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**Inquiry into ACT Budget 2021–22**  
**ANSWER TO QUESTION ON NOTICE**

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Asked by Mr Johnathan Davis MLA on 21 October 2021 to Minister for Education and Youth Affairs:

In relation to: Social and youth workers in ACT government schools (Output 1)

Noting the investment of more social and youth workers in our schools.

- a. Will there be a social or youth worker located in each government school by the end of this parliamentary term?
- b. Does the government predict issues in recruitment and retention of these workers?
  - i. If so, what is the strategy the government will take to combat these issues?
- c. What advocacy did the ACT Government make to the federal government to see the money they invest into school chaplaincy programs in public schools reinvested into secular social and youth workers?

MINISTER BERRY The answer to the Member's question is as follows:–

- a. The ACT Education Directorate is developing a model for the allocation of social and youth workers in ACT Public Schools. The model, will determine how social and youth workers are allocated to ACT Public Schools to meet the needs of students. It is anticipated that the model will determine the allocation methodology and professional requirements of youth and social workers, with appropriate centralised supervision and support. Youth and social workers will supplement the work of school psychologists and will form part of school wellbeing teams and work with school leadership teams to support students and their families.
- b. No issues have been identified in regards to the current recruitment processes to engage social workers and youth support. The ACT Education Directorate has a strong working relationship with Canberra universities and the Canberra Institute of Technology and will capitalise on these relationships to continue to attract qualified social and youth workers to ACT Public Schools. As an employer, the Directorate is attractive for allied health professionals as it provides them with an opportunity to engage in early intervention and prevention work.
- c. In 2019 the ACT Government wrote to the Federal Education Minister, the Hon. Dan Tehan MP seeking agreement that government schools have the opportunity to engage secular student welfare workers through the National School Chaplaincy Program. This request was declined.

Approved for circulation to the Standing Committee on Secretary: Standing Committee on Education and Community Inclusion

Signature:

Date: 03/11/21

By the Minister for Education and Youth Affairs, Minister Yvette Berry