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Senator Matt O'Sullivan
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Dear  Senator

Thank you for your email dated 7 November 2022, inviting the Northern Territory (NT) Department of Education (the department) to make a submission to the Education and Employment References Committee inquiry into the national trend of school refusal and related matters.

The department does not collect data relating to school refusal or its impact on the financial security of parents and carers, as defined by the Terms of Reference of the inquiry. Rather, enrolment and attendance data are recorded and analysed for the purpose of developing evidence-based initiatives and strategies to support disengaged students to return to school.

A key example of evidence-based strategies is the NT Education Engagement Strategy 2022-2031, the NT Government's 10-year vision that sets a new course for student engagement and improved educational outcomes so that every child can engage in learning.

The department has developed this strategy to increase engagement and attendance in education, based on what we have heard from our Aboriginal partners, including elders, students, families, schools, communities, and government agencies. It builds on work that the NT Government has already been undertaking alongside schools and communities to address the multi-faceted complex barriers that impact on attendance and engagement in the NT.

Thank you for the opportunity but as such the Northern Territory Department of Education will not be making a submission to the Education and Employment References Committee.

Yours sincerely

EVA LAWLER

7 DEC 2022

