More than 150 Indigenous students in the Katherine region now have access to secondary education that they would not have had previously, Minister for Employment, Education and Training Syd Stirling said today.

Reporting to Parliament on some of the Government’s early successes in improving Indigenous education in the Territory, Mr Stirling said for the first time students at Timber Creek, Beswick, Jilkminggan and Minyerri were undertaking secondary studies in their own communities.

"Under the CLP, these students would have simply been left to drop out of the education system," Mr Stirling said.

"Now, Indigenous education is seen as core business of the Department of Employment, Education and Training – as it should be, given that nearly 40% of our students are Indigenous.

"This Government made a strong commitment to turn around Indigenous education outcomes by implementing the recommendations of the Learning Lessons report and I am pleased to report that the situation is already changing for the better."

Other early successes include:

- Trialling full secondary education provision in Kalkaringi and Maningrida, with up to six students expected to complete their Year 12 Certificate by the end of the year;
- Implementing alternative provision programs in Alice Springs, Tennant Creek and Darwin; and
- Trialling community controlled schools at Utopia, Maningrida, Tiwi Islands and the Walpiri Triangle.

Mr Stirling said the Secondary Education Review team was also looking carefully at how to provide appropriate secondary education to indigenous students across the Territory.

"After years of neglect, Indigenous education in the Territory is still well behind where it should be. We have a long way to go in terms of ensuring every Territorian has equal access to a quality education, but these early signs of success show that we are starting to head in the right direction."