

Minister's Office File Ref:	
Department File Ref:	12/439113

## Briefing Note

The Chief of Staff

Office of the Minister for Education, Training and Employment

**Action required: Noting**

**Action required by:**

**Routine – General information provided for noting.**

### **SUBJECT: INVOLVEMENT OF DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION, TRAINING AND EMPLOYMENT IN THE AUTISM COOPERATIVE RESEARCH CENTRE (CRC) BID**

#### **Summary of key objectives**

- In 2011, the then Minister for Education and Industrial Relations agreed for the Department to be an essential participant in the 2011 Autism CRC bid but this application which was not successful.
- In 2012, the Department continued to honour its commitment for the updated 2012 Autism CRC bid application which included a financial commitment of \$400,000 (\$50,000 over 8 years) as well as \$340,000 in-kind support. The Autism CRC bid is currently one of seven to progress to the second and final stage of Round 15 of the Commonwealth CRC bid process.
- On 18 December 2012, the Autism CRC bid team was interviewed by the Selection Committee and announcements of successful bids will be made in late January/early February 2013.

#### **Key issues**

1. The financial commitment of \$400,000 as part of the essential participation component for the Autism CRC bid has been tagged to come from the \$33 million allocated to the Department through the *More Support for Students with Disabilities National Partnership* (MSSWD NP).
2. The Queensland MSSWD NP has a number of targeted outputs to assist Queensland state schools to support the education needs of students with autism spectrum disorder (ASD). If successful, the *Autism CRC Core Program 2: Enhancing Learning and Teaching (Attachment 1)* will compliment and greatly enhance the outputs associated with the MSSWD NP.
3. The in-kind support was developed in 2011. Since then the *More Support for Students with Disability National Partnership* has been developed, with a good deal of work occurring in the area of ASD. Therefore, it will be timely to reconsider the nature of in-kind support. This kind of renegotiation is a routine component of the development of a CRC and has already been discussed with Professor Robert Van Barneveld, a Co-Director of the CRC bid.
4. However it is important to note that this is not a financial contribution, but rather a way of valuing time and expertise of school personnel who would be involved in the action research and professional training.

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## Implications

### *Financial*

5. As the funds for the core essential participant commitment (\$400,000) has been tagged and addressed through the MSSWD NP, this funding is available if the Autism CRC bid is successful.
6. Negotiations will need to occur with the Autism CRC bid team regarding the in-kind support commitment (\$340,000) due to the *More Support for Students with Disabilities* National Partnership and changes in staff working in the area.

### *Educational Approaches*

7. Current challenges that the Autism CRC *Core Program 2* has identified to address include:
  - a. Academic underperformance relative to level of ability among students with ASD.
  - b. Challenges with behavioural regulation in classrooms (frequently resulting in a suspension, exclusion or use of home schooling as a last resort).
  - c. High incidence of students with ASD experiencing bullying in schools.
  - d. High incidence of anxiety and depression, and other mental health issues among students with ASD.
  - e. Students with ASD with sensory processing issues frequently find school environments overwhelming (e.g, excessive noise levels, visual clutter).
  - f. Lack of knowledge and understanding of ASD amongst teachers and other school staff.
8. Enhancing educational approaches and processes will result in greater school success and retention in school, access to tertiary education and employment, capacity for independent living in adulthood and, ultimately, reduced need for income and living supports of adults with ASD.

## Background

9. The Autism CRC bid team consists of: Co-Directors Professor Robert van Bameveld, CEO Autism Queensland and Professor Sylvia Rodger, University of Queensland and 7(3)(b) and 49 of the RTI Act - Disclosure would, on balance, be contrary to the public interest and each of the Core Program team leaders.
10. CRCs are funded through an Australian Government program. CRCs are designed to bring together researchers and end-users in long-term collaborations to achieve outcomes of national significance.
11. Essential participants of the 2012 Autism CRC currently include University of Queensland, Queensland University of Technology, Curtin University, University of New South Wales, La Trobe University, University of Western Australia, AEIOU, Autism Queensland, Griffith University, the Mater Medical Research Institute and Autism Spectrum Australia.
12. The previous Minister committed to be an essential participant in the 2011 Autism CRC bid process (**Attachment 2** – Ref 11/163032). This commitment involved a financial contribution of \$500,000 (\$50,000 over 10 years) plus in-kind support. The bid was not successful but positive feedback was received by the bid process reviewers.
13. The Autism CRC bid was adjusted to reflect this feedback and resubmitted for the 2012 CRC bid process. Recommitment was sought at the beginning of 2012 from the then Minister for the Department to be an essential participant again for the 2012 Autism CRC bid. The essential participant commitment had lessened to \$400,000 (\$50,000 over 8 years) plus in-kind support of \$340,000.

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14. The Autism CRC bid team was interviewed by the Selection Committee on 18 December 2012. Successful bids will be notified in late January/early February 2013.
15. Further consultation will then occur with all participants between February and June 2013 to formalise the commitment and finalise the expectations and outcomes.
16. The Autism CRC would be scheduled to commence on July 1, 2013.

#### **Right to information**

17. I am of the view that the contents or attachments contained in this brief **are not suitable** for publication.

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**Recommendation**

That the Chief of Staff

**Note** the Department's commitment to the Autism CRC bid and the financial implications.

**NOTED**

**FIONA CRAWFORD**  
**Chief of Staff**  
**Office of the Hon John-Paul Langbroek MP**  
**Minister for Education, Training and**  
**Employment**

Copy to Assistant Minister

**Minister's comments**

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Proposal to establish a  
Cooperative Research Centre for Living with  
Autism Spectrum Disorders

**The core bid team invites your organisation to join a bid for the establishment of a Cooperative Research Centre (CRC) focussing on the understanding, diagnosis and support of people with Autism Spectrum Disorders.**

PO Box 354 Sunnybank Qld 4109 Phone: 07 3273 0075 Email: [Jill.Ashburner@autismqld.com.au](mailto:Jill.Ashburner@autismqld.com.au)



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## BACKGROUND

To date, twelve organizations have committed to being essential participants of the proposed *Cooperative Research Centre for Living with Autism Spectrum Disorders (Autism CRC)*. They include the University of Queensland, Queensland University of Technology, Curtin University, the University of New South Wales, La Trobe University, University of Western Australia, the Queensland Department of Education and Training, Autism Queensland, Autism Spectrum Australia (Aspect), Griffith University, Mater Medical Research Institute and AEIOU. They have each committed to contributing \$50,000-100,000 per annum over 8 years to the proposed CRC.

The Autism CRC bid team, which consists of representatives from each of these seven organisations, is seeking to develop collaborative partnerships with industry and end-user groups/ASD service providers to be involved in a Cooperative Research Centre focussing on the understanding, diagnosis and support of people with autism spectrum disorders (ASD). The purpose of this document is to inform potential participants about the vision and goals of the proposed CRC, the Australian Federal Government's CRC program, and core research program areas of the CRC.

### **Vision of Proposed CRC for Living with Autism Spectrum Disorders**

The Autism CRC will enable earlier, more accurate and efficient diagnoses, and will find more effective and cost efficient ways of enabling children and adults with ASD to achieve valued life outcomes through an end-user driven, cooperative, public-private cooperative research centre.

### **Why pursue a CRC for Living with Autism Spectrum Disorders?**

Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) is a lifelong condition affecting at least **1 in 100<sup>1</sup> children with an estimated annual cost to Australia of \$4.5-7.2 billion**. With an unexplained 25-fold increase in diagnosis in the past 30 years, there are now **more children with ASD than the combined number of children with cerebral palsy, diabetes, deafness, blindness and sickle cell anaemia**. Currently, diagnosis of autism is imprecise, time-consuming and expensive. While there is a diverse range of intervention programs, further evidence of outcomes for these programs is still required. Schools struggle to provide for children with ASD who frequently under-achieve academically, drop out, or are excluded for behavioural reasons. In adulthood, the majority experience dependence and unemployment, while around one third experience psychiatric illness.

### **What will a CRC for Living with Autism Spectrum Disorders deliver?**

**Many of the ongoing demands for disability support**, which all governments are struggling to meet **will be alleviated** through more accurate, cost- and time-efficient diagnostic procedures, innovative technological applications, evidence-informed interventions, appropriate curriculum and tailored supported education, and independent-living and workplace participation programs. The CRC will also provide a unique longitudinal perspective of the progress of children with ASD as they mature into adulthood.

Only through the establishment of a collaborative, inter-disciplinary research team of experts will we be able to improve the prospects of **more than a million**



**Australians** directly or indirectly affected by ASD<sup>2</sup>. Our team consists of experts in medicine (paediatrics, psychiatry, genetics, epidemiology), pharmacology, neuroscience, psychology, education, speech pathology and occupational therapy working closely with individuals with ASD and their families, schools and support service providers. By ensuring that services across the lifespan are ASD-friendly and evidence-informed, we will enable children with ASD to become citizens who contribute significantly to society. This CRC will also build the **capacity of the current and future workforce** to deliver evidence-informed programs to people with autism and their families, and enhance the capacity of autism research in Australia.

- 1 Range of prevalence rates: **1 in 64 or 1.57** (Baron-Cohen, S., Scott, F. J., Allison, C. Williams, J., Bolton, P., & Matthews, F. (2009) Prevalence of autism-spectrum conditions: UK school-based population study. *The British Journal of Psychiatry* (2009) 194, 500–509. doi: 10.1192/bjp.bp.108.059345) to **1 in 110 children or .9%**. (Autism and Developmental Disabilities Monitoring Network Surveillance Year 2006 Principal Investigators (2009). Prevalence of autism spectrum disorders – Autism and Developmental Disabilities Monitoring Network, MMWR Surveillance Summary, Vol. 58, 1-29. 14 sites, United States, 2006: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention)
- 2 Estimate based on a prevalence rate of 1 in 100 and people affected (parents, siblings, grandparent, individuals x 20 years.

## About the Cooperative Research Centre Program

The Cooperative Research Centre (CRC) Program is a program funded by the Australian Government Department of Innovation, Industry Science and Research.

### The purposes of the CRC program are to:

- support medium to long-term collaboration between the **producers and end-users of research**. An end-user in this context refers to either a public or private entity capable of deploying the research outputs to deliver significant economic, environmental and/or social benefits to Australia.
- provide funding to build critical mass in **research ventures between end-users and researchers** which tackle clear and defined, major challenges for the end-users. CRCs pursue solutions to these challenges that are innovative, of high impact and capable of being effectively deployed by the end-users.
- stimulate a **broader education and training experience for postsecondary students, particularly research students**, to enhance their employment prospects, provide them with the skills needed to utilise research outputs and produce innovative end-user centred solutions.

### CRC participants

At any one time a CRC must have among its essential participants at least one Australian:

- end-user (either from the private, public or community sector); and
- higher education institution (or a research institute affiliated with a university).

### Essential Activities:

As a minimum, CRCs must undertake all of the following activities:

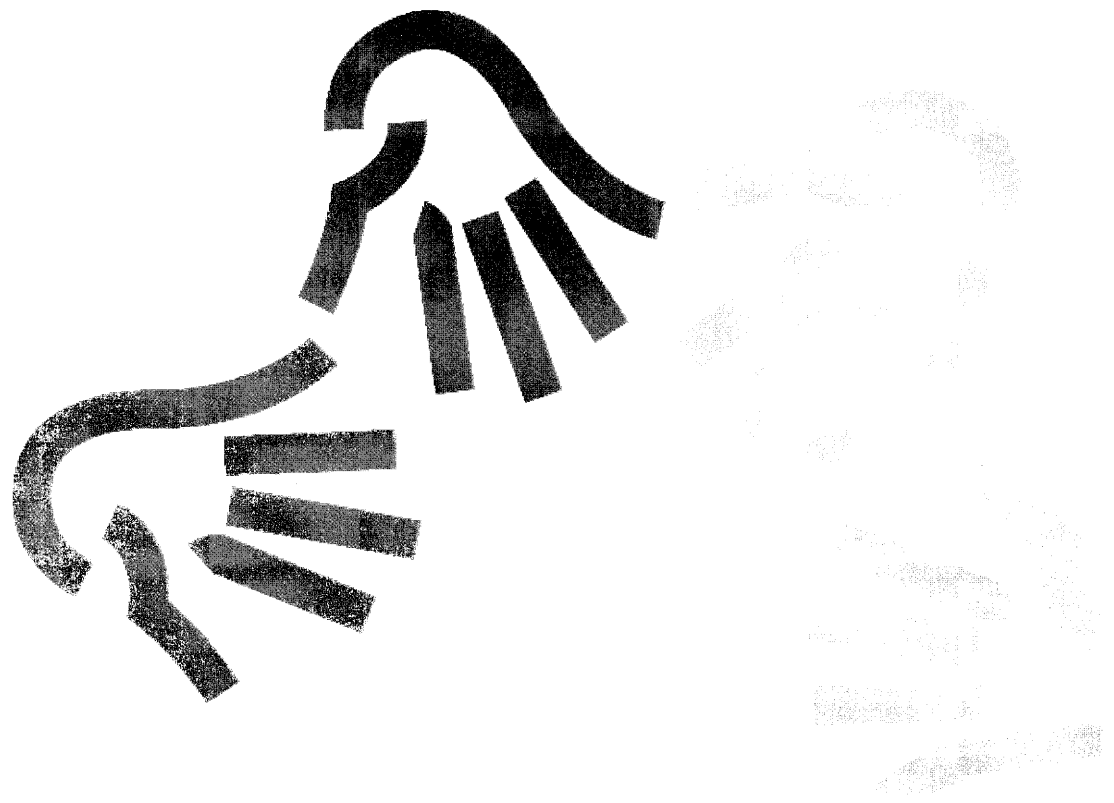




- medium to long-term **end-user driven** collaborative research;
- an **end-user-focused education and training program** at least including, but not limited to, a PhD program that complements the research programs and that builds engagement, innovation and R&D capacity within end-users
- **Small to medium enterprise (SME) strategies** that build their innovation and R&D capacity;
- **utilisation activities** to deploy research outputs and encourage take up by end-users.

### **CRC Funding**

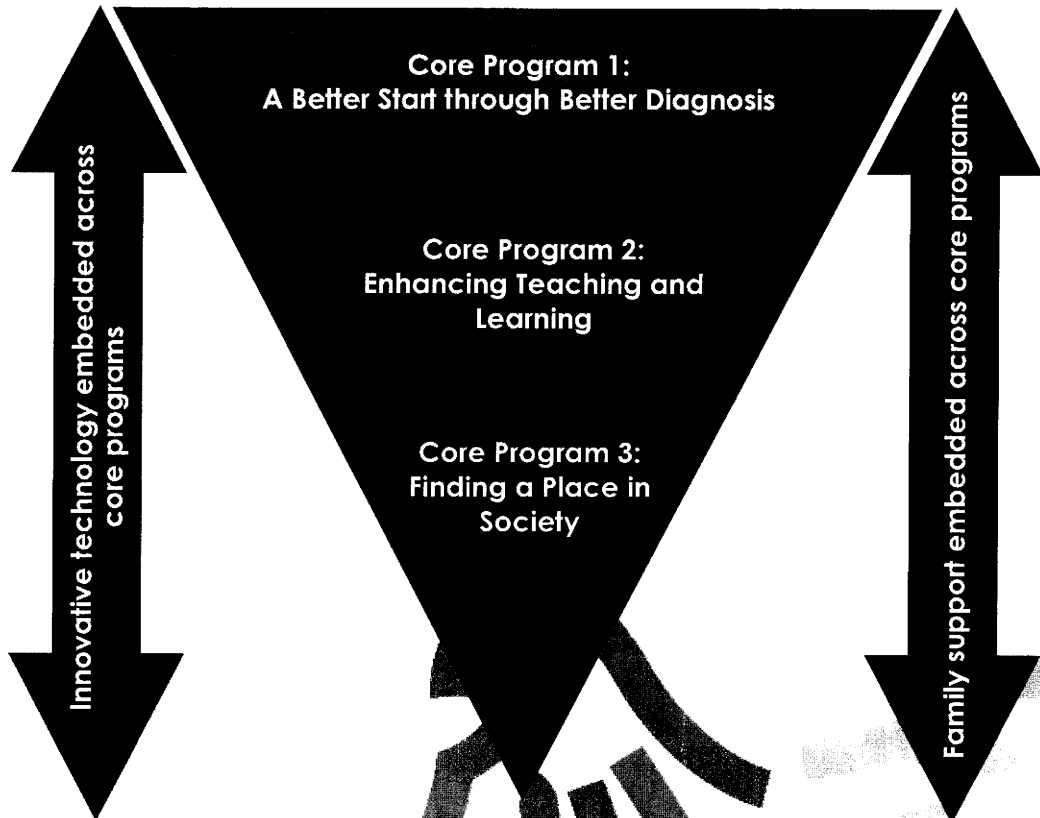
The CRC program provides funding to supplement contributions by the participants. **All participants must contribute resources to the CRC.** These include both cash and in-kind, tied and untied contributions, and these must match the Commonwealth grant. However, to be a competitive application, the total participant contributions may need to be in excess of the dollar for dollar matching required by the guidelines.





# PROPOSED CORE PROGRAMS OF THE CRC FOR LIVING WITH AUTISM SPECTRUM DISORDERS

Based on extensive discussions among more than 60 key stakeholders from around Australia and the discussions of the core bid team the following programs will be the focus of the CRC.



Information on the Autism CRC bid can also be viewed on this web page:  
[http://www.autismqld.com.au/index.php?page\\_id=333](http://www.autismqld.com.au/index.php?page_id=333)

## Core Program 1: A Better Start through Better Diagnosis

### Current challenges for end-users

- End-users have expressed concerns about instances of both over- and under-diagnosis of ASD.
- Currently specialist training in identification and diagnostic procedures is inadequate, often leading to inaccurate diagnosis and delays in the delivery of appropriate intervention.
- As current "gold standard" diagnostic tools are very time consuming and require intensive and expensive training, they are not always used.
- There are no set supports and no clear integration or pathway from identification and diagnosis to intervention services, which leads to excessive stress for families and failure to cope and adapt.

### Core Program 1 Research Outputs and Milestones:

- Biological and genetic findings will be combined to produce a 'biomarker matrix' that can identify ASD with high-levels of accuracy. Cutting-edge methodologies developed within Australia will be used to validate pre- and post-natal biological markers for ASD. Genetic research will also lead to the development of a DNA-chip and other high throughput genetic screen methods for identifying ASD susceptibility.
- An evidence-based, cost-effective universal developmental surveillance program for identifying infants at risk of ASD will be incorporated into the existing system of 'child-health checks' from 12 months of age in all states of Australia.
- A one-year tertiary Diploma in ASD Diagnosis will be implemented nationally, to provide an avenue through which diagnosticians (i.e., paediatricians, psychologists and speech pathologists) can obtain competency in the identification and diagnostic protocol as developed by the CRC.
- A minimum of three behavioural and/or biological subtypes of ASD will be identified.

### Social and economic benefits of Australia's Core Program 1

- Development of uniform screening and developmental surveillance programs for early detection of ASD in Australia, and promotion of knowledge around the early behavioural phenotype/s will lead to more efficient and accurate early identification.
- Identification of biomarkers to identify autism spectrum risk prior to the development of behavioural and cognitive manifestations will lead to early and accurate diagnosis and intervention approaches.
- More accurate, time-efficient and earlier diagnosis will reduce the cost associated with over- and under-diagnosis and enable earlier access to intervention for children with ASD, reducing the long-term impact.
- A better understanding of subtypes will contribute to understanding the underlying genetic and neurobiological mechanisms, leading to the identification of risk status as well as preventative and treatment approaches.
- Development and commercial licensing of diagnostic tools for detecting genetic susceptibility related to ASD.

## Core Program 2: Enhancing Learning and Teaching

### Current challenges for end-users

- Academic underperformance relative to level of ability among students with ASD
- Challenges with behavioural regulation in classrooms (frequently resulting in a suspension, exclusion or use of home schooling as a last resort)
- High incidence of students with ASD experiencing bullying in schools
- High incidence of anxiety and depression and other mental health issues among students with ASD
- Students with ASD with sensory processing issues frequently find school environments overwhelming (e.g., excessive noise levels, visual clutter)
- Lack of knowledge and understanding of ASD amongst teachers and other school staff

### Core Program 2 Research Outputs and Milestones:

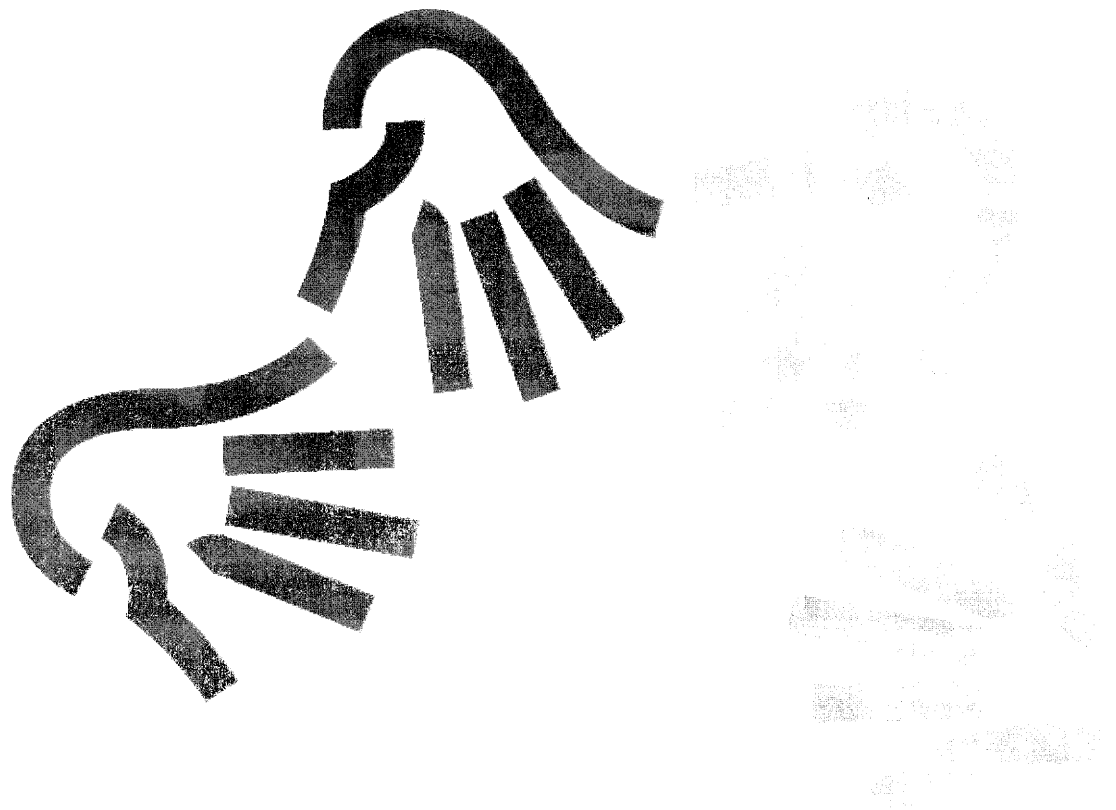
- The *ASD Classrooms of Excellence* project will evaluate the use of inclusive teaching and assessment strategies that aim to enhance the capacity of students with ASD to process instruction, express their knowledge, and engage in and transition between learning tasks.
- The impact of classroom environments (e.g., acoustics and visual organisation) on student outcomes will be investigated.
- The effectiveness of transition planning programs for students with ASD, when they move into and between educational settings will be examined.
- The effectiveness of multi-disciplinary models of support for students with ASD will be explored.
- Programs to support social-emotional wellbeing and school connectedness will be developed and evaluated.
- Positive behaviour and engagement programs for students with a range of behavioural and emotional needs and the use of advanced videoconferencing system to deliver these programs to students in rural and regional areas will be examined.
- The information yielded by Program 1 will be used to identify autism subtypes and, subsequently, the occurrence of these subtypes in a school setting. This in turn will be used to target specific needs, leading to more effective classroom design and educational approaches.
- Academic staff from participating universities will form a higher education sector reference group with the aim of informing the development of minimum national teacher registration requirements, and pre-service education programs for teachers and other professionals in regards to the education of students with ASD.
- Training packages for education professionals, GPs, pediatricians and psychologists on the education of students with ASD will be developed.

### Social and economic benefits to Australia of Core Program 2:

- Enhancing educational approaches and processes will result in greater school success and retention in school, access to tertiary education and employment and capacity for independent living in adulthood and, ultimately, reduced need for income and living supports of adults with ASD.



- The educational approaches utilized to enhance the learning of students with ASD have a broad application and can be successfully applied to all learners.





## Core Program 3: Finding a place in society

### Current challenges for end-users

- The limited evidence available suggests high levels of adverse adult outcomes such as long-term unemployment, dependence on families and social isolation, and secondary negative impacts on the health and wellbeing of individuals and families.
- Parents describe the need for interventions to address self awareness, relationships, autonomy and community living challenges.
- Little is known about effective interventions for adults with ASD to address participation in tertiary and vocational education, and workforce participation (employment).
- There is a very high prevalence of secondary mental health issues such as severe anxiety and depression in young people and adults with ASD that impact on their participation.

### Program 3 Research Outputs and Milestones

- Increase the number of young people with ASD in tertiary and vocational education sectors by 20% and reduce the rate of unemployment of people with ASD by 20%
- Evidence based ASD specific vocational assessment/ guidance protocol and an ASD specific job capacity assessment to enabling matching of the skills and abilities of individuals with ASD with appropriate post school education and employment options
- Development of multi-state data set on employment of individuals with ASD to inform future research and national policy re workplace accommodation and supports.
- Evidence based information modules for VET and University sector student support staff, academics and students with ASD to enhance inclusion and academic success in the sector and social relationships in adulthood, community access supports (transport/driving, house use by support workers, families, and professionals).
- As with Program 2, the information collected from Program 1 regarding autism subtypes will be used to tailor services to specific needs associated with these subtypes.

### Social and economic benefits to Australia of Core Program 3

- Adults with ASD will increase their participation in vocational and tertiary education and employment and community engagement, and reduce their dependence on families and spouses.
- The economic costs associated with income and living support will be identified and reduced.
- Effective ways of supporting the social emotional well being and quality of life of adults with ASD will be developed and this will enhance their societal participation and reduce long-term use of services including mental health services.

## Innovative use of technology embedded across core programs

### Current challenges for end-users

As people with ASD are almost universally visual learners and are less adept at processing speech, gestures and facial expressions, they naturally gravitate towards technology, which offers predictable and consistent environments with minimal distractions and the flexibility of working at their own pace. However, research on the effectiveness of different types of the hardware (e.g., laptops, iPads, iPods) and software in achieving particular outcomes is lacking.

- Specific outcomes that require further evaluation include the use of technology:
  - as an alternative means of communication for children who have limited speech
  - to support the understanding of social interaction (e.g., human gestures, emotions and facial expressions and appropriate ways to interact socially) using software applications
  - to assist with organisation (e.g., visual schedules, electronic calendars, task sheets and electronic reminders)
  - as a vocational opportunity for young people with ASD for whom this area is a strength
- Services for children with ASD and their families in regional and rural Australia are infrequent and often inadequate. Possible applications of remote technologies using Australia's new high-speed National Broadband Network to overcome the tyranny of distance include:
  - direct interventions with people with ASD
  - support of professionals in health and education
  - support of diagnosis of ASD, and diagnosis and management of secondary mental health issues particularly where there is limited access to paediatricians or psychiatrists

### Deliverables

- Core program 2 will deliver research on the effectiveness of technological applications as an adjunct to educational approaches
- Core program 3 will develop and evaluate employment programs focusing on technology for young people with ASD for whom this is a strength
- All core programs will incorporate cost-benefit analysis of the use of remote technologies to deliver supports to rural and regional areas using the National Broadband Network

### Social and economic outcomes to Australia

- Better outcomes for people with ASD in terms of communication, social understanding, education and vocational opportunities.
- Economic benefits arising from the Australian development of innovative technological applications, which would have both domestic and overseas markets.

## Family supports embedded across core programs

### Current challenges for families

- Families often report delays in diagnosis and high levels of stress during the gap between diagnosis and accessing a suitable service.
- Families of school age children report that school staff often do not appreciate the impact of ASD on their child and consequently misunderstand their child's learning needs and behaviour. Where routine school behaviour management strategies prove to be ineffective, schools frequently respond by suspending or sending students home, or encouraging parents to home school the child. As a result some parents experience difficulties in accessing a quality education for their child.
- Parents often describe the experience of their child leaving school as "falling off a cliff" because of the challenges that their child experiences in accessing vocational or tertiary education, or finding employment. Many young people with ASD become socially isolated in the family home and continue to be dependent on their families as adults.
- When compared to other families, families of children with ASD are known to experience higher rates of anxiety and depression, and to have lower family incomes as result of the need to make alternative employment choices to care for their child.

### Deliverables

The concerns of families of children with ASD will be addressed by the following programs:

- Core Program 1 will focus on better developmental surveillance, earlier, more accurate diagnosis, and a seamless transition between diagnostic and intervention services.
- Core program 2 will focus on evaluation and implementation of ASD-friendly classroom programs and intensive social/emotional/self-regulation programs for students with complex behavioural needs and improved home-school communication.
- Core Program 3 will focus on evaluation and implementation of adult programs addressing social interaction skills, emotion regulation, and relationships, and supports to enable adults with ASD to participate in tertiary and vocational education and employment.

### Social and economic benefits to Australia

- More responsive services from children, adolescents and adults with ASD will reduce the stress experienced by families.
- Improved access to a quality education and/or post-school options such as vocational or tertiary education, employment and/or community programs will enable parents of children or adults with ASD to participate in the workforce and in community life to the same extent as other parents. Increased workforce and community participation of family members will result in improved family well-being, higher family incomes, and benefits to the Australian economy.





**Hon Cameron Dick MP**  
Member for Greenslopes



**Queensland  
Government**

24 June 2011

**Minister for Education  
and Industrial Relations**

Dr Robert van Barneveld  
Consultant Research Scientist (Nutrition)  
PO Box 354  
SUNNYBANK QLD 4109

Email:

Dear Dr van Barneveld

Thank you for your recent correspondence regarding the proposed Autism Cooperative Research Centre (CRC) and your invitation for the Department of Education and Training to participate.

It was my pleasure to meet with you on Monday 16 May 2011 to discuss the bid and anticipated outcomes of the Autism CRC. The *Invitation to Participate* prospectus enclosed with your correspondence outlined an ambitious and exciting initiative.

I am pleased to advise that I have approved that the Department support the Autism CRC as an Essential Participant – with a funding commitment of \$50,000 per annum over 10 years.

With respect to the funding arrangements, I invite you to contact Ms Colleen Franklin, Director, Education Queensland, by email at [colleen.franklin@deta.qld.gov.au](mailto:colleen.franklin@deta.qld.gov.au) or on telephone (07) 3235 0983.

Once again thank you for inviting the Department to contribute to and be an Essential Participant in this national initiative.

Yours sincerely

**CAMERON DICK MP**  
**Minister for Education and Industrial Relations**

Ref: 11/140237

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Hon John-Paul Langbroek MP  
Minister for Education, Training and Employment

15 JAN 2013

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Professor Robert van Barneveld  
Consultant Research Scientist (Nutrition)  
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Dear Professor van Barneveld

Thank you for your letter dated 26 October 2012 regarding the 2012 Autism Cooperative Research Centre (CRC) bid.

With the CRC bid being shortlisted to progress to the second and final stage of the selection process, I would appreciate the opportunity for staff from my Department to meet with you and the relevant program leaders regarding the anticipated role of my Department, the proposed financial contribution, and the expected leverage and outcomes that will result from the Autism CRC.

This is a very exciting initiative and I look forward to hearing of the outcomes of the meeting and the bid process.

I invite you to contact Ms Sharon Mullins, Executive Director, State Schooling Operations and Strategy, by email at [sharon.mullins@dete.qld.gov.au](mailto:sharon.mullins@dete.qld.gov.au) or on telephone 3224 5530 to organise the meeting.

Yours sincerely

**JOHN-PAUL LANGBROEK MP**  
Minister for Education, Training and Employment

Ref: 12/433181 ETE/12/3889

Minister's Office File Ref:	
Department File Ref:	12/395522

## Briefing Note

The Honourable John-Paul Langbroek MP  
Minister for Education, Training and Employment

### Action required: For Approval

### Action required by: As soon as possible

**Urgent** –A decision needs to be made regarding the future of the funding agreement and this advice conveyed to CYAAA prior to the end of the school year. CYAAA finish Term 4 on 7 December 2012.

### SUBJECT: CAPE YORK ABORIGINAL AUSTRALIAN ACADEMY FUNDING AGREEMENT

#### Summary of key objectives

- To inform the Minister about the current status of the funding agreement between the Department and the Cape York Aboriginal Australian Academy (CYAAA) which expires at the end of the 2012 school year.
- To seek approval of one of two options regarding the future of the funding agreement.

#### Key issues

1. The previous State Government made a commitment to fund a trial of a new model of schooling as part of the range of welfare reforms occurring through the Cape York Partnership.
2. A Memorandum of Understanding between the former Department of Education and Training and Cape York Partnerships, signed in December 2009, outlined the parameters of a partnership to ensure that the Class, Club and Culture programs as outlined in a business case were delivered at Coen and Aurukun. (Ref: 12/397275)
3. A Funding Agreement between the former Department of Education and Training and the Cape York Aboriginal Australian Academy (acting through the Cape York Partnership for Welfare Reform Pty Ltd) was developed to provide up to an additional \$7.2 million for a period of three years from 22 January 2010 up to the end of the school year 2012 (Ref: 12/78788).
4. This additional funding was to trial Class, Club and Culture programs. The normal operation of the school is funded through the recurrent allocation made to all state schools in Queensland.
5. The CYAAA trial was established at the Aurukun Campus and Coen Campus in 2010, with the program being extended to Hopevale State School in 2011. This trial is being funded from the Smarter Schools National Partnership.
6. Based on average February effective enrolments for CYAAA over the past three years of 372 (in 2012 there were 221 in Aurukun (including pre-Prep), 46 in Coen and 119 in Hopevale), the investment of \$7.72m over three years equates to approximately \$6,900 per enrolment per year.

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7. The scope of the Funding Agreement was only to cover Coen and Aurukun although due to funds being available it has been extended to cover Hopevale as it is a campus of CYAAA, the state school.
8. The Funding Agreement expires at the end of the school year 2012.
9. The Funding Agreement states that, "If funds are available within the \$7.72m then the program can be extended beyond 2012".
10. As at the end of Semester 1 2012, the full cost to date is estimated at \$3.5m – leaving a balance of \$4.22m unexpended funds.
11. There was low expenditure in the early period primarily due to delays in establishing the Club and Culture programs. The timing of expenditure is also dependent upon when Education Queensland is invoiced.
12. The full year cost of fully operational Class, Club and Culture programs is estimated at approximately \$2m – at an annual cost per student of \$5,180.
13. It is anticipated that there will be funds for at least the 2013 school year – with potentially \$1.22m still remaining at the end of the 2013 school year.
14. An independent evaluation is currently being conducted by the Australian Council for Educational Research, with the first interim report due to be provided in January 2013, and a final report at the end of March 2013.
15. The evaluation will take two key approaches:
  - a. The distance travelled in the school across a range of indicators will be measured.
  - b. The distance travelled at these schools will be benchmarked with like schools in Cape York, and across Australia.
16. The quantitative data currently outlined in the framework have been negotiated with CYAAA and include NAPLAN, attendance, School Opinion Survey, and other literacy and numeracy measures (i.e., PAT – M, PAT – R, Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills and Neale Analysis).
17. This brief provides an overview of options to be considered regarding the future of the funding agreement between the Department and the CYAAA.

### Options

18. The Queensland Government has the option to extend the funding, or to cease it in December 2012.

#### Option 1: Cease the Funding Agreement in December 2012

19. The Queensland Government could cease funding at the end of the school year 2012. This would pre-empt the findings of the evaluation. While the question of future funding is outside of the scope of the evaluation, it may be prudent to await the findings of the evaluation prior to ceasing support for the trial.

Minister's Office File Ref:	
Department File Ref:	12/395522

## Option 2: Extend the Funding Agreement until December 2013

20. The extension of the program until December 2013 enables the school to maintain its program for the full school year rather than only one semester. Schools generally plan for a full school year. Once the outcomes of the evaluation are known, the Government could work with CYAAA to identify a funding model beyond 2013.

### Background

21. Cape York Aboriginal Australian Academy is a state school with three campuses – Aurukun, Coen and Hopevale with a principal responsible for the school.

22. The agreement is with Cape York Aboriginal Australian Academy a separate incorporated body with 7(3)(b) and 49 of the RTI Act - Disclosure would, on balance, be contrary to the public interest.

23. These two organisations work in partnership to provide the three programs at the school.

24. A brief has also been provided for the Minister's consideration (Ref: 12/361363) recommending the closure of the secondary campus from 2013. This will mean that the teacher FTEs that are provided to the school for the secondary component will not be provided in 2013. Currently some of these FTEs are being used to support the Club and Culture programs.

### Current outcomes

25. The most recent attendance information for Aurukun, Coen and Hopevale shows improved attendance at Aurukun. NAPLAN results show no substantial improvement for these sites.

26. There are a number of provisos to be taken into account with respect to the analysis of these data. These include: the small numbers of students at the schools; the fact that gains will need to be measured in long term trends rather than the short period of time from the transition year in 2010; and the restricted nature of the data provided. However, the general trends since 2009, the year before the transition year in Aurukun and Coen, and two years before the transition year for Hopevale reveal:

- For Aurukun —an increase of 5.6% in attendance of Indigenous students from 2009-2012; no discernible pattern of overall improvement in NAPLAN
- For Coen — no upward trend for attendance from 2009–2012 but having started at a much higher level than Aurukun; an overall upward trend in NAPLAN
- For Hopevale from 2010 – no upward trend in attendance from 2010–2012 but having started at a much higher level than Aurukun; no discernible pattern of overall improvement in NAPLAN.

### Right to information

27. I am of the view that the contents or attachments contained in this brief are **not suitable** for publication.

Minister's Office File Ref:	
Department File Ref:	12/395522

**Recommendation**

That the Minister

Note the information regarding the funding agreement between the Department and the Cape York Aboriginal Australian Academy; and

Approve one of two options below regarding the future of the funding agreement.

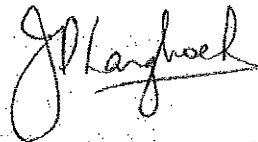
- Option 1: Cease the Funding Agreement in December 2012
- Option 2: Extend the Funding Agreement until December 2013

NOTED

~~APPROVED/NOT APPROVED~~  
**ENDORSED/NOTED**



**FIONA CRAWFORD**  
 Chief of Staff  
 Office of the Hon John-Paul Langbroek MP  
 Minister for Education, Training and  
 Employment




**JOHN-PAUL LANGBROEK MP**  
 Minister for Education, Training and  
 Employment

to all, 12.

9.11.12

Copy to Assistant Minister

**Minister's comments**

Action Officer	Endorsed by:	Endorsed by:	Endorsed by:
Sharon Mullins	ADG	DDG	DG
Executive	Marg	Lyn Mckenzie	Julle Grantham
Director	Pethiyagoda		
State Schooling	State	Education	DETE
Strategy and	Schooling	Queensland	
Evaluation	Operations		
	and Strategy		
Tel: 324 73544	Tel: 323 70157	Tel: 323 70619	Tel: 323 71070
	Mob:	Mob:	Mob:
	Date: 29/10/12	Date: 29/10/12	Date: 30/10/12

## Memorandum of Understanding

Cape York Partnerships for Welfare Reform Pty Ltd (ABN 72 070 475 311) and the State of Queensland (through the Department of Education and Training) agree to work in partnership to ensure that the Class, Club, Culture and Demand programs and associated high expectation, high quality educational philosophy of the Cape York Aboriginal Australian Academy proposed in the business case is delivered at the Aurukun and Coen Academy schools as follows:

1. An education reform committee will be established as a sub-committee of the Cape York Welfare Reform (CYWR) Project Board to oversight the following:

- the delivery of the Class program (Direct Instruction and associated behaviour management components) as proposed in the business case
- the full commitment of the Department of Education and Training staff to deliver the Class program and undertake professional development as guided by the preferred Direct Instruction implementation partner to ensure the program is implemented to the fullest extent and highest fidelity to facilitate maximum outcomes
- the Academy to contract and facilitate the provision of professional development, ongoing support and educational textbooks and materials for the delivery of the Direct Instruction and associated behaviour management components of the Class program
- implementation of the contractual arrangement between the Cape York Aboriginal Australian Academy (the Academy) and the Department of Education and Training (DET) for the delivery of the Club and Culture programs by the Academy in the Aurukun and Coen Academy schools
- Implementation of Demand initiative programs by the Academy under the Cape York Welfare Reform model.

The sub-committee will report on progress to the CYWR Project Board.

The sub-committee will be chaired by Noel Pearson with:

- 1-2 Department of Education and Training (DET)/Department of Communities representatives
- 1-2 Commonwealth Government (DEEWR, FACHSIA) representatives
- 3-4 Cape York Aboriginal Australian Academy (CYAAA) representatives.

Don Anderson as Executive Principal (Western Cape College) will sit on the sub-committee as an ex officio member.

The government representatives on the sub-committee will be officers that have maximum seniority and objectivity to support the partnership between DET and the Academy to ensure recommendations are supported within the state and Commonwealth governments and efforts in achieving the core objectives of the initiative are maximised. These representatives will be approved by the CYWR Project Board. The intention of the parties is that the sub-committee members be in alignment with the educational philosophy of the Academy as proposed in the business case in order to give the Academy the best chance of success.

A binding agreement between the Cape York Welfare Reform stakeholders will be developed to support the implementation of this reform initiative. Specifically the agreement will be designed to ensure that there is a clear understanding about the relationship between the sub-committee and Executive Principal (Western Cape College) of the Academy schools and the roles and responsibilities of the parties within that relationship. Additionally the agreement will ensure that the Executive Principal (Western Cape College), in making decisions about the operations of the Academy schools, will as much as possible, align their decision making to the advice received from the sub-committee. The parties will use their best endeavours to execute this binding agreement as soon as possible but no later than 22 January 2010.

2. A Cape York Aboriginal Australian Academy will be incorporated under corporations law as a 'Not For Profit' Incorporated body:

- a. Noel Pearson will chair the Board and the directors will be as per the business case with the addition of Ross Clark as an experienced former regional director of DET
- b. A director appointed by DET and the Commonwealth Government may also be on the Board
- c. The intention of the parties is that the Board members be in alignment with the educational philosophy of the Academy as proposed in the business case in order to give the Academy the best chance of success
- d. The Academy will be provided the funding allocated by DET under the National Partnerships allocation over three years through a contract, in order to:
  - i. contract and facilitate the Direct Instruction implementation partner to provide professional development, ongoing support and educational textbooks and materials for the delivery of the Direct Instruction and associated behaviour management components of the Class program
  - ii. deliver the Club and Culture program to the Academy schools.

The Academy will have necessary flexibility over the administration of this funding to deliver these services as specified in the funding agreement.

3. Education Queensland (EQ) will administer existing school resources in accordance with the allocative model through Western Cape College (WCC).

4. Don Anderson will be the Executive Principal (Western Cape College) including the two state primary schools that are the subject of this proposal:

- a. Western Cape College Weipa would have the function of providing the corporate and operational services of the two Academy schools
- b. Coen, for the purposes of school identity and branding, will be a campus of the Academy, but in terms of governance and administration it will come under WCC
- c. Aurukun, for the purposes of school identity and branding, will be a campus of the Academy, but in terms of governance and administration it will come under WCC
- d. The budgets for Aurukun and Coen Academy schools will be administered separately and transparently from the Weipa and Mapoon campus budgets
- e. The Executive Principal (Western Cape College) will have program reporting responsibility in relation to the Class, Club, Culture and Demand programs to the Assistant Director-General, Teaching and Learning, Education Queensland



*Dot points b and c will need to be consulted with QTU if asking teachers to wear uniforms.*

*DET will facilitate this meeting*

5. A binding agreement between the Academy and DET will make provision for:

- a. the participation of the Academy in the recruitment and selection of teachers and school leaders. This process could be modelled on the recruitment and selection processes used for National Partnerships, Partners For Success and for the Queensland Academies
- b. facilities
- c. respective obligations to deliver the Class (Direct Instruction and behaviour management), Club, Culture program and Demand initiatives
- d. an operational co-ordination group that will meet regularly as required to co-ordinate and ensure smooth delivery of the day to day operations of the Class (Direct Instruction and behaviour management), Club, Culture and Demand programs between DET and the Academy. This group will consist of the Executive Principal (Western Cape College), the Head of the Academy and the Chair of the sub-committee.
- e. all other management arrangements including the contractual arrangement between DET and the Academy.

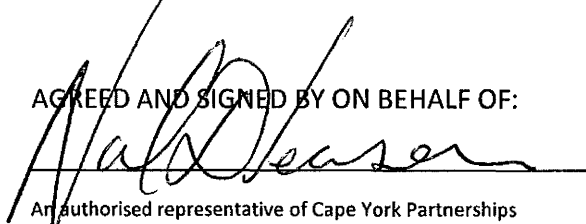
*Dot point (a) will need to be consulted with QTU – DET will facilitate this meeting*

6. Specific commitments:

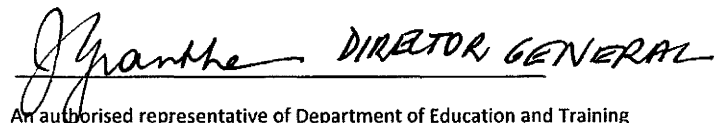
- a. that the appointment of the Head of Campus of Aurukun be subject to the Executive Principal (Western Cape College) and the Academy being confident that there is alignment with the proposed program and if not, then preparedness to find an alternative appointment. The process to determine alignment will involve an introduction to the Direct Instruction methodology and then a commitment through interview with the Executive Principal (Western Cape College) and Academy representatives to implement the proposed program
- b. that Maureen Liddy be approached for recruitment into an acting Coen Head of Campus role during the introductory phase before taking up the role of Head of Culture and Club (to be funded by the Academy) when a fulltime Head is recruited for the Coen campus.
- c. the Executive Principal (Western Cape College) will sign a contract of employment with the CEO of DET pending the agreement of this proposal
- d. The parties acknowledge that operational funding for the Academy itself is not provided for in this Memorandum of Understanding and acknowledge that Cape York Partnerships will be pursuing a resolution for this funding with the Australian Government.
- e. the Class program will commence in January 2010 and the Club and Culture program will start following Term 1, 2010 (This will be the Executive Principal (Western Cape College)'s decision in consultation with the sub-committee).
- f. the staff induction and training program will be implemented as proposed in the business case using the Direct Instruction implementation partner. The program will be delivered from the 22<sup>nd</sup> January over ten working days. The Executive Principal (Western Cape College) will determine, in consultation with the sub-committee, how to ensure the professional development occurs

- g. the Executive Principal (Western Cape College), in consultation with the sub-committee, has the capacity to tailor the induction program for teachers going into Aurukun and Coen to suit the specific needs of the Academy
- h. Education Queensland integrates existing pre-prep program into the Academy as proposed in the business case during 2010, in consultation with and approval by the Aurukun Shire Council (Aurukun) and Crèche & Kindergarten (Coen) It is noted that the C&K program at Coen is not a pre-prep program.
- i. the existing Cape York Welfare Reform Demand programs are transitioned to the Academy as proposed in the business case during 2010, if approved by the CYWR Project Board
- j. the implementation of a transition plan for all 2009 Aurukun secondary school students, to ensure they are placed in local secondary preparatory, alternative secondary or vocational education during 2010
- k. the parties agree to use their best endeavours to resolve any emergent problems. The first point of advice for the Executive Principal (Western Cape College) is through the sub-committee. If subsequent directives from the state or federal government are in conflict with this advice, the following dispute resolution process will be initiated:
- i. The sub-committee, the relevant government authority and the Executive Principal (Western Cape College) will meet to find agreement
  - ii. If agreement cannot be reached, the dispute will be elevated to the CYWR Project Board for advice and to the Director General of DET for decision.
- l. the parties agree to provide for succession planning that will ensure the ongoing sustainability of the model
- m. it is proposed that the model be reviewed before the end of the first twelve months of operation and, that where, if in the reasonable opinion of the evaluating body amendments to the agreement should be made to facilitate the more effective operation of the proposal, the parties are committed to objectively assessing that recommendation and implementing all necessary adjustments (including a stronger governance model). The CYWR Project Board will be the body to evaluate the model and recommend required changes (including governance arrangements and funding where possible).

AGREED AND SIGNED BY ON BEHALF OF:

  
An authorised representative of Cape York Partnerships

24 December 2009 (Date)

 **DIRECTOR GENERAL**  
An authorised representative of Department of Education and Training

24 December 2009 (Date)

Minister's Office File Ref:	
Department File Ref:	12/361363

## Briefing Note

The Honourable John-Paul Langbroek MP  
Minister for Education, Training and Employment

**Action required: For Approval**

**Action required by: As soon as possible**

**Urgent – Proposal to take effect commencing 2013 school year.**

**SUBJECT: PROVISION OF YEAR 8-10 SECONDARY EDUCATION AT AURUKUN DURING 2013.**

### Summary of key objectives

- To seek the Minister's approval for Western Cape College to assume responsibility for providing the Years 8-10 secondary education program in Aurukun.

### Key Issues

- The Cape York Aboriginal Australian Academy (CYAAA) provides an educational program for students from pre-prep to Year 7 at the Aurukun campus. CYAAA accepts secondary enrolments. Students are placed in ability groups for literacy and numeracy.
- In January 2012 a residential college opened in Weipa to enable students from remote communities to enrol in the Weipa Campus of Western Cape College.
- The Principal of Western Cape College (WCC) supervises the operation of the residential college. Extended services are provided for residential students, including intensive literacy and numeracy programs and welfare support.
- Given small numbers of student enrolments and the difficulties associated with providing a comprehensive secondary specific program to small numbers of students, particularly in remote locations, it is proposed that secondary education at Aurukun be provided by Western Cape College in 2013. The secondary education will be provided by a small number of teachers based in Aurukun under the educational leadership of WCC.
- Students will have the choice of enrolling at WCC yet remain within community or live at the residential college in Weipa and attend WCC.
- The existing Transition Support Service will continue to support Year 7 students to apply to, and transition to boarding schools, and will support all students who are at boarding school to complete their schooling.
- Where students are currently not enrolled in a school outside of the community, the Western Cape College will case manage students to engage in the secondary program at Aurukun or to transition to the residential college and secondary school at Weipa.
- The Principal of Western Cape College will work with the Executive Principal, CYAAA and the Head of Campus at CYAAA Aurukun to ensure that students are enrolled in a secondary school for the 2013 school year.
- It is proposed that this strategy be evaluated during Term 3, 2013, to inform consideration of the closure of the secondary department at Aurukun from the start of the 2014 school year.

Minister's Office File Ref:	
Department File Ref:	12/361363

### Implications

10. CYAAA is currently allocated six teacher FTEs for the secondary school through the staffing model. In 2012 only 4 FTEs of the six FTEs have been provided to the school.
11. It is recommended that the six teacher FTEs be allocated to Western Cape College during 2013 to operate the secondary program and to support the re-engagement of students who are living in Aurukun and not enrolled in school.
12. It is recommended that CYAAA Aurukun campus maintains the resources of a Deputy Principal and Head of Curriculum for 2013 to enable the school to adjust to the reduction in staffing.
13. The evaluation of the strategy in 2013 will consider the level of recurrent resourcing required for the successful transition of students to Western Cape College.
14. If the closure of the secondary department results in improved educational opportunities, future approval may be sought for the closure of the secondary departments at Kowanyama State School and Lockhart River State School.

### Background

15. Past enrolment figures for the secondary department at Aurukun are as follows:
  - 50 students in 2008;
  - 28 students in July 2011; and
  - 11 students in July 2012.
16. As at August 2012, there were approximately 75 children of compulsory school age (Years 8-10) in Aurukun. Of these 75 children:
  - 19 were enrolled and attending boarding schools throughout the State; and
  - 56 were living in the community:
    - 13 of whom were enrolled in the secondary department at Aurukun Campus CYAAA; and
    - 43 of whom were not enrolled in any school.
17. Students in the secondary department at Aurukun have achieved poorly in the National Assessment Program – Literacy and Numeracy and there are limited pathways to employment, further education and training.

### Right to information

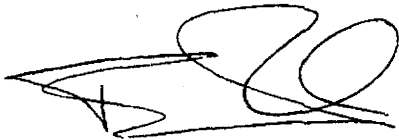
18. I am of the view that the contents or attachments contained in this brief are not suitable for publication.

Minister's Office File Ref:	
Department File Ref:	12/361363

**Recommendation**

That the Minister approve Western Cape College provide 8-10 secondary education at Aurukun in 2013.

NOTED

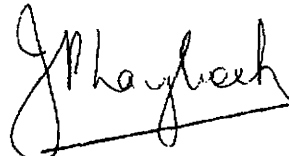


**FIONA CRAWFORD**  
 Chief of Staff  
 Office of the Hon John-Paul Langbroek MP  
 Minister for Education, Training and  
 Employment

26 / 11 / 12

Copy to Assistant Minister

~~APPROVED~~ / NOT APPROVED  
 ENDORSED / NOTED



**JOHN-PAUL LANGBROEK MP**  
 Minister for Education, Training and  
 Employment

27 / 11 / 12

**Minister's comments**

Action Officer Clive Dixon	Endorsed by: Marg Pethiyagoda	Noted by: Lyn McKenzie	Endorsed by: Annette Whitehead A/Director-General
Regional Director Far North Queensland Region Tel: 40465271 Date: 25/9/2012	Assistant Director- General State Schooling Operations and Strategy Tel: 32370157 Mob: Date: 21/11 /2012	Deputy Director- General Education Queensland Tel: 32370619 Mob: Date: 21/11/2012	Education, Training and Employment Tel:32371070 Mob: Date: 22 / 11 / 12



**URGENT MINISTERIAL MEETING BRIEF REQUEST**

*Requested by: Departmental Liaison Officer (3237 0875) YR*

**To: Education Queensland**

**Subject: Minister to meet with Mr Russell Mitchell, General Manager, Opera Qld on Thursday 16 August at 2.00pm**

**Date/time required by MESU: 10AM 10 AUGUST 2012**

**Today's date: Tuesday, 15 January 2013**

---

- Please provide an IBN, for the Chief of Staff and **Minister** to note.

**Key Meeting Details**

When: Thursday 16 August 2012

Where: Minister's office – Education House

Opera Queensland would like to meet with the Minister to outline their plans for the future development and enhancement of education programmes.

The brief should address/include, without restricting it to, the following:

- What are the current arrangements between Education Queensland and Opera Queensland?
- Address any issues that may be raised-or may exist-regarding the meeting subject, attendees and/or venue.
- Provide detailed information about any relevant **contentious** issues and suggested responses to those issues.
- Provide only relevant background information that may assist understanding of any issues.

*When a departmental representative is requested to attend, please ensure they have noted the appointment in diary for attendance. Please also advise the requesting officer of the rep and indicate in the briefing and in TRIM notes.*

Thank you for your assistance in providing this information by the date/time required.

---

**Action required**

- Action Officer to prepare IBN using the template

**Preparation instructions**

- If this brief requires additional information from another branch/directorate within the department, please liaise with the appropriate person to submit one consolidated response.
- Please TRIM brief and any attachments to Coordinator Executive Briefings M&ESU indicating in the TRIM notes that it has been approved by the appropriate officers. Please bring Coordinator Executive Briefings M&ESU attention to urgent documents.
- Hard copies of the approved IBN (and any attachments) should be returned to Coordinator Executive Briefings M&ESU (floor 14), who will then process the brief through the relevant channels. Under **NO CIRCUMSTANCES** are briefings to be sent directly to the Minister's office.
- Any attachments and/or correspondence prepared for Ministerial signature should also be contained under this request *and* forwarded with request to Coordinator Executive Briefings M&ESU (floor 14).

**PLEASE NOTE – the brief must progress through MESU and have DG approval prior to meeting the MO deadline.**

Minister's Office File Ref:	
Department File Ref:	12/280261

## Briefing Note

The Honourable John-Paul Langbroek MP  
Minister for Education, Training and Employment

### Action required: For Noting

Action required by: 16/08/2012

Routine – Brief to support Minister's meeting with Opera Queensland.

**SUBJECT: MINISTER TO MEET WITH MR RUSSELL MITCHELL, GENERAL MANAGER, OPERA QLD ON THURSDAY 16 AUGUST AT 2.00 PM**

### Summary of key objectives

- On 16 August 2012, the Minister will meet with Mr Russell Mitchell, General Manager, Opera Queensland.

### Key issues

- Mr Mitchell recently wrote to the Director-General requesting a one year extension of the current Education Liaison Officer seconded from Education Queensland.
- The Director-General responded to Mr Mitchell on 19 July declining the extension and advising Mr Mitchell that "... my Department is currently reviewing all items of expenditure including grant agreements to external organisations and the provision of secondments."
- Consideration is currently being given to discontinuing Education Queensland support for Opera Queensland.

### Implications

- It is anticipated Mr Mitchell will be seeking to maintain the current level of support and possibly requesting a reconsideration of the decision not to extend the current Education Liaison Officer.

### Background

- Education Queensland currently supports the education program at Opera Queensland through the provision of an unindexed annual grant of \$35,000, an annual indexed grant currently of \$69,959.23, and one AO6 temporary Education Liaison Officer.
- Opera Queensland provides an extensive suite of more than 14 opera education programs under the *Opera Works* banner that include a school touring program, a senior years *Moving Opera* residency program and in-school workshops for primary and secondary students and teachers.
- Opportunities are maximised for state school students and teachers to participate in these programs.
- This funding has been identified as potential savings as part of the Department's budget saving strategy for 2012-13 and the out years.

### Right to information

- I am of the view that the contents or attachments contained in this brief are **not suitable** for publication.

Minister's Office File Ref:	
Department File Ref:	12/280261

**Recommendation:**

That the Minister considers this brief in preparation for the meeting with Russell Mitchell from Opera Queensland on 16 August, 2012.

**NOTED**

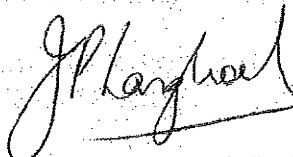


**Fiona Crawford**  
**Chief of Staff**  
**Office of the Hon John-Paul Langbroek MP**  
**Minister for Education, Training and**  
**Employment**

12/8/12

Copy to Assistant Minister

**APPROVED/NOT APPROVED**  
**ENDORSED/NOTED**



**JOHN-PAUL LANGBROEK MP**  
**Minister for Education, Training and**  
**Employment**

12/8/12

**Minister's comments**

<b>Action Officer</b> Mike Tyler Principal Education Officer Operations and Reviews Tel: 70428	<b>Endorsed by:</b> Director Anna Brazier  State Schooling Implementation Tel: 70793 Mob: Date: / /	<b>Endorsed by:</b> ADG Mark Campling  State Schooling Implementation Tel: 70121 Mob: Date: / /	<b>Endorsed by:</b> DDG/CO/ASSDG Lyn McKenzie  Education Queensland Tel: 70619 Mob: Date: / /	<b>Endorsed by:</b> DG/CO/ASSDG Julie Grantham  Director- General Tel: 70999 Mob: Date: 10/8/12
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29 May 2012

Ms Julie Grantham  
Director General  
Department of Education, Training and Employment  
PO Box 15033  
City East, QLD, 4002

Dear Ms Grantham,

Please let me introduce myself as the relatively new General Manager for Opera Queensland. I recently enjoyed the happy task of signing the 2011/12 Grant Agreement between the Department and Opera Queensland, which continues what I recognise as a highly effective collaboration.

In relation to that Agreement, I am writing to request an extension to the current period of secondment for Opera Queensland's Education Liaison Officer, Mark Taylor. As you are probably aware, Mr Taylors' secondment from the Department is due to conclude at the end of 2012 and I am seeking an extension for a further year, to the end of 2013.

By way of background to this request, I commenced in this position on February 1, with Opera Queensland's new Artistic Director, Lindy Hume. Lindy and I were appointed with a brief to "develop and articulate a new strategic vision for the company and its contribution to artform development and presentation" with an expectation the company would "deliver innovative regional and educational programs including links with schools and communities".

These are responsibilities Lindy and I were delighted to embrace and we have applied ourselves over the past four months to analysing the company's activities as we work with the Board and senior staff towards a new strategic statement for the company. This is quite an undertaking and we expect to arrive at a reasonable 'working model' by the end of this month.

Crucial to the future of the company are our activities in education and we are very pleased to have inherited an established, wide ranging program in this area. As with all of our activities, the current education program will be reviewed against the company's new strategic ambitions to ensure we are offering an optimal artistic and educational experience. It is too early to say what impact this may finally have but we expect it will initially build on the knowledge and experience of current activities.

In addition to the support provided by the Department through our Grant Agreement, Opera Queensland contributes to the company's education programs from its recurrent funding as well as securing specific corporate and philanthropic contributions. The company will be working towards increasing these commitments into the future as we develop our educational offering through a focus on engagement and the provision of worthwhile learning experiences in primary and secondary schools in every area of Queensland.

Over 13,000 young Queenslanders experienced our education programs in 2011, and we plan to increase this number in the coming years.

The expertise of an Education Liaison Officer allows us to ensure that the programs are both worthwhile and relevant to the current curriculum documents. The strong networks Mark Taylor has established within schools across all Education Queensland regions assist us in developing and delivering performances and workshops that deliver measurable learning outcomes whilst providing valuable professional development to Queensland teachers.

Lindy and I have been enormously grateful for the advice and guidance provided since we arrived by Mark Taylor in his role of Education Liaison Officer. We have realised the significant benefit to the company of Education Queensland making the services of an educational professional available to us - and Opera Queensland gains full value from this benefit as a result of Mark Taylor's insight and his enthusiasm for the role.

In particular Lindy has been working with Mr Taylor assessing our current program offerings and she will be spending time with our *Moving Opera* team in Townsville when she returns to the company later this month. To date many of the observations Lindy has made about the education program have been consistent with views Mr Taylor has about potential improvements. We are excited by the prospect of this program development and believe there is greater potential for a significant enhancement of our education offerings through a continuing association with Mark Taylor in this role. I understand Mr Taylor feels the same way.

Therefore, during this period of change for Opera Queensland, we feel it would be to the benefit of the company, Education Queensland and the school communities we serve that Mark Taylor be permitted to spend a further year with the company. I also believe it would represent a proper culmination of Mark Taylor's time at Opera Queensland

I very much hope you will give this request your favourable consideration.

Please let me know if you require any further information from me at this stage.

**Best wishes**

49 of the RTI Act - Disclosure would, on balance, be contrary

**Russell Mitchell**  
General Manager



QUEENSLAND  
GOVERNMENT

Department of  
Education, Training and Employment

19 JUL 2012

Mr Russell Mitchell  
General Manager  
Opera Queensland  
PO Box 3677  
SOUTH BRISBANE QLD 4101

Dear Mr Mitchell

Thank you for your letter dated 29 May 2012 requesting a one year extension for Mr Mark Taylor, Education Liaison Officer at Opera Queensland. I apologise for the delay in replying.

I would like to congratulate you on your appointment as General Manager at Opera Queensland.

I acknowledge the work of Mr Taylor and the role he has played in providing a diverse range of arts experiences for teachers and students throughout the State. However, I am unable to extend his secondment.

The Department of Education, Training and Employment's policy outlining the management of seconded teachers states that teachers will be released on secondment for a maximum period of three years. The three year maximum timeframe is intended to ensure teachers retain currency and practical expertise in their substantive role.

*In line with this policy, the secondment for Mr Taylor will be for the term of his original appointment, from 22 January 2010 to 23 January 2013.*

Given your new position I felt it is also important to inform you to the fact that the Premier has recently released an interim report from the Independent Commission of Audit revealing the state of Queensland's finances. In response to this report, my Department is currently reviewing all items of expenditure including grant agreements to external organisations and the provision of secondments.

If you would like further clarification, I invite you to contact Ms Marg Pethiyagoda, Assistant Director-General, within Education Queensland, by email at [enquiries.schooloperations@dete.qld.gov.au](mailto:enquiries.schooloperations@dete.qld.gov.au).

I know that this is not the outcome you were seeking with respect to Mr Taylor's secondment; however, I trust you will understand the Department's position on this matter.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Julie Grantham'.

Julie Grantham  
Director-General

Ref: 12/250191

Office of the Director-General  
Floor 22 Education House  
30 Mary Street Brisbane 4000  
PO Box 15033 City East  
Queensland 4002 Australia  
Telephone +61 7 3237 0900  
Facsimile +61 7 3237 1369  
Website [www.dete.qld.gov.au](http://www.dete.qld.gov.au)  
ABN 76 337 613 647

Pages 36 through 41 redacted for the following reasons:

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Access must be deferred pursuant to section 37(3)(d) of the RTI Act

Minister's Office File Ref:	
Department File Ref:	12/443855

## Briefing Note

Chief of Staff

Office of the Minister for Education, Training and Employment

**Action required: With Correspondence**

**Action required by: N/A**

**Routine – Response to correspondence**

### SUBJECT: RESPONSE TO AEIOU FOUNDATION BRIEFING PAPER

#### Summary of key objectives

- To provide information about the:
  - Autism Centres of Excellence at Bond University and in Far North Queensland;
  - speech-language therapy service within Education Queensland; and
  - support for students with autism spectrum disorders in Queensland state schools.

#### Key issues

- The Minister met with Dr James Morton, Chairman of the AEIOU Foundation on 18 September 2012.

#### *Early Intervention Services to the Gold Coast*

- The briefing paper requests the redirection of early intervention funding for autism to the Gold Coast. This specifically relates to funding provided by the Department of Communities, Child Safety and Disability Services. As such the Department of Education, Training and Employment (DETE) is unable to respond to this issue.
- The Department acknowledges the importance of effective transition programs from early intervention centres to Queensland state schools for children with ASD and the need for a multi-faceted, cross-sector and cross-agency approach to support children with disability and their families.
- To support transition from early childhood education to schooling the *Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) Online Transition Resource Package* was developed through a joint project between DETE, the AEIOU foundation and Autism Queensland. The resource package is designed to support educators, parents and carers in assisting students with ASD to make a smooth transition from early childhood learning into Queensland's state schools. It provides a one-stop shop of information and resources on the departmental website to support the day-to-day educational needs of early childhood and Prep students with ASD.
- The Department provided \$106,000 for this project which was allocated directly to Autism Queensland and the AEIOU Foundation to research and develop resources for a web-based transition-to-school package for children with ASD. The online resource was launched on 29 August 2012.

#### *Education Queensland's Autism Centre of Excellence*

- The AEIOU briefing paper outlines concerns that the Autism Centre of Excellence at Bond University is duplicating and reducing the work that can be produced by Griffith University.
- DETE is developing two centres of expertise in autism spectrum disorder, one in Far North Queensland and one in the South East Region, under the *More Support for Students with Disability National Partnership (MSSWD NP)* – with each centre collaborating with a university to undertake further research in ASD. Each Region identified the specific need for these centres.
- The Department's ASD Centre of Expertise, in collaboration with Bond University has been designed to transform classrooms by training teachers in the scientist-practitioner model of educational practice. The focus will be on teachers translating their knowledge into applied practice in the classroom for the purpose of enhancing educational outcomes for students with

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an ASD as well as any of their peers requiring specialised and systematic intervention to achieve their personal best.

10. The centre has been established at Burleigh Heads State School prior to National Partnership funding to improve the educational outcomes for students with ASD in environments consistent with school settings, through research based design and delivery of:
  - pedagogy fidelity in literacy and numeracy
  - physical environment modifications
  - management processes shaped to ensure a safe and productive school based learning environment.
11. The partnership commits \$659,000 from the MSSWD NP funding over a two year period to the operation of the centre of expertise and completion of seven research projects involving students and teachers at the centre. This will result in the production of teaching resources, information, professional development opportunities for teachers, teacher aides and specialist staff culminating in the contribution of content to the state-wide centre of expertise website to be accessed by all Education Queensland staff.
12. The Memorandum of Understanding for the partnership with Bond University for the MSSWD NP project is being finalised, with arrangements for signing underway.
13. Bond University was selected by the South East Region for this project based on their research record in anxiety in children and adolescents with an ASD, school bullying in students with an ASD, and school-based functional assessment applications for students with an ASD. The decision was also based on the work of their Centre for Autism Spectrum Disorders (CASD), their local proximity to the centre of expertise and their existing postgraduate programs in behaviour management.
14. Bond University developed their CASD in 2010 as a result of great demand for evidence-based and specialised treatment programs in the Gold Coast autism community. CASD is a multidisciplinary research and education facility dedicated to assisting people on the autism spectrum and their families, educators and other professionals involved in their support.
15. The Director of CASD, Professor Vicki Bitsika, was awarded a Winston Churchill Fellowship in 2010 for investigation of specialised intervention technologies for children and adolescents with an Autism Spectrum Disorder. Professor Bitsika will take the role of Chief Investigator in the research projects as part of Bond University's contribution to the partnership.
16. Local community groups (including AEIOU) have been informed of developments involving the MSSWD NP initiative and have been invited to contribute.
17. Some students who will attend the centre of expertise in 2013 have previously received support from AEIOU programs.
18. The Department will work closely with Bond University to ensure there is no duplication between the time-limited MSSWD project and the work being undertaken at Griffith University.
19. The Department has also committed to be an essential participant in the bid process for the development of an Autism Cooperative Research Centre. Should the bid be successful, \$400,000 from the MSSWD NP funding has been committed. AEIOU Foundation and Griffith University have also committed to be essential participants.
20. This bid is about enhancing learning and teaching and identifying appropriate educational environments and programs for students with ASD so they have the best chance of social, behavioural and academic success.

#### *Education Queensland Speech-Language Pathologist Commitment*

21. The briefing paper from AEIOU outlines concerns that the additional 30 speech-language pathology positions will have a significant impact on retention of their current staff and recruitment to any new positions. They request that the additional positions are used in a "capacity building manner" partnering with Disability Services Queensland funded early childhood providers.

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22. This proposal is not consistent with the intent of the election commitment to deliver additional speech-language pathologists through the state school network. Additionally, the Department does not believe it is likely that the additional speech-language pathology positions will compete with the services of AEIOU.

#### *Autism Units in Selected State Schools*

23. In the briefing paper, Dr Morton proposes to use classrooms in primary schools that are vacated as a result of the transition of Year 7 into high school to provide autism units in selected state schools.
24. The Department currently provides the majority of services to students with ASD enrolled in state schools through access to specialist teachers and support staff.
25. There are approximately 600 special education programs in state primary and secondary schools across the state offering specialist support to students with ASD and to assist classroom teachers in the development and delivery of the student's educational program.
26. Special education services providing support for students with disability include:
- advisory visiting teachers (AVTs);
  - speech-language pathologists;
  - occupational therapists;
  - physiotherapists;
  - registered nurses (DETE funded); and
  - guidance officers.
27. Classroom teachers are supported by these specialist staff to assist in the development and delivery of students' educational programs to meet the diverse needs of all the students in their class, including students with ASD.
28. The Department also provides funding to Autism Queensland to support the operation of two independent autism specific schools. Students attend the Autism Queensland School on a part-time basis together with either their state or non-state school.

#### **Background**

29. The AEIOU Foundation is a not for profit organisation dedicated to providing a professional, full-time early intervention program of the highest quality for children aged two and a half to six who have been diagnosed with ASD.
30. The AEIOU Foundation has nine centres across Queensland which are located in Moorooka, Bray Park, Toowoomba, Townsville, Park Ridge, Nathan, Nambour, Gold Coast and Emerald.
31. The AEIOU Foundation is funded by parent fees, fundraising, donations and some Government support. As the AEIOU Foundation is not classed as an education provider, it does not access funding through the Department.
32. Dr James Morton is the chair and a founding member of the AEIOU Foundation. Mr Alan Smith has been the Chief Executive Officer of the AEIOU Foundation since 2009.
33. Griffith University has established the Autism Centre of Excellence (ACE); a joint initiative with the AEIOU Foundation. ACE brings together researchers, educators and key opinion leaders in autism under the federal government funding through the *Helping Children with Autism Package*.
34. The Department is represented on the ACE advisory board by Education Queensland
35. The MSSWD NP is an Australian Government partnership designed to support schools to provide quality, inclusive education for students with disability.
36. MSSWD NP will provide the Department with an additional \$33 million to ensure that schools and teachers have the support they need to cater for students with a disability.

#### **Right to information**

37. I am of the view that the contents or attachments contained in this brief **are suitable** for publication.

Minister's Office File Ref:	
Department File Ref:	12/443855

### Recommendation

That the Chief of Staff **note** the information and issues provided in this briefing regarding the support for education provision for students with ASD.

### NOTED

**Fiona Crawford**  
**Chief of Staff**  
**Office of the Hon John-Paul Langbroek MP**  
**Minister for Education, Training and Employment**

/ /

Copy to Assistant Minister

### Chief of Staff's comments

Action Officer Sharon Mullins Executive Director State Schooling Operations and Strategy Tel: 45530	Endorsed by: ADG Marg Pethiyagoda State Schooling Operations and Strategy Tel: 3237 0157 Date: 17/12/2012	Endorsed by: ADG Mark Campling State Schooling Implementation Tel: 3237 0121 Date: 18/12/2012	Endorsed by: DDG Lyn McKenzie Education Queensland  Tel: 3237 0619 Date: 19/12/2012
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Minister's Office File Ref:	
Department File Ref:	12/315673

## Briefing Note

The Honourable John-Paul Langbroek MP  
Minister for Education, Training and Employment

**Action required: Noting**

**Action required by:**

**Routine – Minister requested brief**

**SUBJECT: COMPARATIVE STUDIES ON EDUCATION PROGRAMS FOR CHILDREN WITH AUTISM**

### Summary of key objectives

- To provide advice on research that would compare outcomes of services delivered by the AEIOU Foundation for children with autism with outcomes of services provided by Education Queensland's Early Childhood Development Programs (ECDPs).

### Key issues

1. The Minister's Office has requested advice on:
  - a comparison of services provided by the AEIOU Foundation and ECDPs;
  - the Department's position on the suggestion for such a study; and
  - the process for applying to undertake independent research should AEIOU or any other organisation propose to do its own comparative study.

### *Comparing the distinctive services of AEIOU and EQ's ECDPs*

2. Comparison of outcomes from the two programs is difficult due to the following issues:
  - The different aims and intended outcomes of each program. AEIOU's program aims to increase skills. ECDPs aim to increase children's ability to function in a range of current and future learning environments by addressing their educational support needs and preparing them for Prep. Any comparative study would need to ensure that the intended outcomes of each program are clearly stated and evaluated.
  - Children may attend both an AEIOU program and an ECDP consecutively.
  - ECDPs cater for children with a range of impairments including diagnosis or suspected diagnosis of Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD), intellectual impairment, physical impairment, vision impairment, hearing impairment and speech-language impairment from birth to Prep age.
  - AEIOU offers programs only to children who have a confirmed ASD diagnosis.
  - There is a difference in the intensity and length of each program. Children registered at an ECDP attend on a sessional basis and the number of sessions increases with the child's age. Each session equates to approximately 2.5 hours. Therefore, a child can access from approximately three sessions a week increasing to a maximum of ten sessions a week. AEIOU provides a full-time program (20 hours per week) for approximately two years.
  - AEIOU programs are currently only offered in metropolitan and regional areas whilst ECDPs are provided across the state including in rural and remote areas of Queensland.

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- The Department offers ECDPs to all children who meet eligibility criteria. There are no fees to participate. AEIOU programs are fee-for-service, although the fees may be partially or totally offset (for a period of time) by childcare fee relief and the Federal Government's Helping Children with Autism Package.

#### ***The Department's position on a comparative study***

3. The Department considers that comparative studies such as this would be a complex undertaking, and may not be able to draw any strong conclusions due to the disparate variables that exist across the services. However, the Department is very interested in research on the effectiveness of programs delivered to children with ASD.
4. While the Department does not currently have resources to conduct such a complex study, there may be future opportunities to partner with relevant organisations to undertake research on programs for students with ASD.
5. Any study would need to be conducted with minimal impact on the educational programs of children in ECDPs including a minimal time requirement for teachers and therapists.

#### ***The process for applying to undertake independent research***

6. Research in state schools or other Departmental sites (undertaken either in-house or by an external party) requires approval by a properly constituted ethics committee and by the Department through its on-line research application process.
7. The approval process aims to ensure that research conducted in departmental facilities has minimal impact on students' education programs, does not add to the workload of teachers or other Education Queensland staff, has appropriate intentions, useful outcomes, and is methodologically sound. Further information regarding this process is outlined in **Attachment 1**

#### ***"A review of the research to identify the most effective models of practice in early intervention for children with autism spectrum disorders"***

8. The Australian Government's review on the evidence for intervention was published in 2006. Early childhood development programs and services may refer to this document but it is not mandated. It is available to staff through the *Gateway to Educational Adjustments and Programming* Learning Place community.
9. Given the focus on autism in the intervening years, this review is now out-dated with new evidence emerging for interventions that previously had no evidence, and new interventions developed that have emerging evidence of their effectiveness.

#### **Implications**

10. A comparative study of AEIOU and ECDP programs would be challenging to conduct due to the discrepancies between the focus, intensity and funding for each program.
11. The costs and staff time commitment to conduct such a study would be significant.
12. The Department has committed significant resources to a range of activities to support children with ASD (**Attachment 2**).

#### **Background**

13. The AEIOU Foundation is a not-for-profit organisation dedicated to providing a professional, full-time early intervention program for children aged two and a half to six years who have been diagnosed with ASD. The AEIOU Foundation currently operates ten centres which provide early intervention support for children with ASD.

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14. AEIOU's intervention program aims to help children with ASD to develop skills in social interaction and play, cognitive development, self-help/tasks for everyday life, develop and improve communication and language skills, encourage social interaction, sensory integration and fine and gross motor skills.
15. The Department provides ECDPs and services across the state to support young children with suspected or diagnosed disabilities prior to compulsory schooling without a dedicated funding source or growth formula.
16. ECDPs provide learning experiences for children to develop knowledge and skills to maximise their individual potential in current and future learning environments.
17. ECDPs and services are hosted by state schools and provide learning experiences for children with disability to develop knowledge and skills, maximise their individual potential, and function in a range of current and future learning environments with a focus on school readiness.
18. Regions prioritise access to children with disability based on their level of education need resulting directly from their impairment. The following issues are considered and documented in determining which children should have priority of access and in allocating of the number of sessions for each child:
  - age of the child;
  - severity of the disability resulting from the impairment;
  - significance of the impact of the disability on the child's future education; and
  - other opportunities for the child to access educational support through funded non-government agencies.
19. ECDPs provide programs at a centre for children and/or may provide support to the child within community settings such as a kindergarten.
20. In 2012, 101.5 FTE teachers and 2,198 teacher aide hours have been allocated to these programs and services.
21. The Department has provided a one off total payment of \$103,000 directly to Autism Queensland and the AEIOU Foundation to research, develop and produce resources for a web-based transition-to-school package for children with ASD.

#### **Right to information**

22. I am of the view that the contents or attachments contained in this brief **are suitable** for publication.


Minister's Office File Ref:	
Department File Ref:	12/315673

**Recommendation**

That the Minister

**note** the information and issues regarding research that would compare outcomes of services delivered by the AEIOU Foundation for children with autism, with outcomes of services provided by ECDPs.

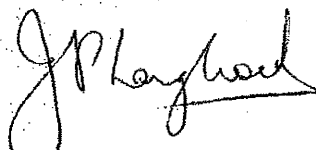
**NOTED**



**FIONA CRAWFORD**  
**Chief of Staff**  
**Office of the Hon John-Paul Langbroek MP**  
**Minister for Education, Training and Employment**

24/9/12  
 Copy to Assistant Minister

**APPROVED/NOT APPROVED**  
**ENDORSED/NOTED**



**JOHN-PAUL LANGBROEK MP**  
**Minister for Education, Training and Employment**

20/9/12

**Minister's comments**

<b>Action Officer</b> Director Suzanne Rothwell Tel: 34056349	<b>Endorsed by:</b> ADG Sharon Mullins Tel: 70157 Mob: Date: 27/08/2012	<b>Endorsed by:</b> ADG Gabrielle Sinclair Tel: 323 71327 Mob: disclosure would, on Date: 27/08/2012	<b>Endorsed by:</b> DDG EQ Lyn McKenzie Noted Tel: 3237 0819 Mob: Date: 07/09/2012	<b>Endorsed by:</b> DDG PLEC Annette Whitehead Tel: 324 73365 Mob: disclosure would, on Date: 11/09/2012	<b>Endorsed by:</b> DG Judith Grantham Tel: 3237 1070 Mob: Date: 18/9/12
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### **Processes for Conducting Research in Queensland State Schools**

The Department has an established online process to deal with the 150 (on average) applications it receives centrally each year from various universities and consultants who apply to conduct research in Queensland State Schools under their own funding arrangements.

This process is outlined on the Department's Research website, together with the Guidelines for Conducting Research in Queensland State Schools at <http://education.qld.gov.au/corporate/research>.

The research application process is designed to minimise any potential risk to the Department if it agrees to participate in independent research projects involving State Schools.

In short, following the receipt of any application, Strategic Research assesses and reviews the merits of the application in terms of its:

- research validity and reliability
- ethical considerations
- practicality/feasibility (for example, the impact on school time), and
- the benefit of the findings to the Department.

Other relevant areas of the Department assist Research Services with decisions on whether to approve or not approve particular applications.

If the research application is approved, then the applicant/s are notified that they may approach the Principals of the nominated schools to invite their participation in the research project.

If the research is not approved, the applicant/s is notified that the Department does not wish to participate in the research at that particular time.

## **Outline of current initiatives regarding students with Autism Spectrum Disorder**

### *More support for Students with Disability National Partnership*

- The Department is developing centres of expertise in ASD under the *More Support for Students with Disabilities National Partnership* with each centre collaborating with a university to undertake further research in ASD. It is proposed a website will be developed to share professional development resources developed by the Centres of Expertise.

### *Autism CRC*

- The Department has committed as an essential participant in the bid process for the development of an Autism Cooperative Research Centre (CRC). One of the components of the CRC is about enhancing learning and teaching with a focus on addressing the urgent need to identify appropriate educational environments and programs for students with ASD so they have the best chance of social, behavioural and academic success. The proposed research outputs and milestones include evidenced-based classroom and school models and practices to optimise the learning environment for students with ASD.
- AEIOU has also committed as an essential participant to the Autism CRC. No other state education jurisdictions have made this commitment.

### *ASD Online Transition Resource Package*

- The *ASD Online Transition Resource Package* is a joint project between the Department, AEIOU Foundation and Autism Queensland in collaboration with the Department of Communities, Child Safety and Disability Services.
- The resource package is designed to support educators, parents and carers in assisting children with ASD to make a smooth transition into Queensland's state schools through evidence-based practices and supports.

## MINISTERIAL MEETING BRIEF REQUEST

Requested by: Departmental Liaison Officer (324 74093)

**To:** Education Queensland  
**Subject:** Minister to meet with Dr James Morton  
Autism Early Intervention Outcomes Unit  
**Date/time required:** 10am, Monday, 10 September 2012  
**Today's date:** Tuesday, 15 January 2013

- Please provide an IBN, for the Chief of Staff to note.
- Please see letter contained within this request for agenda items.

The brief should address/include, without restricting it to, the following:

1. Address any issues that may be raised-or may exist-regarding the meeting subject, attendees and/or venue.
2. Provide detailed information about any relevant contentious issues and suggested responses to those issues.
3. Provide only relevant background information that may assist understanding of any issues.

*When a departmental representative is requested to attend, please ensure they have noted the appointment in diary for attendance. Please also advise the requesting officer of the rep and indicate in the briefing and in TRIM notes.*

Thank you for your assistance in providing this information by the date/time required.

### Action required

- Action Officer to prepare IBN.

### Preparation instructions

- If this brief requires additional information from another branch/directorate within the department, please liaise with the appropriate person to submit one consolidated response.
- Please TRIM brief and any attachments to zz *Departmental Liaison Officer* indicating in the TRIM notes that it has been approved by the appropriate officers. Please bring to MESUs attention any urgent documents.
- Any attachments and/or correspondence prepared for Ministerial signature should also be contained under this request and forwarded with request to zz *Departmental Liaison Officer*.

**PLEASE NOTE** – the brief must progress through MESU and have DG approval prior to meeting the MO deadline.

Minister's Office File Ref:	
Department File Ref:	12/340998

12/337874

## Briefing Note

The Honourable John-Paul Langbroek MP  
Minister for Education, Training and Employment

**Action required:** For Noting

**Action required by:** N/A

Urgent: Background information to support Minister's meeting with Autism Early Intervention Outcomes Unit (AEIOU) Foundation on 18 September 2012

**SUBJECT: MEETING WITH DR JAMES MORTON AND MR ALAN SMITH, AEIOU FOUNDATION**

### Summary of key objectives

- To provide background information to support the Minister's meeting with Dr James Morton, Chair and Mr Alan Smith, CEO, AEIOU Foundation on 18 September 2012.

### Key issues

#### *Autism Centre for the Gold Coast*

1. The *More Support for Students with Disability National Partnership* (MSSWDNP) is an Australian Government partnership designed to support schools to provide quality, inclusive education for students with disability.
2. The MSSWDNP will provide the Department with an additional \$33 million over two years (2011–12 to 2013–14) to ensure that schools and teachers have the additional support that they need to cater for students with disability.
3. The Department of Education, Training and Employment (DETE) is developing centres of expertise in autism spectrum disorder (ASD) under the MSSWDNP with each centre collaborating with a university to undertake further research in ASD. It is proposed a website will be developed to share professional development resources developed by the Centres of Expertise.
4. There are two such Centres being set up, one in Far North Queensland and one in South East Region. The Gold Coast centre is in collaboration with Bond University.

#### *Education of children with autism*

##### *Transition from Early intervention to school*

5. The Department acknowledges the importance of effective transition programs from early intervention programs to Queensland state schools for children with ASD. Successful transition may reduce the disadvantage experienced by some young children with a disability and provide a strong foundation for building positive educational outcomes.
6. For children aged three and a half to five years, DETE early childhood development programs and services consist of centre-based sessions at an early childhood development program, and/or specialist outreach support by members of a multidisciplinary team to the home and other educational settings attended by the child. As children move through this phase, the transition to Prep becomes a significant focus for the early childhood development program and/or service.
7. The AEIOU Foundation has been encouraged to establish relationships with regional and school staff to support effective transitions for their clients.
8. The AEIOU Foundation members have met with the Department on a number of occasions, in particular around the issue of transition.



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9. On 12 April 2011, the Acting Deputy Director-General, Education Queensland (A/DDG, EQ) approved funding of up to \$103,000 from Education Queensland to link with the AEIOU Foundation and Autism Queensland (AQ), to develop an online resource package to assist children with ASD to successfully transition into Queensland schools.
10. On 29 August 2012, *the Autism Spectrum Disorder- Online Transition Package* was officially launched and is now available on the Department's website. This package assists early intervention service providers, parents and teachers (kindergarten and Prep) by providing information and resources to support the transition of children with ASD into Queensland state schools.

#### *Autism Units in Selected Schools*

11. The Department currently provides the majority of services to students with ASD through access to specialist teachers and support staff.
12. There are approximately 600 special education programs (SEPs) in state primary and secondary schools across the state offering specialist support to students with ASD and to assist classroom teachers in the development and delivery of the student's educational program.
13. Special education services providing outreach support for students with disability include:
  - advisory visiting teachers (AVTs)
  - speech-language pathologists
  - occupational therapists
  - physiotherapists
  - registered nurses (DETE funded)
  - guidance officers.
14. Classroom teachers are supported by these specialist staff to assist in the development and delivery of students' educational programs to meet the diverse needs of all the students in their class, including students with ASD and/or complex behaviours.

#### *Current Financial Support*

15. The State Government provides funding to Autism Queensland through two avenues – through recurrent funding provided to all eligible non-state schools, and through a three year service agreement. The service agreement provides additional support towards the operations of the school as well as an outreach service. In 2012, Autism Queensland will receive \$283,140 and \$1,655,087 respectively.
16. The Department also provides funding to Autism Queensland through the Non-School Organisations (NSO) Program to enhance the educational outcomes and personal development of students with ASD through the provision of educators and therapists with specialist skills and knowledge in ASD. Services are provided in early intervention education settings, state and non-state schools throughout Queensland. In 2012, Autism Queensland will receive \$1.2 million through this program.

#### *Teacher Training*

17. Principals are responsible for the professional development needs of the staff at the school to ensure they have the skills and support to provide quality educational programs for all students in the school.
18. The Department has committed to be an essential participant in the bid process for the development of an Autism Cooperative Research Centre (CRC). CRC's are funded through a Federal Government program designed to bring together researchers and a range of private and publicly-funded organisations to achieve outcomes of national significance.

Minister's Office File Ref:	
Department File Ref:	12/340998

19. One of the components of the CRC is about enhancing learning and teaching with a focus on addressing the urgent need to identify appropriate educational environments and programs for students with ASD so they have the best chance of social, behavioural and academic success. The proposed research outputs and milestones include evidenced-based classroom and school models and practices to optimise the learning environment for students with ASD.
20. The successful applications will be announced in December 2012. No other state education jurisdictions have made this commitment.
21. The AEIOU Foundation has also committed as an essential participant to the Autism CRC.
22. There are five Teacher Education Centres of Excellence established through the *Improving Teacher Quality National Partnership* to provide high quality professional professional/field experiences to preservice teachers and professional development for teachers. A cluster led by Aspley Special School is dedicated to preparing aspiring teachers for students with special needs.
23. Griffith University has established the Autism Centre of Excellence (ACE); a joint initiative with the AEIOU Foundation. ACE brings together researchers, educators and key opinion leaders in autism under the federal government funding through the *Helping Children with Autism Package*.
24. The Department is represented on the ACE advisory board by Education Queensland.

#### *Outcome and Cost Benefits Comparison Study*

25. The Department considers that comparative studies between the outcomes and services provided by AEIOU and early childhood development programs (ECDPs) would be a complex undertaking, and may not be able to draw any strong conclusions due to the disparate variables that exist across the services. However, the Department is interested in research on the effectiveness of programs delivered to children with ASD.
26. While the Department does not currently have resources to conduct such a complex study there may be future opportunities to partner with relevant organisations to undertake research on programs for students with ASD.
27. A more detailed brief on a potential comparative study has been prepared for the Minister's consideration (Ref: 12/315673).

#### **Implications**

28. None

#### **Background**

29. The Department recognises the need for a multi-faceted, cross-sector and cross-agency approach to support children with disabilities and their families.
30. The Department provides ECDPs and services for children with disabilities from birth to five years. DETE works collaboratively with other organisations and agencies to support the family and to deliver integrated early childhood development programs and services.
31. The AEIOU Foundation is a not for profit organisation dedicated to providing a professional, full-time early intervention program of the highest quality for children aged two and a half to six who have been diagnosed with ASD.
32. The AEIOU Foundation has nine centres across Queensland which are located in Moorooka, Bray Park, Toowoomba, Townsville, Park Ridge, Nathan, Nambour, Gold Coast and Emerald.
33. The AEIOU Foundation is funded by parent fees, fundraising, donations and some Government support. As the AEIOU Foundation is not classed as an education provider it does not access funding through the Department of Education, Training and Employment.
34. Dr James Morton is the chair and a founding member of the AEIOU Foundation.
35. Mr Alan Smith has been the Chief Executive Officer of the AEIOU Foundation since 2009.

Minister's Office File Ref:	
Department File Ref:	12/340998

**Right to Information**

3. I am of the view that the contents or attachments contained in this brief are **not suitable** for publication.

**Recommendation**

That the Minister

**Note** the information and issues regarding education provision for student with ASD contained in this brief.

NOTED

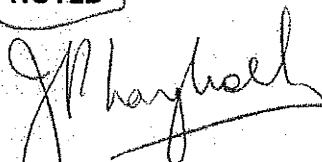


**FIONA CRAWFORD**  
 Chief of Staff  
 Office of the Hon John-Paul Langbroek MP  
 Minister for Education, Training and Employment

13/9/12

 Copy to Assistant Minister

NOTED



**JOHN-PAUL LANGBROEK MP**  
 The Hon John-Paul Langbroek MP  
 Minister for Education, Training and  
 Employment

14/9/12

**Minister's comments**

Action Officer  
 PA- Disability Policy

Tel: 32370834

Endorsed by:  
 ADG SSOP

Tel: 32370157  
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 Date: 10/09/2012

Endorsed by:  
 DG

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 Date: 11/9/12

