Inquiry into referred 2017–18 Annual and Financial Reports

ANSWER TO QUESTION ON NOTICE

Asked by Ms Lee MLA:

In relation to: Capability development of workforce page 115

On page 115 reference is made to ongoing capability development of the workforce in relation to the Shaddock Schools for All recommendations:

1. a) How was a skills gap identified for teachers of students with complex needs and challenging behaviour?
   b) Before the Shaddock Report what additional skills were required in Learning Support Units for:
      i. teachers and
      ii. Learning Support Assistants (LSA)?

2. What specific training is now available for teachers and LSA's in these units?

3. What specific training is now required for employment as a teacher or LSA in these units?

4. Are staff allowed and/or required to be employed in teaching special needs students if they have no appropriate special needs training?
   a) If they don't have special needs training, are they required to undertake such training?

5. Is the cost of such additional training covered by the Education Directorate?

Yvette Berry MLA: The answer to the Member's question is as follows:—

1. The Education Directorate's Schools for All Program has included a focus on ongoing capability development of the workforce to respond to the diversity of students in ACT schools, and varying levels of workforce experience and capability in supporting students with complex needs and challenging behaviours. This work program responded to a range of recommendations in the Schools for All Children and Young people – Report of the Expert Panel on Students with Complex Needs and Challenging Behaviour (November 2015) based on a review of relevant undergraduate and postgraduate education units offered in ACT universities, available professional learning and the perspectives of teachers, parents/carers and other stakeholders on the adequacy of teacher preparation and their opportunities for ongoing development to meet student need.
2. All school leaders, teachers and LSAs in ACT public schools have access to a broad range of professional development to provide the skills, knowledge and confidence to support and teach to the needs of all students. This includes a range of online training courses on topics including:

- Understanding Autism Spectrum Disorder
- Understanding and Supporting Behaviour
- Understanding Dyslexia and Significant Difficulties in Reading
- Inclusion of Students with Speech, Language and Communication Needs
- Understanding Motor Coordination Difficulties
- Understanding hearing Loss

All education staff are required to undertake training on the Disability Standards for Education 2005.

3. All staff have access to appropriate professional learning.

4. See response to question 2 for the range of training available to all staff.

5. The Directorate makes provision for appropriate training as outlined under question 2. The Directorate has also committed to financially support up to 50 Learning Support Assistants to upskill in a tailored version of the Certificate IV Education Support commencing in 2019.

Approved for circulation to the Standing Committee on Education, Employment and Youth Affairs

Signature: [Signature]

Date: 03/12/18

By the Minister for Education and Early Childhood Development, Yvette Berry MLA