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Government Must Rethink Middle School Implementation and Get Back to Basics

“Political outcomes are driving the Middle Schools Agenda in the Territory.” Shadow Education Minister, Terry Mills said today.

“While political objectives rather than educational objectives drive the implementation of Middle Schooling the reforms will fail. Government has decided implementation must occur in 2007 to provide maximum time to manage the change in time for the next election.

“No other reason justifies this approach.

“Education is principally about what is taught, the curriculum and those that teach. The Labor Government seems to think that these foundational elements can be sorted out after the system is introduced. In the meantime the Government will turn every school upside down.

“The rush to bed down the reforms by focussing the discussion on where students will go to school and avoiding discussion of what they will learn when they get there, is totally inappropriate.

“Questions must be answered about the curriculum. What does the Minister actually mean by a ‘Middle Years Approach’, he needs to be far more precise.

“How exactly will this ‘approach’ improve educational outcomes?

“Does the Minister support the recommendations contained in the review into the South Australian Certificate of Education which will impact upon the tone of NT curriculum? The central thrust of these recommendations is to guarantee every student a pass-eventually. Is this the way to go?

“It appears that this approach will see a generation of youth with no concept of competition or striving to be the best; the cruelest possible preparation for the real world. Let’s talk about this.

“If the Education Minister is serious about improving education then allow education rather than political imperatives drive the process.”

Media Contact: John Elferink - Email: john.elferink@nt.gov.au - Ph: 08 8901 4184 (m) 0418 506 633