



THE VOICE FOR NT PUBLIC EDUCATION

ANNUAL REPORT

2024-25

**Northern
Territory
Council of
Government
School
Organisations
Inc.**



ACKNOWLEDGMENT

The Northern Territory Council of Government School Organisations pays respect to First Nations people and Traditional Custodians, recognising their deep connection to land, waters, and sky. We acknowledge elders and communities as first educators - of culture, language, and knowledge - and recognise the strength and value this learning holds for young people.

In 2024-25, NTCOGSO received operational funding of \$353,727 from the Northern Territory Government to support our role as the peak parent body. This report identifies that funding component and demonstrates delivery against the agreement's performance measures.

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NT CONTEXT

**ALMOST
32,500
STUDENTS
IN 153
NORTHERN
TERRITORY
GOVERNMENT
SCHOOLS.**





43.3%

**of students in
NT government
schools are
indigenous,
compared to
6.6% nationally**

70.6%

**of NT government
schools are in
remote or
very remote
locations**

40.4%

**of all NT
government
students are in
remote or very
remote locations,
compared to
2.3% nationally**

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



Ruth Mirams
President

I am pleased to present the Annual Report of the Northern Territory Council of Government School Organisations (NTCOGSO) for the year ending 30 June 2025.

This report underscores our commitment to transparency and accountability to you, our members, and to our funders as required by our Operational Base Funding Agreement.

For over five decades, NTCOGSO has been a strong advocate for families, students, and school communities across the Northern Territory. This report highlights our achievements and our dedication to ensuring that every student and family thrive through access to quality education.

At our Annual General Meeting and Full Council in November 2024, I was honoured to be elected President, with Wayne Green as Vice President. We are still on the look out for a Treasurer, so please get in touch if you are interested!

A strong voice for what matters to you

We are pleased this year that our advocacy efforts over a number of years have been successful and achieved progress in areas such as school counsellors.

This year, we have focused on budgets and cost shifting, with concerning trends around what schools are now expected to pay for out of their budget. We urge you to keep an eye on your budget and any cost shifting, and keep us informed so that we can continue to support you and advocate at the highest levels around these issues.

Diligently managing our finances

The 2024-25 Special Purpose Financial Reports confirm that our financial statements accurately reflect our affairs, and we continue to model strong financial governance.

Supporting members with practical governance training

NTCOGSO remains committed to supporting School Representative Bodies through training and mentoring, facilitated by the 'Provision of governance training' funding agreement with the NT Department of Education.

A highlight of the training this year has been the record number of participants across the Northern Territory:

2024-25

185 sessions

69 were delivered in remote or very remote schools

1,826 participants
(704 Indigenous participants
= 40% of total)

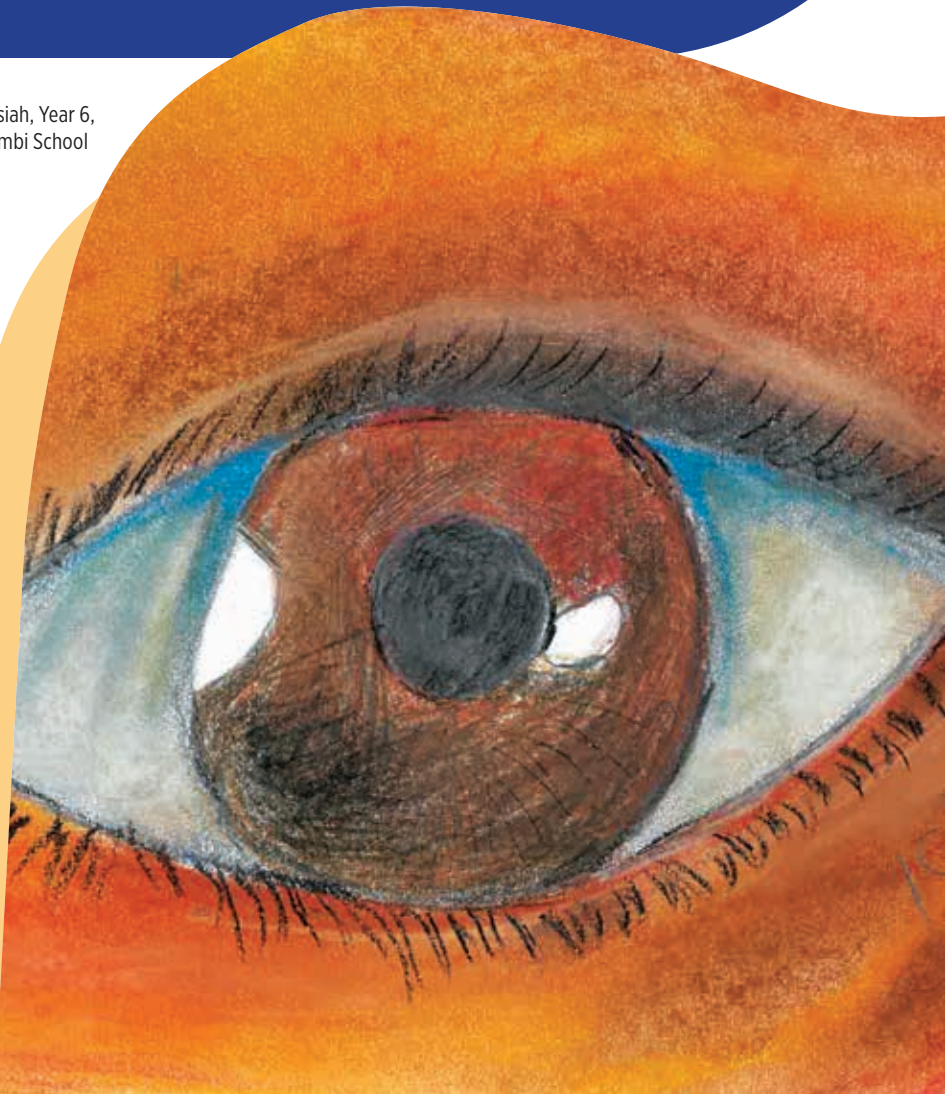
Building strong cross-sectoral partnerships

We have maintained and strengthened our relationships with the NT Government (including the Minister, Chief Executive, department and school staff), collaborators from similar organisations in other states, the federal government, students, families, and school communities. I extend my gratitude to all involved for your open and robust collaboration. Your involvement is crucial to our success.

Lastly, I thank our Executive members, our staff and everyone who put their hand up to serve on their School Body for their unwavering commitment to public education. We are stronger together.

RUTH MIRAMS
PRESIDENT

right: Isiah, Year 6,
Milingimbi School



ABOUT NTCOGSO

NTCOGSO influences
the direction of
public education for
the benefit of our
students.

The Northern Territory Council of Government School Organisations (NTCOGSO) is the peak body representing parents of public school students in the Northern Territory.



WHO WE REPRESENT

We represent every NT government school.

MISSION

To strengthen public education by encouraging continual improvement in the provision of quality education for all students.

VISION

Students and families thriving in government schools.

BASIS FOR AUTHORITY

The NT Council of Government School Organisations (NTCOGSO) is bound by our Constitution in line with the Northern Territory Associations Act. NTCOGSO has all of the usual obligations of an incorporated association.

WHO WE ARE

Based in Palmerston City on Larrakia Country, NTCOGSO includes a representative from each region across the Northern Territory.

The NT Full Council, comprising all affiliated schools, is the governing authority of NTCOGSO. Each year, during Semester 2, the NT Full Council Conference convenes to discuss and set the strategic direction and policies for the organisation.

EXECUTIVE

The management of the Northern Territory Full Council is vested in the Executive, which has power to do all things necessary to achieve the objectives of the Full Council.

The Executive consists of:

- President
- Vice President
- Treasurer
- Representatives from each region

The Executive may invite an additional three (3) persons whom the Executive considers to have special qualifications, knowledge, or experience that will assist the Executive in the exercise and performance of its functions by providing information or advice to become a member of the Executive.

MANAGEMENT

Executive Officer

Our Executive Officer leads the execution of NTCOGSO's Strategic Plan, ensuring its effective implementation while overseeing staff and managing the organisation's physical and financial resources. This role also includes governance over corporate planning, financial management, and maintaining key external relationships. Additionally, the Executive Officer ensures that our Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) are met in line with funding agreements.

Administrative Support

Our Administrative Officers provide a wide range of administrative and organisational support to the Executive Officer. This includes managing day-to-day office operations and ensuring effective communication and coordination across the organisation.

GOVERNANCE AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Project Manager

This role is the central point of contact for all NT government schools and school representative bodies for governance advice, support and training. They are responsible for building the governance capacity of members through best practice & strategic planning for school improvement.

Governance Officers

Governance Officers deliver flexible, high-quality training and mentoring on governance and community engagement throughout the Northern Territory. They educate members and potential members on the governance requirements of relevant legislation, guidelines, and policies.



EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE



Ruth Mirams

President

Contact: (08) 7942 2255

Ruth completed her schooling in the Queensland public education system. This set her up to go on to successful post graduate studies, and she holds a PhD in data analytics in complex systems.

Her children are thriving at Tennant Creek Primary School, where she is Secretary of the School Council.

In her professional life, Ruth is a trusted advisor to government and corporate clients, providing support around strategy, governance and funding. Throughout her career, she has focused on working with inspiring, passionate teams to create meaningful outcomes.

Ruth believes that every child deserves the opportunity to thrive through access to quality education, and is committed to using her skills and experience to support NTCOGSO, parents and children throughout the NT.



Wayne Green

Vice President & Barkly Region Representative

Contact: (08) 7942 2255

Wayne is a Parent Member on the Tennant Creek High School Council and has served there for over eleven years. Previously Wayne served on Tennant Creek Primary School Council for over ten years. Wayne and wife Karyn have four children who have all been educated in Tennant Creek.

Wayne is a strong believer in the need for parent and community involvement within schools for better and broader outcomes for students. He is also a proud advocate for the Barkly region and ensures Barkly voices are heard by those shaping Territory education.



Richelle Kent

Treasurer

Contact: (08) 7942 2255

Richelle has two children who attend government schools. Commencing a School Council journey in 2013 at Driver Primary School as Parent Member, later holding the position of Treasurer on Karama Primary School Council and Batchelor Area School Council. Richelle is Treasurer of Namarluk School Council and Parent Member of Henbury School.

As NTCOGSO Treasurer, Richelle ensures compliance with all financial reporting obligations. Richelle considers parent and community involvement in schools is critical to achieving better outcomes for students.



NOELA ANDERSON

Big Rivers Region Representative

Contact: (08) 7942 2255

Noela is a Parent Member on the Borroloola School Council and comes from two language groups; Garwa and Yanyuwa and has spent her entire life in and around Borroloola. Having worked for three years at Borroloola School as a Tutor/Assistant Teacher, Noela is currently in the role of Home Liaison Officer, in addition to being an active participant of the School Council.

Noela loves her role of assisting and supporting up to 200 students, from helping them engage in the classroom to helping plan the schools Weekly Culture days.



LAUREN WINTER

Central Region Representative

Contact: (08) 7942 2255

Lauren has been involved with various schools in Alice Springs since 1995 when her first child commenced in preschool.

Having served on School Councils, committees and fundraising bodies, Lauren currently holds the position of Parent Member on Centralian Senior College Council.

With a large family of 6 children with the youngest currently at school, Lauren is passionate about public education both Territory and Australia wide.

“WE’RE NTCOGSO AND WE ARE PASSIONATE ABOUT PUBLIC EDUCATION.”

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE



Simon Niblock

**Darwin Region
Representative**

Contact: (08) 7942 2255

Simon studied at Monash University completing a Bachelor of Computing (Robotics and Digital Technology) in 1992. In the late 1990s Simon spent 5 years living and working in Arnhem Land for the Northern Territory Department of Education publishing bilingual teaching materials.

Simon has an active interest in school governance and has chaired the Nightcliff Primary and Darwin High School Bodies for over 9 years.

Simon is a Graduate of the Australian Institute of Company Directors.



Tanya McKenna

**Top End Region
Representative**

Contact: (08) 7942 2255

Tanya is an advocate for continual improvement of public education on behalf of families. Tanya previously held Office Bearer positions on Girraween Primary School Council from 2011 to 2020 with Council successful in improving school infrastructure, providing more classrooms, upgrading play areas and implementing wellbeing programs to improve student outcomes. Tanya then went on to hold the position of Taminmin Chair.

Tanya considers it critical that children, parents and wider community have a strong voice within the public schooling system, all working in collaboration to achieve excellent educational outcomes, without discrimination. Together we can do so much.

“

**THE
BEAUTIFUL
THING ABOUT
LEARNING IS
THAT NO ONE
CAN TAKE
IT AWAY
FROM
YOU.**”

B.B King



Noel Carpenter

Invited Member

Contact: (08) 7942 2255

Noel lives in the Yirrkala community in north-east Arnhem Land with his family. He has previously served as a Parent Member and Chair on both the Nhulunbuy Primary and Nhulunbuy High School Councils, as well as being NTCOGSO's East Arnhem Representative.

Noel is active in engaging with others in north-east Arnhem Land communities and has a focus on working together to build education outcomes for all students.



Fred Richardson

**Invited Member &
Public Officer**

Contact: 0408 944 265

Fred has lived and worked in the Northern Territory since 1973, including 32 years in Adult Education where Fred has specialised in the development and delivery of adult IT skills in remote locations. Fred was elected Central Regional Council Representative in 2015 and 2016 with a son at Centralian Senior College. Since 2017 Fred has served as an Invited Member on the Executive and is valued for his critical thinking and a creative and innovative approach to curriculum improvement.

Fred firmly believes that well informed families, engaged in the discussions and decisions that affect and chart their children's experiences and accomplishments at school, are a crucial part of the work that goes on to nurture the potential each student has.

STRATEGIC PLAN 2025-29

GOAL 1: PARENT VOICE

- Provide the conduit for a strong parent voice direct to government.
- Advocate for the educational rights and needs of students including access to education no matter where they live.
- Foster deeper engagement with the NT Department of Education and Training (DET) to ensure parents are integral to decision-making processes that affect their children.
- Empower parent representatives through training and resources, ensuring they can effectively represent their communities.
- Provide representation for students, families and schools on working groups and taskforces.
- Develop and maintain strong, collaborative relationships with key DET staff.
- Promote open discussions within parent communities, allowing diverse perspectives to shape NTCOGSO's advocacy efforts.

GOAL 2: INCLUSION IN EDUCATION

- Champion policies that ensure all students, regardless of their background or abilities, have access to equitable, quality education.
- Promote awareness and understanding of diverse learning needs.
- Advocate for tailored support and resources that allow every child to excel academically, socially, and emotionally, creating a sense of belonging within the school community.

GOAL 3: MEMBER AFFILIATES

- All NT Government schools affiliate annually.
- Provide high quality advocacy advice to affiliates.
- Provide high quality governance training and support to affiliates.
- Timely distribution of communications from DET, NTG and Executive.
- Coordinate regular School Representative Body online briefings with the Chief Executive and their delegate.



“

**CHILDREN ARE VERY
PRECIOUS, VERY SPECIAL,
THEY ARE OUR FUTURE. THEY
DESERVE OUR NURTURING.**

”

Janet Holmes A Court

GOAL 4: LEADERSHIP

- Monitor and influence educational policy developments.
- Participate in government advisory panels and working groups.
- Identify and nominate suitable candidates to fill the NTCOGSO nominee role on the Teacher Registration Board (TRB).
- Promote opportunities for public education parents to nominate for the Parent Member position on NTBOS.
- Demonstrate and promote a culture of continuous improvement and innovation within the organisation.
- Engage with all stakeholders to ensure sustainable growth and progress.

GOAL 5: GOVERN THE ORGANISATION

- Ensure operational processes are streamlined, clear, and well-documented, with regular reviews to optimise performance and efficiency.
- Regularly review governance processes and ensure compliance with the NTCOGSO constitution, policies, and regulatory requirements, with clear accountability structures in place.
- Foster a workplace culture that values diversity, inclusivity, and employee wellbeing.
- Provide continuous professional development opportunities to encourage growth and retention.
- Build a sense of belonging within the team by promoting open communication, collaboration, and mental health initiatives.



OUR REACH

NTCOGSO continues to deliver on its three key pillars: **Support, Advocacy and Governance**, outlined in our 2025-29 Strategic Plan.



“OUR VISION IS TO SEE STUDENTS AND FAMILIES THRIVING IN GOVERNMENT SCHOOLS.”

INFORMATION & SUPPORT

We remain committed to providing timely information and support to School Bodies and their broader school communities. Our guidance centres on strong governance and effective school operations, aligned with relevant Northern Territory Government legislation, policy and educational initiatives.

SOCIAL MEDIA

Our Facebook presence continues to grow as an important and engaging communication tool. Between 1 July 2024 and 30 June 2025, our follower base increased by 10.8%, and our posts reached an impressive 90,801 people. The platform not only helps keep families informed and celebrates the great work happening in NT Government schools, it also enables us to share advocacy updates, our partnership work with DET, training opportunities, as well as connect with School Body members across the Territory.

WEBSITE

Our website saw significant growth in 2024-25, with 5,500 active users recorded - a remarkable 82% increase from the previous year. Notably, over 90% of these were new visitors.

(Google Analytics 2024)

REPRESENTATION & ADVOCACY

FUNDED ACTIVITY:

Northern Territory Council of Government School Organisations Incorporated (NTCOGSO) – Operational Funding for a Peak Parent Body for Northern Territory Government Schools and Public Education.

NTCOGSO was established in 1971 to represent the interests of families of children attending Northern Territory Government schools and work in partnership with:

- 1. all school representative bodies for Government schools in the Northern Territory (as defined in the Education Act 2015) and their respective school communities; and
- 2. key Northern Territory public education stakeholders to provide high level representation and advocacy regarding the rights of all children to full participation in an equitable and just public education system.

PERFORMANCE MEASURE 1

NTCOGSO TO MAINTAIN A RATIO OF 95% SCHOOL REPRESENTATIVE BODIES, BY REGION, AFFILIATED WITH NTCOGSO.

OUTCOME 1

	NUMBER OF SCHOOL REPRESENTATIVE BODIES	NUMBER AFFILIATED WITH NTCOGSO	MEASURE ACHIEVED
Barkly	4	4	100%
Big Rivers	22	22	100%
Central	13	13	100%
Darwin	27	27	100%
East Arnhem	13	13	100%
Top End	28	28	100%

* All Northern Territory government schools, including those without a school representative body, are affiliated with NTCOGSO.

OUTCOME 1 (cont.)

	SCHOOLS WITH NO SCHOOL REPRESENTATIVE BODY	NUMBER AFFILIATED WITH NTCOGSO
Barkly	9	9
Big Rivers	4	4
Central	21	21
Top End	7	7

PERFORMANCE MEASURE 2

NTCOGSO TO MAKE FORMAL CONTRIBUTIONS OR RESPONSES ON BEHALF OF SCHOOL REPRESENTATIVE BODIES IN ALL GOVERNMENT SCHOOLS IN THE NORTHERN TERRITORY TO RELEVANT EDUCATIONAL POLICIES AND INITIATIVES (DEPENDENT ON OPPORTUNITY).

OUTCOME 2

NTCOGSO continues to champion the voices of School Representative Bodies and all Northern Territory government schools through our formal contributions to educational policies and initiatives. This year marked another period of significant work at the request of the Northern Territory Department of Education and Training.

This collaboration reflects the trust placed in NTCOGSO and demonstrates our commitment to ensuring that the perspectives of parents and school bodies contribute directly to the development of Territory education policy.

Through these contributions NTCOGSO has reinforced its role as a respected partner, with government and departmental leaders recognising the value of embedding parent and school body voices in decision-making.

“

**ALL NORTHERN
TERRITORY
GOVERNMENT
SCHOOLS,
INCLUDING
THOSE WITHOUT
A SCHOOL
REPRESENTATIVE
BODY, ARE
AFFILIATED WITH
NTCOGSO.**

”





**CHILDREN
LEARN
MORE FROM
WHAT YOU
ARE THAN
WHAT YOU
TEACH.**



W.E.B. Du Bois


1. Contributions and responses to Department POLICIES:

- **Financial and Resource Management for Schools (FARMS) Manual & Policies**

NTCOGSO continued its contribution to the implementation of the FARMS Policy and Manual following its finalisation in 2024 by:

- Developing a ‘Finance and Resource Management School Body Responsibilities Checklist’ to assist School Representative Bodies in understanding and meeting their obligations under the Education Act NT.
- Providing communications and guidance to School Representative Bodies across the NT to ensure the FARMS manual and checklist were accessible and practical.
- Reinforcing the importance of transparent, accountable financial management at the school level, supporting both compliance and confidence in school governance.
- **School Representative Body Guidelines**
 - School Governance Policy and School Representative Body Guidelines
 - School Governance record management system

At our first meeting in March 2020 with the then incoming Chief Executive, NTCOGSO emphasised the importance of undertaking this critical work. With a change in Chief Executive since that time, NTCOGSO continues to look forward to the release of the final draft in 2025-26.



NTCOGSO conducted a Territory-wide survey that received 655 responses across all six NT regions, including urban, rural, and very remote communities



• **School Fees and Voluntary Contributions Policy | Taskforce**

Participated in DET's policy development process following significant inconsistencies across schools in the charging of fees and contributions.

Provided detailed feedback on the draft School Fees and Voluntary Contributions Policy, ensuring alignment with legal requirements that government schooling is free of charge for standard curriculum delivery.

Advice and recommendations covered:

- **Electives** - reinforced that electives must be free as part of the curriculum, with only optional higher-cost materials chargeable.

– **Stationery and resources** - recommended central provision of basic stationery to ensure equity, reduce waste, and ease family pressure.

– **Educational applications** - opposed charging parents for apps like Reading Eggs and Mathletics, stressing they are essential curriculum tools and must be fully resourced by DET.

– **Registered Training Organisations (RTOs)** - called for a review of contracts to ensure costs of delivering standard VET curriculum are fully funded.

– **Information technology** - supported the development of a fair Territory-wide cost recovery or insurance model for lost/damaged laptops, instead of parent fees.

– **School body approval processes** - reinforced the requirement that all fees and contributions must be formally considered and approved by school bodies, with equity and hardship provisions applied.

– **Voluntary contributions** - emphasised the need for consistent, transparent communication to parents that contributions are optional and services cannot be withheld if families do not contribute.

NTCOGSO highlighted that geographically isolated families are disproportionately impacted by fee and contribution practices. Families in remote areas were required to fund ICT access to the curriculum, pay for their children's printing and paper for essential learning resources. **Equity for geographically isolated families must be embedded in policy development and implementation.**

Provided direct feedback to DET in May and June 2025 at the request of the Chief Executive, ensuring parent voice shaped the draft policy.



- **NTG Back to School Voucher**
NTCOGSO contributed to DET's review of the Back to School voucher program, ensuring both affordability for families and practical implementation for schools were considered. To inform our contribution, NTCOGSO conducted a Territory-wide survey that received **655 responses** across all six NT regions, including urban, rural, and very remote communities.

By undertaking our own research and presenting a clear set of recommendations, NTCOGSO ensured that family perspectives directly informed the department's considerations. This contribution reflects our commitment to using evidence-based feedback from parents and school bodies to shape Territory policies.

The survey highlighted that the voucher is broadly valued by families but identified opportunities for improvement.

NTCOGSO's recommendations, drawn from the survey and ongoing conversations with School Representative Bodies, were presented in full to the department.

Key recommendations included:

- Empower families with genuine choice in voucher use.
- Extend voucher to 30 June.
- Ensure access for all enrolled students.
- Prevent waste and repetition in purchasing.
- Simplify the process for families.

Back to School Voucher Recommendations:

EMPOWER FAMILIES WITH GENUINE CHOICE

- Families must retain autonomy in how the voucher is spent, without school-imposed restrictions
- No family should feel pressured to use the voucher on specific items if they believe it is wasteful or unnecessary
- Avoid school led processes that remove choice from parents

PREVENT WASTE AND REPETITION

- Shift away from the “parents buy every year” mindset
- Many families report book packs are unnecessary and offer no opt-out
- Encourage schools to purchase and hold shared supplies
- Yearly replacement expectations lead to waste and less care

ENSURE VOUCHER ACCESS FOR ALL ENROLLED STUDENTS

- Widen voucher availability to all Semester 1 enrolments
- Prevent inequity by ensuring all students receive the same support

ALLOW BROADER, PRACTICAL USES – NOT ONLY ITEMS CONTROLLED BY SCHOOLS

- Expand eligible items to include:
 - School appropriate footwear
 - School bags and lunch boxes
 - Stationery purchased individually (e.g. paper reams and printer ink)
 - Support for geographically isolated students

EXTEND VALIDITY TO JUNE 30

- This allows families time to plan purchases, particularly when supplies are delayed or needs change early in the school year

SIMPLIFY THE PROCESS

- Provide accessible voucher information to families
- Provide consistent details on voucher value and balance
- Allow pooling or sharing across siblings

RESPECT THE NATURE OF VOLUNTARY CONTRIBUTIONS

- The voucher should never be used for a voluntary contribution unless the family chooses to do so, and has no other need for the remaining balance
- This must be a genuine, informed choice made by the family – not assumed, suggested, or encouraged by the school



- **Artificial Intelligence in Schools Policy**

NTCOGSO contributed feedback on DET's draft 'Generative AI policy and guidelines for NT schools' to ensure a reflection of both the opportunities and risks of AI in education, including:

- The importance of comparing the draft NT policy with frameworks being adopted in other jurisdictions, particularly South Australia, to ensure alignment and best practice.
- The role of generative AI in educational contexts, highlighting both its potential to support teaching and learning and the need for safeguards around ethics, privacy, and responsible use.
- The value of capturing parent perspectives in addition to those of teachers and students, so that families are confident in how AI will be integrated into schools.
- NTCOGSO emphasised that clear, practical guidelines are needed to support schools and families in understanding AI's role, and that policies must remain responsive as technology evolves.

2. Contributions and responses to Department INITIATIVES:

- **School Based Policing Consultative Group**

NTCOGSO continued to have the Northern Territory Government's endorsement for our participation in the School Based Police Program Consultative Group, which provides oversight and feedback on the program operating in 13 middle and senior schools across Darwin, Palmerston, Alice Springs, Tennant Creek and Nhulunbuy.

During 2024 to 2025, the group:

- Confirmed updated Terms of Reference, including a shift to one meeting per semester to reflect the program's maturity while retaining the forum as a key channel for raising system wide issues.

- Received presentations and updates on the role of School Based Police Officers (SBPOs), their primary focus on building positive relationships, delivering curriculum programs and contributing to student wellbeing teams.
- Monitored staffing levels, with 15 SBPO positions across the NT, noting recruitment challenges but also the benefits of continuity where officers have been in place over multiple years.
- Received principal updates from schools, highlighting the valuable contribution of SBPOs in lesson delivery, excursions, wellbeing programs, and relationship-building with students, staff and families.

- **Review of Secondary Education in the Northern Territory**

- **Engagement and Consultation**

NTCOGSO supported the Department of Education and Training's Secondary Education Reform work throughout 2024 to 2025, ensuring school body members were informed and able to provide input.

Hosted a series of online sessions where the Chief Executive and the reform team presented directly to school body members and engaged in Q&A.

Provided regular updates at Regional Council meetings, giving members opportunities to raise questions and share feedback.

Attended briefings with the reform team to remain informed of developments and to contribute parent and school body perspectives during the implementation planning phase.

Provided feedback to DET on governance and administrative implications of the transition, highlighting issues for consideration to ensure changes are practical, sustainable, and manageable for schools and school bodies.

- **Financial Governance Training for School Representative Bodies**

NTCOGSO worked with DET's School Business Services unit to design and deliver a new financial governance training program for School Representative Bodies. Sessions were delivered in each NT region, with NTCOGSO co-ordinating attendance and supporting delivery. We also provided detailed feedback from participants back to the DET team to refine and strengthen future sessions.

SUMMARY

In 2024 to 2025, NTCOGSO continued to provide formal contributions to DET when requested, ensuring parent and school body perspectives were included in the development of policies and initiatives. These contributions reinforce NTCOGSO's role as a trusted and valued partner in the Northern Territory education system.

PERFORMANCE MEASURE 3

NTCOGSO TO MAINTAIN ITS MEMBERSHIP ON NORTHERN TERRITORY REPRESENTATIVE AND ADVOCACY-BASED GROUPS, DESCRIBED BY CATEGORY (DEPENDENT ON OPPORTUNITY).

OUTCOME 3

NTCOGSO continues to maintain memberships on representative and advocacy-based groups to ensure the perspectives of School Representative Bodies and parent voice are included.

- **Teacher Representative Board (TRB)**
Under the Teacher Registration Board (TRB) legislation, Part 7, NT Education Act, composition of the board is to include 1 person nominated by NTCOGSO.
- Northern Territory Council of Social Service (NTCOSS)
- United Nations Association of Australia (UNAA) - NT Division

PERFORMANCE MEASURE 4

NTCOGSO TO MAINTAIN ITS PUBLIC PROMOTION OF PUBLIC EDUCATION IN THE NORTHERN TERRITORY.

OUTCOME 4

PROMOTING PUBLIC EDUCATION

NTCOGSO's core purpose is to champion public education and to ensure it is recognised as the foundation of opportunity for every child in the Northern Territory. Our belief in equity, inclusion, and high-quality education for all drives every aspect of our advocacy and representation as the peak parent body.

We know that public education is not only central to the growth and success of young people, but also vital to the health of our communities and to the Territory's future. Parents, students, and educators together form a strong and resilient system, and NTCOGSO continues to highlight and protect the values that underpin this work.

Throughout 2024-25, NTCOGSO has promoted and defended public education by:

- **Advocacy in the public arena:** Through media releases, interviews, and commentary, NTCOGSO has consistently raised awareness of key issues affecting public education and spoken with authority on behalf of parents.
- **Funding advocacy:** We have supported national and Territory-level campaigns for needs-based funding, reinforcing the principle that every school must be resourced according to the needs of its students.
- **Celebrating public education:** By participating in and supporting events across the Territory, NTCOGSO has highlighted the strengths of public schools and the contributions of their communities.
- **Parent and school voice:** Our advocacy ensures that the perspectives of parents and school communities are heard and acted upon at government and departmental levels.
- **Regional engagement:** Ongoing participation in Regional Council meetings has provided direct support to School Representative Bodies, strengthened governance, and reinforced their critical role in shaping Territory public education.

PERFORMANCE MEASURE 5

NTCOGSO TO MAINTAIN ITS PROMOTION OF THE POSITIVE OUTCOMES ARISING FROM NTCOGSO AND THE TERRITORY WORKING COLLABORATIVELY.

OUTCOME 5

PROMOTING POSITIVE OUTCOMES

NTCOGSO and the Northern Territory Government (the Territory), through the Department of Education and Training, remain united by a shared vision:

strengthening and advancing public education across the NT.

Our partnership continues to deliver tangible benefits for students, schools, and families, and NTCOGSO places high value on this collaborative approach.

As outlined under Performance Measure 2, NTCOGSO is dedicated to maintaining and building on this partnership by contributing meaningfully to Territory policies, strategies, and initiatives. We actively highlight and share the positive outcomes of this work in the following ways:

- **Annual Report:** This report not only outlines our achievements and priorities but also illustrates our accountability and the impact of our collaboration. It is circulated broadly to

Our work this year has been a reflection of our enduring commitment to advocating for a robust public education system that serves the needs of all students in the Northern Territory.

We remain dedicated to championing the values of public education and will continue to stand firm in our efforts to ensure it remains a strong and thriving foundation for future generations.

more than 1,200 members, government representatives, national counterparts, and the NT Legislative Assembly, ensuring transparency and recognition of our joint efforts.

- **Annual Full Council:** The NT Council provides a vital platform for reflecting on progress and shaping future priorities. The consistent involvement of the Minister for Education and the Chief Executive of the Department of Education and Training demonstrates the strength of this partnership and the respect afforded to NTCOGSO as a representative parent body.
- **Regional Councils:** By supporting six Regional Councils, NTCOGSO ensures that collaboration is rooted in local voices. These Councils provide an avenue for community perspectives to

inform departmental decision-making, while NTCOGSO keeps members updated on ministerial engagement, departmental initiatives, and the progress of motions.

- **School Representative Bodies:** SRBs continue to serve as a vital connection point between schools and NTCOGSO. Collaborative initiatives such as the Finance and Resource Management for Schools (FARMS) manual have strengthened governance across schools and been recognised as a practical, effective resource.
- **Schools:** Feedback from individual schools is an invaluable measure of how our joint work is received and applied. This input helps identify areas where improvements are needed while also enabling us to celebrate and share positive outcomes.

In 2024-25, NTCOGSO continued to champion the collaborative development and delivery of resources such as the School Representative Body Induction Program and FARMS. These remain key examples of how partnership with the Department builds the capability of school bodies and improves governance across the system.

SCHOOL EDUCATION ADVISORY GROUP (SEAG)

MEMBERS:

- CHIEF EXECUTIVE
- NTCOGSO
- AEUNT
- NT PRINCIPALS ASSOCIATION

DATE AGENDA ITEMS

7 Aug 24 Full Council Motions | Outstanding

Chief Executive update

- 2025 School Improvement Planning
- Machinery of Government (MoG)
- Cultural Responsive Framework
- Improving School Attendance through Parent Accountability
- Suspension from School Guidelines
- Secondary Review Program Plan

3 Dec 24 NTCOGSO items

- School Fees
- Back to School (BTS) Voucher
- School-Based Counsellors | Full Council Motions
- Student Transport Safety | Full Council Motion
- ASIP - Request for Legend of Acronyms
- School Resourcing and Policies
- Financial Governance Training | Full Council Motion
- Teacher Laptop Funding

NT Budget Release

- Stakeholder Engagement Framework
- SEAG Updated Terms of Reference
- Election Commitments
- School Attendance
- Swimming in Schools Program
- Supporting Apprenticeships and Trainees
- Keeping and Attracting Teachers
- Security and Safety of Staff and Students
- Draft School Fees and Voluntary Contributions Policy
- Procurement Policy

30 May 25

NTCOGSO & CHIEF EXECUTIVE MEETINGS

DATE AGENDA ITEMS

13 Aug 24	• Full Council Motions Outstanding
	• Framework for Inclusion
	• Curriculum, Assessment, Reporting and Certification (CARC) Policy
	• School Representative Body Guidelines
	• Signing of the Better Fairer Schools Agreement (BSFA)
12 Feb 25	• School Fees and Voluntary Contributions Policy
15 May 25	• School Fees

FEDERAL MINISTER & PEAK PARENT BODIES

DATE AGENDA ITEMS

22 Nov 24	• Better and Fairer Schools Agreement
	– National priority area: Student wellbeing for engagement and learning and the important role of parents



left: Hon Jason Clare MP, Minister for Education's Parent Roundtable on Student Wellbeing

PROVISION OF GOVERNANCE TRAINING & ADVICE

We are extremely proud to demonstrate our strong performance against the agreed Governance Training Milestones for a thirteenth consecutive year.

MILESTONE 1: DRAFT GOVERNANCE TRAINING SCHEDULE

NTCOGSO provides the Department with draft training schedules at the commencement of each semester. These schedules outline confirmed sessions and training topics planned for delivery.

NTCOGSO remains responsive to the needs and requests of members, while ensuring training is delivered proportionally across government schools in all regions, including urban, remote and very remote locations.

MILESTONE 2: GOVERNANCE TRAINING DELIVERED

NTCOGSO is required to deliver a minimum of 40 face to face training sessions each year for every active Training Officer.

In 2024-25 we exceeded this benchmark by delivering 185 sessions in total.

Through Governance Training & Meeting Support, 1,826 school body members across all educational regions of the Northern Territory engaged in learning and mentoring opportunities.

Our training sessions build members' understanding of the NT Education Act and Regulations, while deepening their knowledge of governance roles and responsibilities.

Meeting support further strengthens this by providing tailored mentoring, both collective and individual, to encourage active participation in school decision making.

NTCOGSO is proud to continue building strong relationships, enhancing community capacity, and supporting parents, families and schools to work together in genuine partnership for the benefit of every student.

“

**WHEN DECISIONS
ARE SHARED
SCHOOLS PROSPER
AND STUDENTS
SUCCEED.**”

”

MILESTONE 3: PROVISION OF ADVICE

NTCOGSO is required to provide advice and support on matters relating to school governance.

In 2024-25 we responded to and resolved 269* individual governance queries, covering a broad range of topics including governance processes, parent and community engagement, finance, and industrial relations. Each query was addressed with tailored, practical advice to support compliance and strengthen effective school governance.

Through this work, NTCOGSO continues to provide parents, teachers, principals, business managers and community members with accessible expertise and guidance that builds capacity and confidence in fulfilling their roles.



The reported total of 269 enquiries excludes the many additional enquiries resolved in less than 15 minutes, as NTCOGSO's reporting focuses on substantive governance matters requiring tailored support.

MILESTONE 4: RESOURCES REVIEW AND DEVELOPMENT

NTCOGSO is required to review and refine all governance training resources to ensure they remain accurate, practical and accessible. We continue to develop new materials that are culturally responsive and aligned with the Education Act, Regulations, and departmental policies and guidelines.

In addition, NTCOGSO commits significant expertise, time and resources to provide advice and feedback to the Department's comprehensive review of key School Body documents, including:

- **Finance and Resource Management for Schools (FARMS) Checklist**
- **School Body School Funds flyer**
- **Frequently Asked Questions**

NTCOGSO greatly values its positive working relationships with the Department and the ongoing opportunities for collaboration to strengthen governance across all Northern Territory schools.

SCHOOL BODIES ENGAGED IN 2024-25

80 SCHOOL BODIES ENGAGED IN 185 SESSIONS

- | | | |
|-------------------------------------|------------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| 1. Acacia Hill School | 30. Jabiru Area School | 59. Palmerston College |
| 2. Alcoota School | 31. Jilkminggan School | 60. Parap Primary School |
| 3. Alice Springs School Of The Air | 32. Jingili Primary School | 61. Nitjpurru School |
| 4. Ampilatwatja School | 33. Kalkaringi School | 62. Pine Creek School |
| 5. Angurugu School | 34. Karama Primary School | 63. Ramingining School |
| 6. Anula Primary School | 35. Katherine High School | 64. Regional Schools (various) |
| 7. Arlparra School | 36. Katherine School Of The Air | 65. Robinson River School |
| 8. Bakewell Primary School | 37. Katherine South Primary School | 66. Rosebery Primary School |
| 9. Baniyala Garrangali School | 38. Lajamanu School | 67. Ross Park Primary School |
| 10. Barunga School | 39. Larapinta Primary School | 68. Shepherdson College |
| 11. Batchelor Area School | 40. Larrakeyah Primary School | 69. Stirling School |
| 12. Bees Creek Primary School | 41. Malak Primary School | 70. Stuart Park Primary School |
| 13. Berry Springs Primary School | 42. Maningrida College | 71. Taminmin College |
| 14. Borrooloola School | 43. Mataranka School | 72. Tennant Creek High School |
| 15. Bradshaw Primary School | 44. Mbunghara School | 73. Tennant Creek Primary School |
| 16. Braitling Primary School | 45. Middle Point School | 74. Timber Creek School |
| 17. Canteen Creek School | 46. Milingimbi School | 75. Wagaman Primary School |
| 18. Casuarina Senior College | 47. Millner Primary School | 76. Wanguri Primary School |
| 19. Casuarina Street Primary School | 48. Milyakburra School | 77. Wulagi Primary School |
| 20. Centralian Senior College | 49. Moil Primary School | 78. Yarralin School |
| 21. Clyde Fenton Primary School | 50. Moulden Primary School | 79. Yuendumu School |
| 22. Darwin High School | 51. Nakara Primary School | 80. Zuccoli Primary School |
| 23. Darwin Middle School | 52. Nemarluk School | |
| 24. Dripstone Middle School | 53. Nganambala School | |
| 25. Driver Primary School | 54. Nganmarriyanga School | |
| 26. Durack Primary School | 55. Nhulunbuy High School | |
| 27. Elliott School | 56. Nhulunbuy Primary School | |
| 28. Girraween Primary School | 57. Nightcliff Middle School | |
| 29. Howard Springs Primary School | 58. Nightcliff Primary School | |

PROVISION OF ADVICE

269*

School governance enquiries resolved with practical support, empowering members to participate confidently while ensuring compliance, clarity and stronger partnerships

* Enquiries resolved in less than 15 minutes are not included in this total.

**EDUCATING THE MIND
WITHOUT EDUCATING
THE HEART IS NO
EDUCATION AT ALL.**

Aristotle

NTCOGSO has responded to enquiries on school governance, financial management, industrial relations, local decision making and community engagement, providing tailored advice and support to school body members.

NTCOGSO delivered more than 100 hours of expert support via telephone, email, online and face to face.

Assisting parents, teachers, principals, business managers and school community members with enquiries on governance, finance, parent and community engagement, and industrial relations.

We are privileged to be able to support school body members to resolve governance matters and strengthen effective decision making through practical, tailored advice.



“

**THE NORTHERN
TERRITORY IS A
PLACE OF VAST
BEAUTY, WHERE
LAND, CULTURE
AND PEOPLE ARE
WOVEN TOGETHER
IN WAYS THAT
INSPIRE AND
ENDURE.**

”









FEEDBACK ON OUR ADVICE

Nothing to improve! Alice and Michelle are absolutely amazing, being a new BM this year their support for not just myself but all school council members and our leadership team has been so helpful!

Very appreciative of NTCOGSO support and services. Our council have received lots of ongoing support ie advice, guidance, workshops etc to help us better and educated ourselves in our roles as council members.

Super helpful. My go-to-bible in all things school governance.

With your support and guidance, we have shaved hours off our meeting times and provided a more structured platform for our team moving forward.

Keep up the good work and thank you all.

The support, advice and training received by NTCOGSO has ensured our school council runs smoothly. Alice and Julie have helped us immensely and I am more confident in my role as a parent member. Very fortunate to have resources available such as the governance templates to help guide us and more importantly to ensure all students receive the best education while living remote.

NTCOGSO offers outstanding support to schools. They offer an exceptional service that is highly appreciated. Always "spot on" with advice. Great staff!

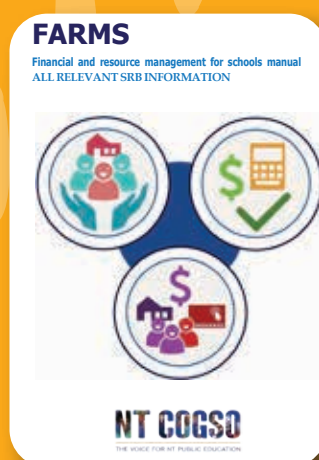
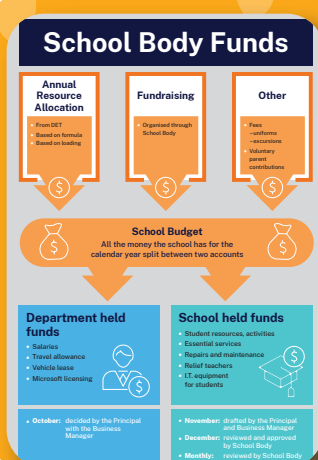
NTCOGSO have been extremely helpful when offering advice and or guiding our school council in the right direction.

Such great templates, easy to use and amend to suit our needs.

Nothing but praise to the entire team. From reception to training officers and executive management. Have learnt so much since joining our school council via NTCOGSO. Very fortunate to have such an organisation that advocates and supports NT government schools.

Thanks for always going the extra mile, from complex issues to helping with the little things that make my day easier like meeting notices or resending draft minutes, I always feel so supported. Thank you!

REVIEW OF PUBLICATIONS



FINANCE AND RESOURCE MANAGEMENT SCHOOL BODY RESPONSIBILITIES CHECKLIST

ANNUAL FIRST MEETING AFTER AGM

PLANNING & BUDGET

☐ Have we approved (initial) the financial delegation amount for the school to move funds between budget lines?
Comment: _____

☐ Have we presented the approved budget to the incoming members?
Comment: _____

☐ Have we approved (initial) curriculum and fundraising events as input T and P (in GST)?
Comment: _____

BANK ACCOUNTS & TERM DEPOSITS

☐ Have we reinitiated and approved (initial) between 3 and 8 people to be bank signatories?
Comment: _____

Are all signatories:

☐ School employees, Principal, Business Manager, or Chair / Treasurer?
Comment: _____

☐ Over 18 and not bankrupt or under fraud investigation?
Comment: _____

☐ Aware of the school budget and their financial responsibilities?
Comment: _____

☐ Free from any conflict of interest when approving payments?
Comment: _____

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We develop adaptable and culturally appropriate training presentations to support School Bodies in understanding their governance responsibilities under the NT Education Act 2015, Part 6: Parent and Community Involvement in Government Schools.

NTCOGSO has developed and continually reviews a suite of resources and templates to assist school body members, including parents, community representatives, teachers, principals, students and invited members, to carry out their governance roles effectively, strengthen decision making and ensure compliance.

These include:

- Role handbooks
- Motions registers
- Finance checklists
- Meeting templates
- Governance guides
- AGM resources
- Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)
- Training presentations and slides

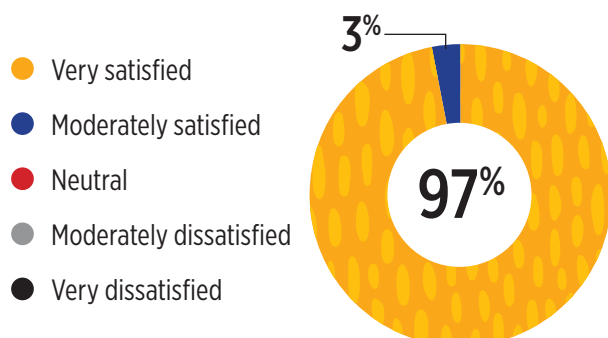
These resources ensure school body members are supported with practical, accessible tools to confidently fulfil their roles and responsibilities.

We are committed to supporting schools and their communities to ensure strong decisions are made in the best interests of all students today, tomorrow and into the future.

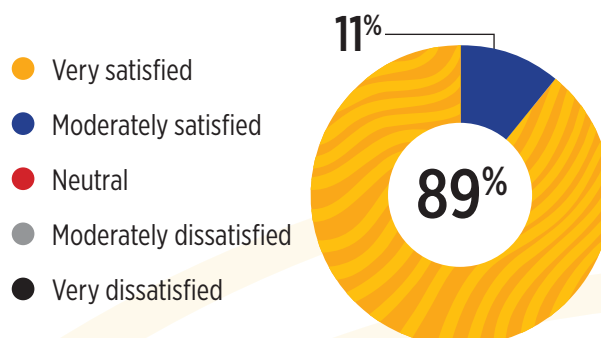
EVALUATION OF OUR TRAINING SERVICES

Analysis of feedback from School Representative Body members on training delivered.

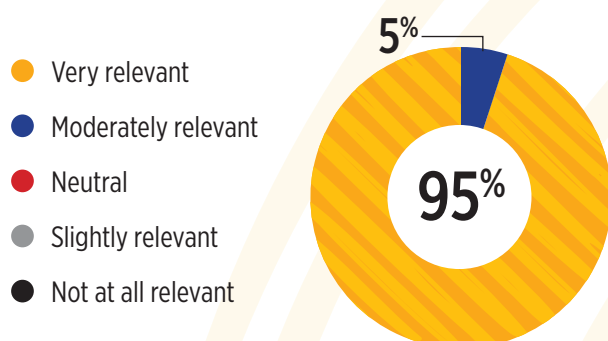
How would you rate your satisfaction with the quality of the content delivered?



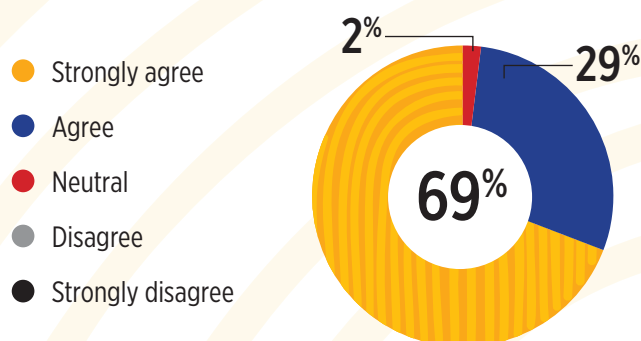
How would you rate your satisfaction with the quality of the resources?



Please rate the relevance of the information delivered.



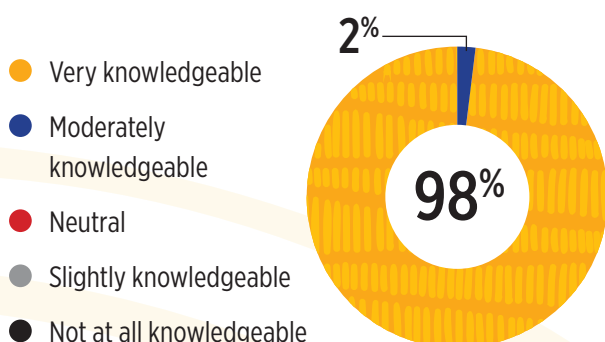
Following the training, do you feel you have a greater understanding of your governance roles and responsibilities?



**“EDUCATION
IS LEARNING
WHAT YOU
DIDN'T EVEN
KNOW YOU
DIDN'T KNOW.”**

Daniel J. Boorstin

How knowledgeable was the trainer?



Do you have any other comments, questions, or concerns?

Every time I undertake this governance session, I learn something new.

As a first-time council member, I found the session very helpful.

Great tool to understand roles, responsibilities and what our Council does and how we are to act on behalf of the school.

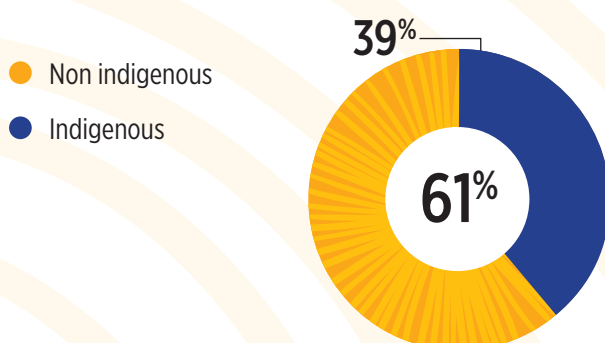
Very clear and succinct. I liked having the slides printed out.

Very well run and in-depth training package.

I understand my role and responsibilities much more thoroughly now, thank you.

Excellent to be able to ask questions and receive reliable answers based on practical experience.

Participation by Indigeneity





“

**THE BEST
TEACHERS ARE
THOSE WHO SHOW
YOU WHERE TO
LOOK BUT DON'T
TELL YOU WHAT
TO SEE.**

”

Alexandra K.
Trenfor



FEEDBACK ON GOVERNANCE TRAINING

Analysis of feedback from School Representative Body members on training delivered.

“Great course & good to really cement policy and our rights as well as that of the school.”

“Very engaging and relevant information. Especially enjoyed having a better understanding of the financial responsibilities of the Council.”

“Great level of information, would be great to have another session later in the year.”

“Really well facilitated prompting some great discussion. Very much appreciated the training and support. Still a few items to cover and discuss but looking forward to further sessions in the near future.”

“Clear, concise and easy to understand. Great information, delivered very well. Thank you.”

“Thank you so much for sharing all your knowledge.”

“Very relevant package and well presented. Thank you!”

“Excellent and concise presentation – Thank you!”

“Great pace and information was easy to access.”

“Thank you for delivering the training in layman’s terms.”

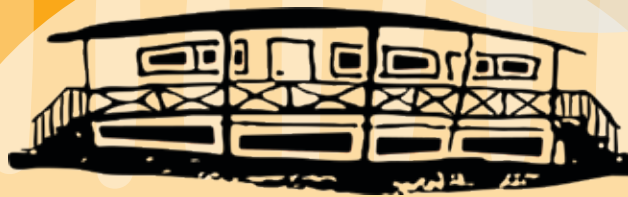
“Content matched personal and Council needs.”

“Presenter was able to give detailed answers and give examples where needed.”

“The information on effective meetings was great.”

SCHOOL MILESTONES

“THERE ARE NO SHORTCUTS TO ANY PLACE WORTH GOING.”
Beverly Sills



SCHOOL	BIRTHDAY
ALICE SPRINGS LANGUAGE CENTRE - CENTRALIAN MIDDLE	15
ARLPARRA SCHOOL	15
CENTRALIAN MIDDLE SCHOOL	15
CENTRALIAN SENIOR COLLEGE	20
DRIVER PRIMARY SCHOOL	40
HUMPTY DOO PRIMARY SCHOOL	45
NORTHERN TERRITORY SCHOOL OF DISTANCE EDUCATION (NTSDE)	45
ALAWA PRIMARY SCHOOL	55
GILLEN PRIMARY SCHOOL	55
GUNBALANYA SCHOOL	100



left: Emery, Year 3, Milingimbi School





THE VOICE FOR NT PUBLIC EDUCATION