

Reforming urban secondary education in the NT – Darwin Region overview

NT Government secondary schools in Darwin will work together to:

- **Create a seamless educational journey**, by enabling students to complete Year 12 at the same school where they began Year 7. This will reduce transition points and foster continuity in learning and relationships between students and teachers.
- **Strengthen collaboration across the education system**, by creating a cohesive network of secondary schools that work together to deliver excellent and equitable learning opportunities.
- **Expand access to a broad range of career and industry programs and pathways** that are tailored to students' interests and aligned with post-school employment, training and further education.
- **Enhance career progression and professional development opportunities for teachers.**
- **Maintain flexibility and choice for students** by offering a range of secondary education subjects and pathways suited to different aspirations.

What is the future for secondary schools across the Darwin region?

The approved future design for secondary schools in Darwin is:

- **Dripstone Middle School** will transition to a full comprehensive high school (years 7-12)
- **Nightcliff Middle School** will transition to a full comprehensive high school (years 7-12)
- **Darwin Middle School and Darwin High School** will be combined to create a new full comprehensive high school (Years 7-12)
- **Sanderson Middle School** will transition to full comprehensive high school (years 7-12) with a connected specialist industry, trade and technical college focussed on high priority industries for senior secondary students (years 10-12)
- **Casuarina Senior College** will remain as a senior college (years 10-12) with a focus on higher education pathways and programs for in-demand professions e.g. education and health.

What is an industry, trade and technical college?

Industry, trade and technical colleges are for students in Years 10, 11 and 12 and offer a unique mix of school-based and vocational training. They focus on preparing students for careers in key industries like engineering, construction, community services, education, and health. Students complete their Northern Territory Certificate of Education and Training (NTCET) while also gaining nationally recognised vocational qualifications (like Certificates II and III).

These colleges will be designed with local industries to make sure students learn the right skills in spaces that feel like real workplaces. Students also get hands-on experience through work placements while they study.

Industry, trade and technical colleges help students step confidently into apprenticeships, traineeships, jobs, or further study at university. When they graduate, students leave with their NTCET, job-ready skills, valuable work experience, and strong connections to local employers.

What are the priority enrolment areas for Darwin schools?

The following priority enrolment areas will apply from 2026 for all future secondary student enrolments:

- **Sanderson:** current Sanderson Middle School priority enrolment area
- **Dripstone:** current Dripstone Middle School priority enrolment area
- **Nightcliff:** current Nightcliff Middle School priority enrolment area. For 2026 only, current Nightcliff Middle School students moving into Year 10 can also be considered for enrolment at the combined Darwin Middle/High school
- **Combined Darwin Middle and High school:** current Darwin Middle School priority enrolment area
- **Casuarina:** no priority enrolment area

Updated priority enrolment maps will be published on the Department's website.