PETER CHANDLER MLA | Member for BRENNAN
MINISTER FOR EDUCATION

MINISTER ‘BLOWN AWAY’ BY EDUCATION PROGRAM

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Get Ready! The catch phrase of motivated and enthusiastic teachers working with Noel Pearson at his Cape York Aboriginal Australia Academy in Far North Queensland.

The Northern Territory Minister for Education, Peter Chandler, has spent the last three days visiting remote schools on the Cape York Peninsular, analysing why they're seeing great results with far less resources than Territory schools.

"I was absolutely blown away by the high level of engagement in every classroom," Mr Chandler said.

"Students were immersed in learning and I truly believe it's because of two things; a structured, consistent education program and highly motivated, enthusiastic teachers.

"It was clear the enthusiasm of the teachers was driven by the tangible improvement they see in their students.

"The schools I visited were not blessed with amazing infrastructure or jam packed with resources and materials. For instance I was lucky to see one SMART Board in each school where in the Territory there is one in almost every classroom.

"The only focus of these teachers is delivering results and from what I saw they're doing exactly that.

"Through the implementation of Bruce Wilson's Indigenous Education Review I have committed to work with Noel Pearson and his Cape York Aboriginal Australia Academy to see how we could replicate this program in the Northern Territory.

"Watch this space."

Schools in Mr Pearson's academy prepare students for boarding school as he believes attempts to deliver secondary education in remote schools have been a miserable failure, as is the case in the Northern Territory.

"Students at these schools know that to continue to receive a quality education, boarding school is the only option and they're prepared for that," Mr Chandler said.

"The expectation of going to boarding school is built into students at a very young age. Primary schools also offer transition programs where the students and their parents visit and spend time in their boarding school prior to the start of the school year."
"Students from the Academy travel mainly to urban centers like Cairns or Brisbane. If boarding is adopted by the Northern Territory Government I would envisage boarding facilities in the Territory's regional centers like Tennant Creek, Katherine, Gove, Alice Springs and possibly large communities like Borroloola and Jabiru.

"There is an opportunity here to make real change, to be bold and make a difference in the lives of thousands of Indigenous Territorians who, until now, have been cheated out of real future.

"I'm ready for this challenge, I'm ready to drive the change I want to see in our education system but I cannot do it alone. To secure the future of Indigenous Territorians I need the support not just of my government but the Opposition as well.

"Education is not a partisan issue, at least it shouldn't be. Everyone wants the best for our children, they're our future, so I call on all involved to join me on this journey."

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