In one of the most significant decisions to ever affect education in the Northern Territory, Minister for Employment, Education and Training, Syd Stirling today announced that Middle Years schooling will be implemented in NT Government schools over a three year period.

“The adoption and implementation of Middle Years schooling will transform education right across the Territory,” said Minister Stirling.

“It will lift Territory students’ results from the bottom of the ladder to among the best in the nation.

“These decisions have been made after extensive public consultation over three years. We have listened very carefully to the views expressed by the community.

“The decision means that Year 7 students will move up to secondary level education either in specialised middle school or middle schools within existing comprehensive High Schools.

“This will take place in 2008 to allow an 18 month transition period to prepare both the students and their families and the teachers.

“Year 10 students will be moved into senior secondary education either in specialised senior secondary colleges or in senior schools within comprehensive High Schools.

“This will take place in 2007 except at Sanderson High School where Year 10, 11 and 12 students will be moved in 2008. This is in recognition of the special pathways programs in that school which we will take a little time to relocate to Casuarina Secondary College.

“We believe that Year 10 students are mature enough and ready to be treated as senior students. It is important to their future beyond school for that movement to occur now,” Mr Stirling said.

SECONDARY SCHOOLS ARRANGEMENTS

- Darwin High School: The Darwin High School will be made into a Year 10 to 12 secondary college. A new Middle School will be built at Bullocky Point at a cost of $19.5 million.
- Casuarina Secondary College: Will take Year 10 students from 2007. Cost to expand $3.4 million
- Nightcliff High School and Dripstone High School will be Middle Schools taking Years 7 to 9 from 2008.
Palmerston High School will take Year 7s from 2008 and will have Middle and Senior Years sub schools. The cost of expansion will be $11 million. A new school at Rosebery will be built from 2008-09.

Taminmin High School, Katherine High School and Nhulunbuy High School will take Year 7s from 2008 and create Middle Years sub schools and Senior Years sub schools. Taminmin will require $4.6 million, Katherine $970 000 and Nhulunbuy $1.3 million to provide for additional facilities in each school.

Tennant Creek High school already has year 7 students in the school. They will be asked to adjust their program to teach middle years in a sub school and senior years in a sub school. This will also apply to all remote secondary schools;

Alice Springs High School and Anzac Hill High School will both be specialised Middle Schools with Years 7 to 9. Centralian College will take Year 10 students and will receive $970 000 for an expansion to its facilities.

“The Territory Government will invest a total of $46.7 million in new school facilities,” said Minister Stirling.

This will include minor new works to various schools of $1 million in the 2006-07 financial year and fit out costs for the new and expanded schools.

BETTER FOR STUDENTS

“The Middle Years decision means students will be engaged more closely lifting their results,” said Minister Stirling.

“All Year 7 students will now have a 17:1 student-staff ratio, compared with the current ratio of 22:1.

“Year 10 students will see their student-staff ratio fall from 17:1 to 14:1.”

For Middle Years students there will be a:

- greater focus on literacy and numeracy
- more pastoral care
- new innovative teaching and learning practices
- and fewer changes of teacher in any one day.

“Territory teachers will benefit from greater teaching support and the ability to introduce innovative and supportive teaching practices such as team teaching. Professional development is being provided to prepare teachers and help them through this change.

“We will be implementing this in a staged three year process that has responded to the community concerns expressed through our extensive public engagement process. Everyone is a winner under this proposal.

“The Middle Years approach is the most significant education reform in many years. It will drive improved results. It is the best investment in our children’s futures.”
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