas of the college programme. Through liaison between the supported accommodation team and College teaching team the necessary language and numeracy skills to develop effective living skills will be taught in the classroom and applied in the home.

Across all programme areas, Indigenous staff and Indigenous volunteers will be part of teaching team. They will take a leading role in matters of Indigenous language, lifestyle and culture, while staff conversant with the dominant culture will take a leading role in areas of western language, lifestyle and culture.

Literacy and numeracy skills are seen to be fundamental to every part of the programme and therefore it will be an essential component of all programmes. Individual goals are set for it in each programme segment. In addition, there will be timetabled intensive training in literacy and numeracy. There will be three levels of intensity of literacy and numeracy training:

Intensive Training (50%+ of school time): for students who need to master basic skills before they can effectively participate in most mainstream studies.

Programme support: for students who have basic competencies but have difficulty in decoding and participation in mainstream classes. Accelerated literacy and numeracy skill enhancement is directly related to coping in the school and home programmes.

Reinforcement and enrichment: for students participating in levels of work commensurate with the
mainstream education levels.

b. Theme Studies

The intended strategy of an integral curriculum is to engage the student at his or her level with questions and issues that are a real and necessary part of life. The “Theme Studies” programme provides opportunities to study in a formal way issues, situations, events and ideas that are important to the student now and in the future. Through a method of “action-research” a student gains knowledge and skill in addressing real situations. This approach recognises the importance of world-view and acknowledges that such a programme will integrate traditional and western cultural views. It is in this way that students will confront the challenge of living across several cultures while maintaining acceptability of behaviour and values in both cultures.

It is therefore important that the learning location is, at times, most appropriate in one or more of the local communities. At other times it may be appropriate to locate the learning activity in a typically western setting such as a city or suburbs. Students will need to be mobile in order to gain immediate experience of events and situations that can then be the subject of ongoing reflection and study.

Themes will also feature linkages with the local community and business enterprise. Such networks are invaluable to the student’s experience of a healthy community and a working future. The College programme attempts to bridge the distinctions between school as an institution, community and business enterprise. Service programs as well as direct instruction form an integral part of these linkages and form a rich environment to stimulate learning and a healthy attitude to community and enterprise.

The thematic approach is structured to have students concentrating on “project” work. It recognises the responsibility of each student to be in control of his or her learning situation. That is, they are taught to accept responsibility, under guidance, for framing their work, planning research and activity, analysing performance and producing a product at the end of the process.

Each module is constructed to provide a set of learning experiences and develop skill outcomes in a number of key areas. The generic areas of experience and development are presented in the Table 2 matrix. The programme skill areas are informed by a range of government reports.

The outcome is expected to be that each student develops a set of competencies in the skill areas over time. Because the module gives a context for the student, materials are provided to assist a student to work at their own developmental level. Effective monitoring, assessment and recording ensure that a comprehensive student profile is built up over time.

Communal Activities
These activities require regular involvement by students as they build up skills, information and products. In the college programme these activities have a tangible outcome or product that serves the college community and others.

In the college community programme these activities vary from lifestyle hobbies to income earning activities to a career or business enterprise ventures. These activities require access to expert input and local, culturally appropriate input, to provide students with a comprehensive educational experience. The teaching methodology and recording of skill levels will include to evaluation of the end product and debriefing with work groups. The literacy and numeracy sub-stratum will be taught both informal and informal ways. Some of the more difficult areas, particularly with respect to technical knowledge, may be referred to the intensive literacy/numeracy-training segment of the college programme.

Activities will be analysed using the programme-planning matrix (See Table 2) to ensure that there is a balance in the activity that will be instructional rather than repetitive. This is important, even though these activities do not form a part of the student skills profile, they are nevertheless crucial in reinforcing the skills that may have been acquired elsewhere in the programme.

Living skills
These are skills that are directly related to living in a “family” setting in the “supported accommodation” houses. The recent report prepared by the Kardu Numida Council at Port Keats notes that many of the skills related to domestic living, even within a traditional culture are being lost. In particular health habits such as regular washing of self and clothes, cleaning teeth and cleanliness of cooking utensils are important lifestyle routines that need to become part of life’s norm. Nutrition and cooking is another area that requires continuous training and exposure so that the individual students will carry these skills forward into the future.

A model for “supported accommodation” is already well established within our Marrara Christian School programme. This programme has achieved spectacular success, not only in terms of the student’s comfort and welfare but also in training to be part of a family unit, a good neighbour and citizen and being in a state of “learning readiness”.

f. Interaction of strategies

Each of these programme segments acts together to provide a comprehensive, 24 hour a day learning programme. The student’s "core" teacher provides the necessary levels of consultation, recording and reporting needed to ensure focussed and accelerated progress toward learning outcomes. Interaction of each of these segments occurs through communal planning by teachers, teacher aides, volunteers and house-parents. The linkage key is the common substratum of literacy and numeracy that is required to successfully achieve the outcomes desired from each programme segment.

Table 1 details the three segments that are expected to be simultaneously operative in the life of a student. While tables 2 and 3 give details of the matrix used to plan activities so that there is a comprehensive coverage of the skill areas where students need to experience development and success.

Table 1 – Sample Curriculum areas and activities
Numeracy
Australian History & history of land relationship
History of Beliefs and Ethics
Civics and citizenship
Aesthetic appreciation
Science, Health & Nutrition
Information Technology
Vocational Education and Training
Enterprise Education

Traditional culture experiences

Western culture experiences

Experiences of Community

Experiences in Enterprise, Vocation and serving others
Experiences of Institutions

Table 2 – Programme Planning Matrix
Sample Curriculum Programme Planning Matrix – Applied to a Theme Studies Module
Curriculum Module: Living in a City - This module is part of a two-unit sequence that contrasts living in an urban environment with life in a remote community. In order to help students to reflect upon the structures and routines in their own situation the previous unit that focused on Living in a Community involved a ten day visit from a group of urban “main-stream” culture students to the College. The visit was the culmination of the unit and provided opportunity for College students to share their newly assembled and carefully structured knowledge of their own setting with people from the dominant culture. This unit focuses on providing Western Culture experiences and involves students preparing for a return visit to the city at the end of this term of study.
Programme Strands

- Programme Elements
- English Literacy
- Indigenous Language
- Literacy
- Numeracy
- Australian History & history of land relationship
- History of Beliefs and Ethics
- Civics and citizenship
- Aesthetic appreciation
- Science, Health & Nutrition
- Information Technology
- Vocational Education and Training
- Enterprise Education

Traditional culture experiences
The previous term students focused on interpreting their own setting and preparing to share their understandings with students from the city in both formal and informal ways.

Western culture experiences
Scaffolding relevant reading experience
Teaching some simple phrases
Mapping
Budgeting
Money
Calendar
Invasion
Colonisation Settlement

Western ideals
Responsibilities of a citizen
Built environment and natural environment

What do people use computers for?
Options for training and work in the city
Small business and big business

Experiences of Community
Keeping a journal

Aboriginal
Migrant
Australians All!

Travelling and keeping healthy
Keeping in touch with many people in many places
Being a student
Being an employee

Experiences in Enterprise, Vocation and serving others

Experience in a short term work placement

Experiences of Institutions

Looking at a museum
Table 3 – Programme Planning Matrix Sample Unit

3.5 Timing Strategy

Proposed School Year Calendar (indicative dates):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Term</th>
<th>Date Range</th>
<th>Duration</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Term 1</td>
<td>23 July to 28 September</td>
<td>10 weeks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Term 2</td>
<td>08 October to 21 December</td>
<td>11 weeks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Term 3</td>
<td>07 January to Easter</td>
<td>14 weeks</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The start of the “school year” is the middle of the year (traditionally Term 3 in the NT). There are distinct advantages in this; a mid-year start for new students will pick up students who would otherwise not have gone to any other schooling option; staff have an opportunity of getting to know students and their families in their communities; the dry season increases accessibility to all communities.

The structure of the year has been designed to take advantage of cultural and meteorological aspects of the region. A very short break is anticipated at the Christmas period. This is a time where movement around the region is restricted and young people are bound to life on the community. Hence this is seen as a good time to conduct classes.

Time needs to be provided for expeditions, hunting, cultural events and ceremony which are often conducted during the dry season. Hence the long break is planned for the onset of the dry season. Such an extended break (three months +) gives staff the necessary opportunities to travel throughout the region in order to spend time networking with parents, communities and students.

Movement to and from communities during term breaks may be a problem during the wet season. However, all communities have access to an airstrip (except during times of flood) and access to Woolaniting is all year round via the Welltree station airstrip located about five kilometres away from the college site.

The NT Department of Education has tried a similar strategy that had students in school during the height of the wet season. The system failed due to staff’s desire to have a substantial break at Christmas time. It is anticipated that the proposed calendar will form part of a conditions of service document and will be instituted from the College’s inception. The highest priorities are effective learning for students and their well-being.

3.6 Staffing Strategies:

Being founded on the principle of community management the College makes the recruitment, training and employment of local staff a high priority. There are a number of well trained and experienced teachers and teacher aides in the region who have expressed a desire to be involved in the College. The College is keen and committed to exceeding the Commonwealths IESIP targets in relation to Indigenous employment and the provision of professional development.

Staff (teaching and non-teaching) drawn from outside the region will undergo a comprehensive cross-cultural awareness course prior to the start of the school year. Priority will be given to appointing staff with proven experience and a willingness to commit to long-term contracts and learn a local language. The educational programme has a number of elements and strategies to assist the ongoing professional
development and cohesion of staff.

Teaching staff will work together in a close team collaboratively developing learning programmes. Ancillary teaching staff will be provided with encouragement and opportunity to pursue further studies. Residential staff will also form a close and supportive team in order to deliver a high quality residential and living skills programme.

All staff will be encouraged and given opportunity and support to develop close relationships and a commitment to working with Indigenous people to ensure high quality two-way learning exchanges. All staff will be given the authority within a framework of accountability so they are empowered to develop creative programmes for the benefit of students.

Support staff will complement the work of teaching and residential staff helping students to overcome physical, social and emotional problems.

Community mentors and support staff will guide career development and students with further training and employment.

Programme Delivery Strategies

The College needs to be mobile in the way it delivers its educational programmes. As a College serving a large region, mobility will enable students to explore that region, learn from their elders, demonstrate through service opportunities the skills that they have learned (e.g., building "picnic" tables in communities as part of a welding course) and maintain relationships with family and community.

Because of their isolation and the need for them to understand and become confident with mainstream culture and institutions, these students need opportunity to participate in and study the full range of experiences available to others. This will involve travel beyond the region to population centres where they can explore the operation of commerce, government and communities. Students will also need to be mobile in order to participate in basketball, netball, football, and other sporting competitions.

In order to provide students with adequate educational opportunities, some College facilities need to function as both general-purpose learning areas (GPLAs) and specialist facilities. The provision of mobile education facilities is required to provide flexibility and mobility. These units consist of sturdy trailers designed to store the necessary equipment and materials and to transform into a convenient work space once deployed on location. While located at the College the mobile units can be deployed in the undercover spaces adjacent to each of the GPLA’s and provide additional specialist facilities.

It is vital to facilitate delivery of learning programmes to locations remote from the college. Students need to gain experiences only available at certain locations and to have the opportunity to contribute services at community locations. Furthermore, flexibility in delivery is required because cultural and family reasons may require students to be away from college for an extended amount of time.

The mobile units required include:

- Mobile unit 1: Mechanics and small tool trades
- Mobile unit 2: Health & Nutrition
- Mobile unit 3: Performing Arts
- Mobile unit 4: Desktop publishing
- Mobile unit 5: Science and environmental health

4. Site, services and facilities

Leasehold and tenure

The Lease documents are as per Appendix 4. The lease provides for a 20-year initial lease with a further 20-year option. The Commonwealth and Northern Territory government agreements for funding infrastructure and building development are with the NT Christian Schools Association Inc. (NTCSA). Hence the 20+20-year option guarantees security of tenure and continuity in educational offerings.
Site and services

Site

A formal geodetic survey has yet to be completed. The shape of the site is largely determined by the availability of land that lies outside of documented drainage basins and some distance away from existing community houses.

Access

The development will be accessed from the existing, sealed, Litchfield Park Road. Road access will be separate from the community entrance to avoid extraneous noise and dust problems.

The current roads on the community are not sealed. Dust is identified as a major contributor to ill health on communities. It is therefore desirable that all access roads to the college and accommodation be sealed. For an option 1 location, it is estimated that some 1200m of roadway and associated parking areas need to be constructed in order to access all educational buildings and residential buildings.

Drainage

Both contoured surface drainage and underground culverts are required to adequately conduct water away from the proposed buildings. Preliminary design has been carried out to make underground culvert system to cope with a one in five year flood. Major flood routing has identified flow paths to a 1 in 100 year flood design regime.

Water

The site has been designed to provide adequate supply for potable water emergency fire supply, ablation and irrigation. Supply has been secured from the Number Two spring from Section 1885. This spring has a flow that is more than adequate for the school's need. Kympen Engineers have been engaged by Territory Housing to propose a supply strategy for the community, the primary school, the new college and other potential developments.

Power

An assessment and preliminary design for electrical energy provision and a distribution grid has been made for the college. The costing is on the basis of supplying energy to the college via diesel-powered generators. This will not preclude consideration for the development of a hybrid supply system that has a lower dependency on fossil fuels, rather than relying solely on diesel generators.

Staging is planned so that there will be time to enter new negotiations with the NT Power and Water Authority to establish a hybrid supply system for all the local developments. We have entered negotiations for the use of excess power from the Education Department Generator (35 KVA). This would be more than adequate for the operation of the existing NTDE primary school and the College to July 2003.

Sewerage

A preliminary design has been conducted to meet the requirements of Health Authority regulations for on-site disposal of effluent. On-site disposal has been design to the specifications of the Territory Health Services' "Code of Practice for Small On-site Sewage and Sullage treatment systems." The costs, based on this system, are as presented in the "services infra-structure" costs.

The area is able to cope with the designed system for the projected sixty students and associated staff developments. However, any expansion of the community or the college would require a better-articulated system (such as evaporative pondage) to be utilised.
Telecommunication

A preliminary data and communications network has been designed to current industry standards. This includes the networking of the educational buildings with the staff and student accommodation to facilitate remote accessing of files in and out of hours.

4.3 Enrolment projections

Throughout the region there has been enthusiastic support for a college at Woolaning. It meets the two fundamental requirements that families have expressed. Firstly, that the college is a “safe” place, and secondly, that the land is an area where traditional law holds.

There is little doubt that with a school population of sixty after three years that there will be a substantial waiting list. Indications from the two largest communities in the region are that there will be considerable pressure to expand the College intake.

Currently at Port Keats (Wadeye) there are an estimated seven hundred and fifty school aged children; of these about half are enrolled at school and about one hundred attend on a regular basis. It is estimated that at least two hundred and fifty of the young people at Wadeye are of secondary school age.

The first three cohorts for the college are to be made up of students who are currently in years five, six and seven. The total number of students who are currently ten to twelve years of age and enrolled in existing primary schools numbers some one hundred and eighty students. The total number of students in this age group in the region would be in the order of three hundred when students not currently enrolled are also considered.

The planning team are assembling a database of prospective students. Some thirty-one students have to date been interviewed and tested. (See Section 6.2 for further discussion of these prospective students and Appendix 7 for a print-out of the database.)

Impact of the College on other providers

Competition with other schools will be minimal. Access to secondary education for students in this region is limited to, correspondence courses that are offered through local primary schools, boarding at one of the boarding schools (NT & interstate) or staying with relatives in a suburban area.

Through consultations in the region the best estimates of students currently utilising these options is well below one hundred out of an estimated five hundred students of secondary school age in the region. Some one hundred and fifty students (who are fourteen years old and over) were enrolled at local primary schools. Attendance is at best a quarter of that number. Hence there is likely to be very little competition with other providers. With the proposed school year commencing in July 2002, any students who may go to school at a boarding school would already be attending that school.

There is no doubt that many students currently have no access to secondary schooling and that families desire to enrol their children in the College at Woolaning.

5. Partnerships and Consultations

The Woolaning Homeland Christian College represents a comprehensive solution to the need for secondary schooling in the Finniss – Cox/Daly region. The importance of schooling provision being integrated with health, training, employment and enterprise cannot be over-emphasised and the planning team has made strenuous efforts to secure cross-agency cooperation from a range of government departments and other agencies for the project (see Appendix 11 - Consultations).

Woolaning Community Incorporated and the Northern Territory Christian Schools Association.
Members of the Woolaning Community have a long-standing association with the NTCSA. From the early 1980’s, students from Woolaning attended Marrara Christian School. Joan Growden, now President of the Woolaning Community Inc., worked as an assistant teacher at Marrara’s Indigenous Learning Centre (ILC) between 1997 and 1999 before returning to live at Woolaning in 2000. As a result of this association and the early success of Marrara’s ILC and supported accommodation programme, the Woolaning community approached the NTCSA in early 2000 with a view to working together to develop plans for a community-managed College to serve families and communities in the Finniss-Cox/Daly region. Knowing that NTCSA schools were founded on the principle of community management the Woolaning community could see no reason why Indigenous families in remote areas should not have the same opportunity to establish and manage their local school as other families do. From the beginning Woolaning Community insisted that the College be Christian in both name and character.

The earlier discussion of strategic partnerships (Section 2.6) noted that the NTCSA/Woolaning partnership has brought together the aspirations and energies of local people with an experienced education provider that operates on the principle of community control. The partnership brings together a complementary set of strengths and limitations. People of the Woolaning Community contribute to the partnership their passion to see the situation change for the better, their knowledge of the region and its people and, their unique set of experiences and aspirations that can shape an effective educational programme for their children. The NTCSA contributes experience in advocacy, governance support, resources for financial planning and accountability and educational programme support.

During the planning phase a relatively small team made up of people from the Woolaning Community and the NTCSA has been active. The team has undertaken extensive and ongoing consultation with families and councils throughout the region. The membership of the College Council is presently being expanded to involve representatives of all communities in the region. All communities have indicated their support for the College in writing (see Appendix 5) and indicated their willingness to nominate a representative to the College Council. The College is to be managed by a regional council representative of the families and communities in the region as a member school of the NTCSA.

The Commonwealth Department of Education, Training and Youth Affairs (DETYA) is the key partner and major source of funds for establishing and maintaining independent schools. The Commonwealth’s National Goals for Schooling in the Twentieth Century and National Indigenous Education Literacy and Numeracy Strategy (NIELNS), form the foundation for College planning. A range of DETYA reports relevant to Indigenous students and their education have informed the goals and strategies developed by the planning team.

Consultations have taken place between the planning group and a range of personnel within DETYA including Greg Gibbs, Manager, NT Office, Peter Buckskin, Assistant Secretary, Indigenous Education; Tony Greer, Secretary, Schools and with the Minister, Dr David Kemp. These regular consultations have provided valuable feedback and advice to ongoing planning for the College.

This project has been funded by the Commonwealth through the National Indigenous Education Literacy and Numeracy Strategy (NIELNS). The College planning group appreciates the partnership with DETYA and its officers and is grateful for the significant and timely support provided at critical stages in the project.

5.3 The Northern Territory Department of Education

The Northern Territory Department of Education (NTDE) Indigenous Education Strategic Plan and the Department’s Independent Report on Indigenous Education, Learning Lessons have been foundational to the work of the planning group. The author of Learning Lessons, Bob Collins, has given enthusiastic support and valuable advice to the planning team from the project’s inception.

Consultations with the NTDE have been frequent and ongoing. As participants in the NT NIELNS Steering Committee members of the NTCSA planning group together with representatives of NTDE, the
Catholic Education Office (CE0) and The Association of Independent Schools (AIS) established priorities for addressing the needs of Indigenous students for the coming quadrennium. As an outcome of this collaboration between all stakeholders in the Territory the Woolaning College project, to develop business plan for a regional residential College, was made a priority and recommended for funding under NIELNS.

Consultations have taken place with Peter Plummer, Secretary, NTDE, Ken Simpson, Manager, Corporate Affairs, Ken Davies, Manager of Indigenous Education (2000) and the recently appointed (2001) Manager, Karmn Dunn, and a wide range of other Department officers.

Registration for the Woolaning College was applied for on 27th September 2000. To date several meetings have been conducted with the CEO of the NTDE and other officers of the Department. Early advice from NTDE officers was that the application (see Appendix 3) was to be referred to Cabinet in March and from there to the June 2001 Budget process. As yet no advice has been received and no outcome has been communicated.

Other Government Departments

The planning team has met with a range of government departments to secure cross-agency support for the College and related developments. A meeting was held in Canberra on 24th of May involving some seven Commonwealth Departments, ATSIC and Aboriginal Hostels to explore cross-agency cooperation for the development of schooling, training, employment and enterprise for Woolaning Community and the wider region. Consultations to date are outlined below:

Department of Transport and Regional Services (DOTRS)

A successful application was made to the Regional Solutions programme for funding to develop a community plan for Woolaning. This project is due for completion in December 2001. As an integral part of the project a local team is undertaking a Certificate course in Community Development jointly developed by the NTCSA and the Northern Territory University (NTU). The outcome of the project will be a comprehensive plan that situates the College within a range of other enterprise, employment and training initiatives.

Ongoing consultations have involved Anni Chilton from the Regional Solutions programme and Vicki Dickman from More Accessible Government (MAG). Further submissions have been developed under Regional Solutions for establishing networks in the region and for infrastructure funds to build Multi-function Community Centre at Woolaning.

Department of Health and Aged Care

Planning team members have met with Dr Lisa Studdert from the office of the Minister to explore Commonwealth support for an integrated provision of education and health services at Woolaning. The meeting confirmed the Minister and Department's support for the notion of integrated service delivery but to date no firm undertakings have been forthcoming.

Territory Health Service (THS)

Liaison with David Ashbridge, Manager of Top End Health Services indicated strong support for an integration of health and educational services at Woolaning College. Indication was given that a letter would be forthcoming outlining the support that could be expected from Territory Health. Discussions are continuing between the Woolaning Community and the THS with the aim of securing an environmental health worker position for the Woolaning Community.

Department of Defence

Representations were made to the Minister Peter Reith in regard to the joint ATSIC/Defence Infrastructure programme and the Department was involved in cross-agency consultations. Indications to date are that the programme is fully committed for the next three years but that there may be value in ongoing consultations
about the processes developed for remote community infrastructure development within this programme.

Department of Aboriginal Affairs

The planning group has met on two occasions with the Minister, Phillip Ruddock who has given timely advice and expressed strong support for the College. On 9 June 2001 the Woolanling community as a whole met with the Minister at Woolanling and shared with him and his advisers the planning toward the College. The Minister has expressed a willingness to assist with the development of cross-agency support for the project.

Department of Employment, Workplace Relations and Small Business

Meetings with the Minister’s office in Canberra and with Gail Delacruz at the Department’s Territory office have focussed on the provision of support for small business enterprise development in the region and the role of the various employment support programmes in securing training and employment for local people. A submission has been for a small business development officer as part of the Department’s Indigenous Small Business Fund programme. The Department is facilitating consultations are being undertaken with Street Ryan researchers who have been engaged to research enterprise opportunities in the Wadeye region.

Department of Family and Community Services

Meetings have been held with Dr John Nation at the Minister’s office and subsequently the Department was represented at the recent cross-agency meeting in Canberra. A submission is being developed with the assistance of Helen Bulis from the Department’s Territory office for funding a family support officer to develop networks of support for parents and parenting education throughout the region.

Other Agencies

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission (ATSIC)

Consultations with Geoff Richardson and Elke Purnell in the ATSIC National Office and Commissioner Kim Hill in the Territory Office have been valuable in developing policy and strategies in relation to the project. Discussions have explored the role of ATSIC in the development of employment programmes and in meeting the need for additional housing in the community. Commissioner Hill has undertaken to write a letter of support for the College.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commercial Development Corporation (ATSICDC)

Planning group members met with Ron Moroney, General Manager of ATSICDC in July 2000 and discussed the role that the Corporation might play in stimulating enterprise and employment in the region. Vincent Noviello from the ATSICDC Canberra office then visited with the planning group at Woolanling and since that time negotiations have been ongoing between ATSICDC and the Woolanling Community in regard to enterprise developments. The most recent consultations involved the Minister and two Board members of the ATSICDC at Woolanling on 9 June 2001.

Aboriginal Development Corporation

The Corporation has provided invaluable advice to the planning team in relation to the myriad of government agencies and programmes that relate to planning for the College. John Gardner has liaised with the members of the team on a number of occasions and provided background information and introductions to a range of agencies and officers.

d. Northern Territory University and Batchelor College

Early consultation has been undertaken in relation to the delivery of vocational courses and adult training
through the College. A range of programmes from both NTU and Batchelor College are presently being delivered to remote area students attending Marrara Christian School. This experience is informing future provision of courses through the College to the region. Greg Williams, Associate Dean of the Faculty of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies (FATSIS) has participated as a member of the NTCSA Reference Group and provides ongoing advice to the planning team.

e. Fraynework Media

Fraynework Media have developed a number of award winning multi-media curriculum resources in conjunction with Indigenous communities (The award-winning Lore of the Land CD Rom was launched by Aboriginal Ambassador Dr Evelyn Scott in 2000). Members of the planning team are developing a submission in conjunction with Adele Howard, the Director of Fraynework Media, to produce a comprehensive learning package for the Finniss-Cox/Daly region. This multi-media resource will build on research undertaken by Ray Petherick into the cultural history of the region and utilise contemporary interviews and archival material. This resource will form an excellent resource for two-way education at the College. The material would provide quality input for students in other schools also.

f. Aboriginal Hostels Limited (AHL)

Aboriginal Hostels have been approached in regard to meeting the cost of an anticipated recurrent deficit in the operation of the Supported Accommodation programme at the College. Meetings with both the National and Territory offices have indicated that such a submission to the AHL would be within their funding guidelines and the application would be considered on its merit.

g. Tangentyere Council, Alice Springs

Mike Bowden, Director of Community Development at Tangentyere has provided valuable advice to the planning team on a number of occasions and requested the team’s assistance in advising a group planning a community managed secondary school for Alice Springs.

h. Shalom College, Townsville

A close relationship has been maintained with the Council and staff of Shalom College, a community managed regional College established by the Uniting Church Aboriginal Congress in Queensland. The planning team is planning to visit the College in late July 2001.

i. Nganatjata College

The Nganatjata College at Yulara in Central Australia is a recently established community-managed residential College. The planning team travelled to Nganatjata College and consulted with the current principal, Di Shanahan and representatives of the College Council. The Council shared with the planning team the aspirations of the communities and the way the College programme was meeting the special needs of the students there.

The planning team also met with John Amadio, Nganatjata’s founding principal, Paul Ashe, the immediate past manager and Brendan Menev the College architect. From this meeting a wealth of information was shared that has informed the planning for the College at Woolaning.

5.6 NTCSA Reference Group

The progress of this project and all other aspects of the NTCSA’s Indigenous education programme has been informed by a Reference Group comprising community representatives, key advisors with long experience with Indigenous education and NTDE and DETYA representatives. In this way regular reports have been made available to all Reference Group members and the work of the planning team has benefited from their critical input.
6. Feasibility appraisal

Community support

Community support for a regional residential College has been overwhelming. Time and again the planning team were told that education is the key to renewal of community life. There is no lack of educational vision or commitment to schooling among the community leaders and the parents we interviewed. Indeed, education of the communities' young people is seen as pre-requisite to any reversal of fortune for the region.

The fundamental breakdown of traditional life and the lack of opportunity to engage with mainstream educational and employment opportunities leaves young people "in limbo" with no options for a productive future. There is a glaring gap in secondary educational provision for the region and this affects the delivery of primary education as well. Parents have lost confidence in a system that has no pathways to a fruitful life.

Control over the key areas that affect peoples' lives is a vital pre-requisite to positive developments in the life of any community. An overwhelming pace of change, combined with a profound lack of control has reduced the capacity of communities to take charge of their own affairs. This College gives opportunity for community voice and action in relation to education in the region and builds the capacity of the region to take charge of its own affairs.

The original request for NTCSA to be involved in partnership with communities came as a result of a small number of people realising that there were options available to parents in the education of their children. The assumption among parents generally to date had been that education is delivered in a particular manner and that there was only a minor role for a local community and a local vision. It is now becoming clear to parents in the region that there is a possibility for them to take responsibility for the shape and quality of education for their children.

All communities in the region have given written support for the College and have indicated a desire to be involved in the ongoing planning and operation of the College through the College Council. Parents from every community have expressed a desire to enrol their children. Every community has expressed support for the location of the College at Woolaning, confirming the special status and significance of the Litchfield Park area to people throughout the region. Woolaning is also seen as a "safe" place where their children can learn and grow unfettered by the negative influences that may exist in communities or in urban areas.

Student Enrolments

To date thirty prospective students and their families have been interviewed, photographed and tested for literacy (See Appendix 7 for a data base report of these students). Community leaders are keen that the initial cohort of students establishes a positive educational climate and have carefully guided the planning team in assembling potential enrolments. A further 46 intentions to enrol have been received in writing (listed in Appendix 7).

Naiuyu (Daly River) Council has indicated that they would send at least thirty students when the college is operational. Wadeye (Port Keats), although not giving a set number of students, acknowledge that this college will be an important link in developing educational opportunities for the region.

Student participation and attendance

A number of factors give the planning team confidence that student participation in the College will be high. These include:

The experience of supported accommodation to date at Marrara Christian School in Darwin. This program places students in large houses in Darwin's northern suburbs with full-time house parents. Retention and attendance have attained exceptional levels and there is every confidence that supported accommodation at
Woolaning would be similarly effective.
The response to date from communities and parents in the region. Even in these early planning stages the College is being strongly supported by parents and communities.
The educational programmes will enthuse students, being comprehensive and extending beyond the school day to include tuition, sport, hobbies and social life.
The educational programmes will be integrated with training, enterprise and employment so that students can readily recognise opportunities for a meaningful life beyond secondary schooling.
The College will enjoy the confidence of families and communities as they participate in shaping College policy and programmes.
The special bond between communities and the College as representatives direct the College's future will maintain commitment to the College.
The close liaison between the school, house parents, students and families will build commitment to complete secondary schooling.

The college affirms the Commonwealth's commitment to high targets in relation to participation and attendance. The College represents a comprehensive response to lack of educational access that exists at present.

Financial performance

The College recurrent budget is based on the experience of the NTCSA in operating schools in remote regions and on the special needs of the students that are to be enrolled in the College.

On the expenditure side account has been taken of:

the special assistance needed to produce accelerated literacy and numeracy goals;
the specific programs required to engage the students in "hands-on" practical learning;
the need for the College programs to be highly mobile to link students with traditional and dominant culture experiences and to deliver courses remote from the College campus;
the need to integrate closely the provision of health care to promptly and effectively address those health conditions that make progress in learning difficult;
the importance of involving students in out of school activity that builds their commitment to school and their ability to learn;
the need for careful induction and training of teachers who come from outside the region;
the training that local people will require to fill teacher aide, teaching and other positions in the College;
ongoing levels of support with advocacy, financial accountability and education support through the NTCSA;
the costs of accommodation and travel for the staff employed from outside the community and;
the special needs of students in supported accommodation.

On the income side account has been taken of:

resources available though the Commonwealth recurrent funding programmes;
resources available through the Territory recurrent funding programs;
resources available through the various Indigenous Education Strategic Initiatives Programmes;
resources available through ABSTUDY funding of school fees for eligible students and;
additional resources ("Remote Community Managed Education funding") required for delivery of education for students in a remote area.

Remote Community Managed Education (RCME) funding represents those funds required over and above the costs of educating Indigenous students in an urban context. RCME funding is vital to the survival and development of schooling that grows out of a community's commitment and vision and delivers the dramatically improved educational outcomes needed by these students and required by the Commonwealth.

The planning team has not been able to source accurate figures for the cost of delivering education to remote areas by NTDE. Any costing that took account of all relevant costs including recruitment, training,
staff travel/accommodation and administration overheads, and also took account of the existing outcomes in terms of participation and attendance would indicate a very high per capita cost for the delivery of primary education in remote communities at present.

7. Operational business plan

7.1 Establishment costs
Site works and Services

Estimated

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Construction</th>
<th>Expenditure</th>
<th>Comments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

Roads & Drainage
$ 387,075

Sewerage
$ 171,700

Water
$ 309,250
Includes Supply from Woolaning Spring

Irrigation & Landscaping
$ 105,000

Electrical Generation & Distribution
$ 180,000

Communication
$ 80,000

Sporting Facilities & Fence
$ 237,800

Contingency & Ins
$ 30,500

Sub-Total
$ 1,501,000
Consultancy [12.5%]
$ 187,000

Escalation
$ -

Total
$ 1,688,000

GST
$ 168,800

Total
$ 1,856,000

Education Facility

Estimated

Construction
Expenditure
Comments

Education Complex
$ 1,031,805

Contingency & Ins
$ 12,000

Sub-Total
$ 1,043,805
Consultancy [12.5%]
$ 130,476

Escalation
0%

Total
$ 1,174,281

GST
$117,428

Total
$ 1,291,709

Student Accommodation Housing

Estimated

Construction
Expenditure
Comments

Houses
$ 2,208,984
Six houses - Accommodation for 60 students

Contingency & Ins
$ 25,000

Sub-Total
$ 2,233,984
Consultancy [12.5%]
$ 279,248

Escalation
0%

Total
$ 2,513,232

GST
$251,323

Total
$ 2,764,555

Staff Accommodation

Estimated

Construction
Expenditure
Comments

Houses
$ 840,000
Eight Units for at least 10 staff &

Contingency & Ins
$ 15,000
visitor accommodation

Sub-Total
$ 855,000

Consultancy [12.5%]
$ 106,875

Escalation
0%

Total
$ 961,875

GST
$96,188

Total
$ 1,058,063

Mobile education units

Purpose: To provide specialist education facilities in a flexible way – at Woolaning and in remote locations

Mechanics & small tools   $25,000
Nutrition and Health      $33,000
Desktop publishing        $62,500
Science & Environment     $30,000
Performing Arts           $39,100

Total Mobile units        $189,600
                          GST   $18,960
                          Total $208,560

Vehicles:

Purpose: To serve accommodation houses and travel to and from communities. Vehicles will form a pool for use as: Accommodation houses family vehicles; student travel to and from home communities; liaison visits to communities; class excursions; remote area based learning; pick-up and delivery of supplies to the college and; landscaping and maintenance within the College Campus.

Vehicle mix:
Commuter buses (14 seats)
Coaster Bus (22 seats)
4x4 Transport (20 students)
Troop-carriers
4x4 Tray truck

2 off  $44,520 (RRP)  $89,040  Bridge Toyota
1 off  $109,710 (RRP)  $109,710  Bridge Toyota
1 off  $240,000 (-RRP) $240,000  Greg Keene (Chrysler)
2 off  $54,350 (RRP)  $108,700  Bridge Toyota
1 off  $70,000 (?)     $70,000  Isuzu GM Aust.
Tractor with forks                        1 off  $100,000 (−RRP)$100,000  Komatsu Darwin

Total                                   $717,450

Workers camp

The intention to train and employ a team of workers from the region in the construction of the College requires that adequate accommodation is provided to this workforce. A workers camp is required to house the construction team of tradesmen, trainers and trainees for the three-year projected building span. The cost of this camp is estimated to be $300,000 (+$30,000 GST). A proportion of the expense can be recovered by a sale of the assets at the completion of the project.

Workers Camp $300,000

Total $330,000

Summary of Capital Works and Items

Site works and Services $1,688,000

Education, Staff & Student Accommodation
Buildings $4,549,388

Mobile Education Units $189,600

Vehicles & Machinery $717,450

Workers’ Camp $300,000

Total $7,544,438

Grand Total $8,298,882

Capital draw down for the proposed Establishment Process
The development is to be constructed over a three-year period. The various phases are as per the plan 0007/1888 A2, briefly they are as follows:

October 2001 to 30 June 2002 (Stage 1)
All site works and services
2 student accommodation houses
1 staff duplex
Education Admin Centre & Ablution/clinic
Mobile Education units - Mechanics & Nutrition
Vehicles 1/Commuter bus +1/Troop-carrier +1/4x4 Truck +1 Tractor

July 2002 to 30 June 2003 (Stage 2)
2 student accommodation houses
1 staff duplex
Education – four GPLA’s & Associated work
Mobile Education units – Science & Performing Arts
Vehicles - 1/4x4 bus +1/ Commuter bus

July 2003 to 30 June 2004 (Stage 3)
2 student accommodation houses
2 staff duplex
Mobile Education units – Information Technology
Vehicles - 1/Coaster bus + 1/Troopcarrier

Costs Summary

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<th>Start Date</th>
<th>Finish Date</th>
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<tbody>
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<tr>
<td>Total Project</td>
<td>1-Jul-02</td>
<td>30-Jun-03</td>
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Site works & Services
$1,688,000

$1,688,000
Education Buildings
$469,712
$704,569

$1,174,281

Student Accommodation
$837,744
$837,744
$837,744
$837,744
$2,513,232

Staff Accommodation
$240,469
$240,469
$480,938
$961,875

Mobile Education Units
$58,000
$69,100
$62,500
$189,600
Vehicles
$268,870
$284,520
$164,060
$717,450

Workers camp
$300,000

$300,000

Total
$3,862,795
$2,136,401
$1,545,242
$7,544,438
Table 7 – Summary of staged costs

7.2 Recurrent costs

For a detailed statement of income and proposed expenditure refer to Appendix 9. The notes below are explanations for variations from what would normally be considered as an acceptable budget for an urban school:

Administration and teaching staff and teaching resources

Levels of staffing and resources are similar to those in normal urban schools and can therefore be expected to be taken out of normal per capita recurrent funding for schools.

Ancillary staff

Ancillary teaching staff are generally made available through Commonwealth targeted programmes or funding such as IESIP. Other funds, such as Abstudy provide for the employment of administrative staff to complete tasks in relation to the supported accommodation programme.

Health and Counseling Staff

Because of the nature of the environmental & personal situations of the targeted students additional staff dedicated to health services and health promotion are required. Experience at Marrara Christian School is that a nurse is an essential part of the education team. There is a need to address medical problems comprehensively through screening, treatment and prevention. Students come with a multiplicity of problems such as hearing loss, infections, STD’s and suffering from the effects of substance abuse. A recent survey of 180 school age children at Port Keats found 85% had hearing impairment of a level that would affect their learning. A registered nurse is also important in maintaining contact and confidentiality between community based clinics and the school – a nurse is often able to access information more easily than a non-medically qualified person.

In addition, there is a great need for a counselor to assist students and their families in overcoming the effects of substance abuse and social dislocation due to family breakdown and psychological/physical abuse. To complement the counseling role, skilled “drug proofing” education to assist students in dealing with the influences that are prevalent on some communities is required.
d. Community Liaison

Consistent with community and parental input to the educational process, liaison with parents and communities on a regular basis is essential. Building the bridges and networks required to effect adequate input and support for students who are away from home for a substantial period of time. Suitable staffing needs to be available to build the links and facilitate communication between college staff, students, enterprises, parents and communities.

e. Career Development

Networking students with suitable experiences of work and industry based mentors will be a significant aspect to the college’s programmes. As noted earlier, presenting students with suitable models for a fulfilling working life is essential to bringing meaning to general education. It is an area that is normally funded from special programmes for senior students. We are suggesting that the notion of work as a tangible outcome from schooling is equally important to students in earlier years. An adequately funded program for students in Years 8, 9 & 10 (middle school) is vital for the College at Woolaning.

f. Mobility and Flexible Delivery of Specialist Programmes

There are costs associated with the mobility of the learning environment. It is vital that the school programme is flexible and able to deliver educational outcomes on campus and when remote from the College. In addition to being able to cater for students who may need to be absent for cultural and personal reasons, it is also desirable that communities observe education occurring as a concrete activity. Furthermore, the mobility of the educative process also captures the element of service to the communities – a desirable model to engender the meaning of working in and serving the community.

By locating specialised equipment in a mobile facility (purpose-built trailers) equipment can be available to classes using the GPLA’s at Woolaning (trailers can be situated under shade areas adjacent to classrooms) and be made available for community-based educational programmes.

Another aspect to the programme is engagement with non-Indigenous students. This will at times require college students to travel to urban areas, interstate locations and possibly overseas to effect this aspect of the programme.

g. Supported Accommodation

The model for supported accommodation is well established at Marrara Christian School in Darwin. Abstudy payments, the NT’s Isolated Student education Allowance (ISEA) and a modest annual contribution from Aboriginal Hostels Limited are adequate to provide for the accommodation so long as there are no annual payments required for capital works such as the initial building of the houses and the provision of transportation (See Appendix 10 for Recurrent Budget – Student Accommodation).

Budget Summary:
The recurrent budget, excluding the cost of any capital repayments for buildings and costs associated with the accommodation of staff, indicates a shortfall in the order of $5000 per student beyond what would normally be available for an independent school for the given region.

Operating Budget

No Interest or Capital repayments included
Income

NT Per Capita
111,720

Commonwealth Per Capita
278,160

Block Grant Authority
-

IESEP
180,000

Abstudy (Fees)
180,000

Interest Subsidies
-

Capital Subsidies
-

Remote Community Managed Education funding
282,000
* Additional funding required

Total Income
1,031,880

Expenditure

Staffing Costs
Administration
38,600

Teachers
246,400

Aides
115,800

ESL support
57,500

Visiting Teacher
28,700

Nurse
60,700

Counselor
24,800

Drug Proofing Teacher
28,700

Community Liaison
44,100

Enterprise & Career Educator
28,700

Driver/Maintenance
38,600

Total Staffing Costs
712,400

- Teaching Costs
Classroom Materials  
15,000

Library  
3,000

Music  
9,000

Sport  
9,600

Magazine  
1,200

Principal's Fund  
3,000

Remote Area Education & Excursions (Mobility)  
45,000

Total Teaching Expenses  
85,800

Admin Expenses

NTCSA administration support  
19,400

NTCSA RCME support  
19,400

Interest - Bank Overdraft  
-

Interest - Loans
Interest - Leases

Loan Charges

Bank Charges
900

Recruitment
6,000

Photocopying and Stationery
2,400

Postage
600

Telephone
3,600

Audit and Legal fees

Advertising
1,200

Computer Expenses
4,200

Travel
3,000

First Aid
1,200

Freight
3,000

Other Admin Expenses
1,500

Subscriptions
  2,400

Insurance
  19,200

Staff Training
  5,400

Bad Debt Expense
  -

Depreciation Expense
  150,000

Total Administration
  243,400

Facilities and Buildings

Maintenance - Buildings
  3,000

Maintenance - Equipment
  1,500

Maintenance - Grounds
  3,000

Electricity
  24,000

Water & Sewerage
  -

Vehicle Operating Lease Payments
Vehicle Repairs, Maint & Rego
6,000

Fuel & Oil
9,000

Operating Leases - Equipment
6,000

Cleaning Expenses
9,000

Waste Disposal
2,400

Rates
1,200

Total Facilities
65,100

Total Recurrent Expenditure
1,106,700

Operating Deficit
- 74,820

Capital

Income
Operating Deficit B/F
- 74,820

Add back depreciation
150,000

Cash funds available for capital
75,180

Expenditure

Loan Payments

Furniture and Equipment
18,800

Total Expenditure
18,800

Cash available after Capital
56,380

Critical Issues

The College Site

Woolaning Community Inc. has identified and set aside a block of some 11 hectares for the establishment of the school and the associated supported accommodation. A lease agreement has been finalised between Woolaning Community Inc. and the NTCSA for a twenty-year term with an option for a further twenty. The lease agreement is between Woolaning Community Inc as owners of the land (freehold title) and the NTCSA.

All power, sewage and water supply required for the College has been costed in detail. Access to water supply has been negotiated with Ray Petherick, owner of the adjacent land. Currently Kympen Engineers are preparing a supply strategy for the Woolaning Community, school and other users including the College.

Legal and survey fees are included in the project acquittal.

Capital requirements

Costing of all site works has been completed. Architectural plans have been finalised and all construction costs have been accurately costed. Cor Koole CP Eng MIEAust has overseen all capital aspects of the business plan. Planning for all capital aspects of the College have taken account of the College goals, the specific needs of the students, educational planning undertaken by the planning team and a wealth of research that identifies essential elements in the delivery of education to Indigenous students from remote communities.

Capital costs of non-government schooling in the Territory would routinely be met from three sources:
Block Grant Authority (BGA)
NT Government Capital and Interest Subsidy Grants
Private borrowings

However the planning group is convinced that if the College were to pursue applications through these channels the project would be delayed for some years. This report indicates an establishment cost well in excess of the capacity of the BGA. The NT Capital Assistance Scheme has recently undergone review. For the duration of this review funding previously approved was withheld and it has been difficult to ascertain what level of resources that may be available through this scheme in the future.

In the interest of the early establishment of this important pilot project, the overwhelming need for secondary education provision in the region, and the high level of support from parents and communities it is proposed the Commonwealth fund the full capital costs of the College.

Recurrent Costs

The cost of providing quality education to needy students in a remote location is significantly higher than the present recurrent funding arrangements anticipate. The planning team is convinced that the College needs to be an appropriately resourced or it will fail to achieve the high education targets desired by the families and communities of the region and required by the Commonwealth.

This report makes a comprehensive and compelling case for each of the additional elements required (Remote Community Managed Education – RCME costs). Without an effective provision of secondary education the nation will face the high social costs of crime, incarceration, welfare and poor health. More importantly Australia will have failed another generation of Indigenous people and lost an opportunity to turn around the declining situation of families and communities in this important region.

College registration

The NTCSA has successfully operated schools in the Territory for over twenty years and has recent experience of the process and requirements that have applied to the registration of independent schools. The most recent registration was granted to establish the Nhulunbuy Christian School in 1999 and this school has subsequently exceeded enrolment targets and operates very successfully.

An application was submitted for the Woolanng College in September 2000 using the same format as Nhulunbuy's application following advice from the NTDE that, while a review of registration processes may be undertaken, there was no alternative process in place.

On the 18th of October 2000 we met with the NTDE Manager of Corporate Affairs, following advice from the Department CEO. At that meeting the Manager indicated that, because the students being enrolled in the College would otherwise not be enrolled in any school and because the registration process was to be reviewed, registration of the College would need to be considered by Cabinet in March 2001 and proceed to the budget process in June 2001. Ongoing requests and meetings with Department officers at all levels have produced no indication of the progress of the application.

Without registration the College cannot proceed. The NTCSA continues to make representations and suggests that the Commonwealth also seek advice from the NTDE in regard to the registration application.

8.5 College enrolments

The key to the success of the College is its ability to enrol, retain and successfully graduate students. The planning team's research and consultations indicate that there is a great number of students ready and willing to enrol. The unique and engaging educational programme is specifically designed to enthuse students and build their commitment to completing their education. Linkages through training and enterprise mean that students will find meaningful work and a fulfilling life beyond school.
Project management will be undertaken by NTCSA staff to ensure that local employment targets are given the highest priority throughout. Work team members will be offered a three year training and employment package which will lead to trade qualifications.

A vital part of this training/employment package is the provision of a worker’s camp without which the team would have nowhere to live. The camp is planned to be located on Community land adjacent to the College and could be readily incorporated into a future caravan park facility.

8.8 Timetable for College Establishment

The planning group has projected a July 2002 start for the College. There are already 14 student enrolment applications to start from this date and indications of many more applications. Communities and families in the region have waited a long time for secondary education to be provided and already successive cohorts of young people have lost the basic opportunities in life available to others. The outcome is evident in the crime and dysfunction caused by these young people on communities.

The planning team proposes the following timetable for the establishment of the College:

3 July 2001 Submission of project report to the Commonwealth
3 August 2001 Meeting with DETYA national office to address any outstanding issues
17 August 2001 In principle agreement to establish the College
14 September Contract agreed and signed
12 October Advance of initial capital funds
19 October Site works commence
21 December Site works complete
January 2002 Stage 1 construction commences
June 2002 Stage 1 completed
25 July 2002 College year commences

Indian and Northern Affairs website – HYPERLINK "http://www.ainc"
http://www.ainc
-inac.gc.ca
Office of Indian Education Programs website – http://www.oiep.bia.edu/
Adelaide Declaration on National Goals for Schooling in The Twenty-First Century, MCEETYA 1999
Positive Self-Identity for Indigenous Students and its Relationship to School Outcomes, Queensland University of Technology, July 2000
Better Practice in School Attendance – Improving the School Attendance of Indigenous Students, Monash University, July 2000
Collins, R., Learning Lessons, Northern Territory Department of Education, 1999

Baumann, Miriam-Rose, Paper prepared for the Aboriginal Economic Development Focus Group, September 2000


Boston, Ken, Conference Address - Indigenous Education Strategic Initiatives Program Conference, Brighton Le Sands, November 2000

What has worked (and will again), IESIP SRP, ACSA & National Curriculum Services, 2000.


Current investigation conducted by Kympen P/L Engineers.


Kemp, David, Educational Equality for Indigenous Australians: Unfinished Business, Not Special Treatment!, Opening address at the IESIP providers conference, Sydney, November, 2000


NT government requirements are 1000 hrs per year (about 40 weeks). This compares to about 35 weeks at the proposed college. It should however be noted that the total number of hours of instruction is planned to be 30 hrs per week, thereby still satisfying the NT requirements.


See Appendix 5 Year 2000 Enrolments in regional schools by age (courtesy of NTDE statistics)

Refer to Appendix 8 “Capital Works Report for greater detail”

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Sample Activities

Horticulture and plant nursery
Hunting and fishing
Mechanical shop operations
Horse handling
Tour operations
Bakery
Food Cooperative
Art, Literature and Culture development
Conservation and quarantine
Music – bands and instrumental
Childcare
Cross-cultural pen pals.
Competitive sports

Substratum of Literacy and Numeracy:
English and Indigenous

Sample Modules
Living in a remote community
Living in a city
Me and my family, clan, people and nation
Work in the community
Weeds and other environmental pests
Music and performance
Food, sex and health
The elderly and their needs
How schools, colleges and universities work
Social welfare

Communal Activities

Theme Studies

Woolaning

Living Skills

Programme Elements
Clothing: attire, care, cleaning
Nutrition
Cooking
Cleaning
Household routines
Living together
Maintenance
Domestic organization
Relationships
Homework

Ray Petherick discusses lease arrangements with Minister Phillip Ruddock

Woolaning Community meeting

Woolaning

Planning team member
Claude Narjic

Woolaning

Woolaning Community Land

Marrara Christian School ILC Students