The Territory Opposition is demanding an independent audit of all Territory schools to investigate claims that some students only have teachers for a few hours a week.

A report in the Weekend Australian quotes Helen Hughes, Professor Emeritus at the Australian National University, claiming that in the Territory ‘Teachers are flown in to remote schools, sometimes for as little as a few hours one day a week, and many schools are not open five days a week’.

“These serious allegations need independent investigation – there is no excuse for the Labor Government failing to provide remote schools with qualified teachers,” says Terry Mills, Leader of the opposition.

“It is every student’s right to sit in class with a fully qualified teacher; it is the Government’s responsibility to ensure that happens.

“Before the start of the school year I called on the Minister for Education, Marion Scrymgour, to confirm that every primary and secondary class will have a suitably qualified teacher standing before them when school starts next week’.

“The Minister publicly stated that all teaching positions had been filled.

“Now at the end of first term we have these serious allegations that some students are receiving just a few hours of teaching a week.

“We already have deep seated problems amongst indigenous students with woeful attendance rates, pitiful MAP test results and a general lack of interest in education.

“Failing to provide qualified teachers only deepens the immense disadvantage these kids are labouring under.

“These allegations must be fully investigated.”

Further comment : Terry Mills 0418 883 594