



Inquiry into Fiscal Sustainability of the ACT

Answer to question taken on notice

Asked by: Mr Ed Cocks MLA

Addressed to: Ms Nicole Moore, Executive Group Manager, System Policy and Reform, Education Directorate

In relation to: Cost effectiveness of the college system

Hearing: 19 May 2026

Proof Transcript pp 127-128

Transcript provided: 27 May 2026

Answer Due: 4 June 2026

MR COCKS: Thank you. One of the issues raised by Mr Eslake was the cost of the college system compared with integrated high school approaches. Have you done any work looking at that or what the cost impact and educational impact of those arrangements are?

Ms Berry: We are proud of our college system here in the ACT, and the success is proven. The college system that we have operating in the ACT is more expensive, because it is not part of a school system. We accept that, but we think it also achieves the outcomes for young people that we would want for all our young people in our school systems. In fact, other school systems, school ministers and, indeed, the federal government have often reflected on the success of our college system.

MR COCKS: Have you evaluated that?

Ms Moore: We do have data that reflects that. In fact, Eslake's final report released today acknowledges that the ACT has the highest retention rate in the senior secondary. That is a major product of the college system that we have. We do know, for example, that from year 10 and moving into college we have quite a number of students move from the non-government sector into the public sector because of our college system. Our retention rate for year 10 students in public schools into college is 92 per cent. So we actually are getting really positive outcomes in terms of education for college students.

MR COCKS: Okay. I am not sure I have the same reading. I think Mr Eslake's report indicated that that, at least in part, was due to our socioeconomics. That was something worth looking at. Is the data that you refer to something you can provide on notice?

Ms Moore: Yes; it is data that we report publicly. We can provide that information.

MR COCKS: The question I asked at the outset went to both cost and cost differences compared with other jurisdictions and the educational attainment difference.

Ms Moore: I have the data on the retention rates but I do not have data on other jurisdictions.

THE CHAIR: If you have something that is directly relevant to the points in the Eslake report, it would be extremely helpful to submit that on notice.

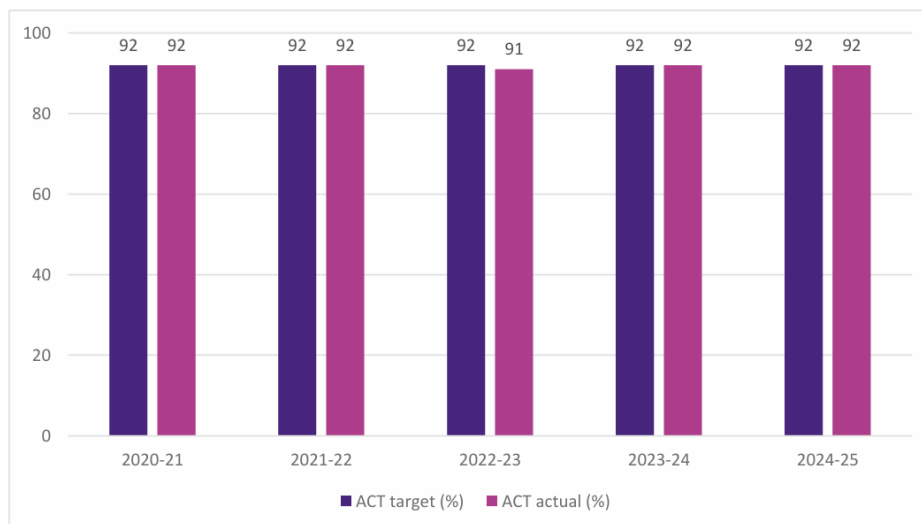
MS Yvette Berry MLA: The answer to the Member's question is as follows:

The Education Directorate has not evaluated the cost of the ACT college education system relative to alternative models.

In relation to performance information of the ACT public college education system

- The percentage of year 10 students who proceed to public secondary college education is reported in the ACT Education Directorate Annual Report (refer Output 1.2, available at www.act.gov.au/open/act-education-directorate-annual-reports, latest data below).

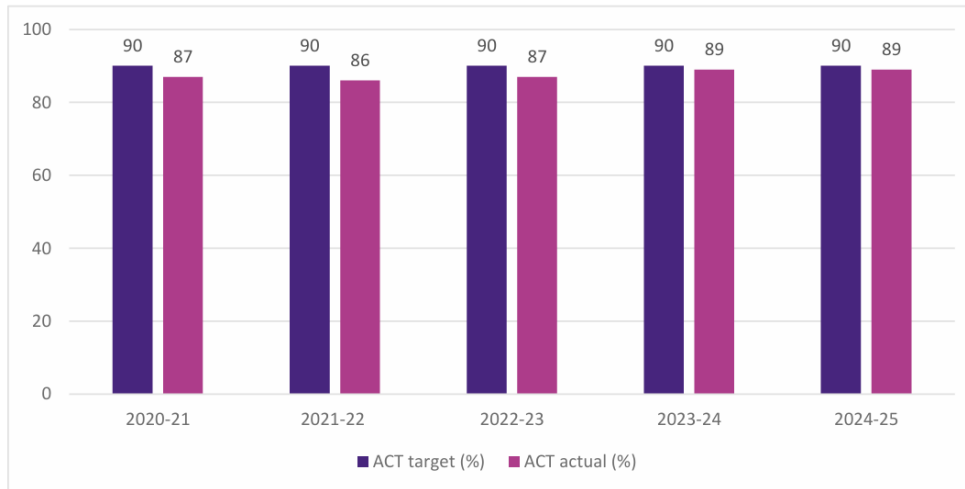
Figure 11: Percentage of year 10 students who proceed to public secondary college education, 2020–21 to 2024–25



Source: Education Directorate, audited Accountability Indicators Output Class 1: Public School Education, Senior Secondary Education (a)

- The percentage of year 12 students in public schools who received an ACT Senior Secondary Certificate is reported in the ACT Education Directorate Annual Report (refer Output 1.3, latest data below).

Figure 13: Percentage of year 12 students in public schools who received an ACT Senior Secondary Certificate



Source: Education Directorate, audited Accountability Indicators Output Class 1: Public School Education, Senior Secondary Education (e)

Approved for circulation to the Select Committee on the Fiscal Sustainability of the ACT

Signature:

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

Date:

22/06/26