A final report recommending a major overhaul of Indigenous education in the Territory has been submitted to the Northern Territory Government and will lead the way in securing our children’s future.

Following extensive consultation throughout the Territory’s towns and remote communities, independent education consultant Bruce Wilson has provided the most thorough assessment of Indigenous education in the Northern Territory for more than 15 years.

The report has been named *A Share in the Future*, an adaption of Galarrwuy Yunupingu’s words made during his acceptance speech of the Australian of the Year Award in 1978.

Minister for Education Peter Chandler said this review provides an opportunity to give Indigenous Territorians that share in the future Mr Yunupingu spoke about almost 30 years ago.

“A share in the future is a powerful statement and, for my part, education is the key to having that share,” Mr Chandler said.

“The review clearly states that efforts to improve results in remote schools have failed and it’s time for a new, evidence based approach.”

The Country Liberals have committed $40.5 million in Budget 2014 to implement recommendations from the Indigenous Education Review. An implementation plan will now be developed and submitted to Cabinet for approval, however the following commitments have been made:

- $40.5 million over four years has been allocated in Budget 2014 for the construction of boarding facilities at regional secondary schools including a transition support program for students
- The Northern Territory Government is considering developing a partnership with Noel Pearson’s Cape York Institute to develop an explicit literacy and numeracy learning program for remote schools
- A Territory-wide girls’ engagement program, similar to the boys’ Clontarf program will be rolled out
- The Families as First Teachers program will continue to operate as a jointly funded arrangement with an extension of funding coming from the recent Federal Budget.

“These commitments show the Country Liberals Government is serious about this review and dedicated to addressing the declining education outcomes in our remote schools,” Mr Chandler said.
We have shown that we’re not afraid to challenge convention to improve results. I will fight those who ignore the evidence and argue for the status quo.

More changes will be needed to see continued and sustained improvement; better NAPLAN results, more NTCET graduates and more Territorians going on to University and employment.

I’m backed by a Cabinet and a Chief Minister who know we need to make changes to improve results so all children can secure a share in the Territory’s bright future.

“Through the government’s bold push to drive North Australia Development there will be new opportunities for employment, it’s important Territory children are in the best position to benefit from those opportunities.”

After releasing his draft report, Bruce Wilson visited a number of regional centres and communities to discuss the draft recommendations and gather feedback from the community.

Some of the key variations between the draft and the final report include:

- A new recommendation to work with other agencies to solve ‘outside school gate’ issues
- The recommendation to have bush and town schools recognised separately have been revised and now proposes a more sophisticated approach
- A bigger focus on community engagement with schools
- Expanding the Family as First Teachers Program to urban locations and strengthening local support
- Greater clarity around the role of first language in schooling

“With the review now complete, the responsibility now rests with government and I am champing at the bit to get out there and make a difference.

“I want to take this opportunity to call on the support of all education stakeholders, because with their support we can achieve something truly great.

“There are different ideologies out there, I accept that, however in the end we all want the same thing and that is well educated children prepared to make the most of life’s opportunities.”

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