Reforming urban secondary education in the NT –
Alice Springs

Secondary education in the Northern Territory (NT) is being reformed to ensure all students can access high-quality secondary pathways that prepare them for further education, training and jobs within the Territory. These reforms will support the NT Government’s vision to provide:

* An **excellent and equitable** secondary system that supports all students to achieve.
* A **guaranteed standard of local secondary school provision**, and a pathway to Northern Territory Certificate of Education and Training completion for all students, regardless of geographic location.
* **A model of delivery that is differentiated** **and informed** by student and community need and industry pathways.
* An engaging learning design that **guarantees core literacy, numeracy and work readiness skills and drives improvements in student attendance and wellbeing**.
* A **shift away from middle schools** as a key NT government election commitment

### What is the future for Alice Springs?

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| In Alice Springs, Centralian Middle School and Centralian Senior College will be combined into **one** **full comprehensive high school (Years 7 to 12)** that will deliver academic and vocational education and training pathways. Over the next four years, a new **regional industry, trade and flexible education college (Years 10 to 12)** will be established that focuses on building student’s skills and getting them ready to work in high priority industries. It can also provide short-term intensives for remote and very remote students in the region.The comprehensive high school 7-12 will be located at the current Centralian Middle School site; and the regional industry, trade and flexible education college will be located at the current Centralian Senior College. |

The NT Government has announced the final design for secondary schools in urban areas of Darwin, Palmerston, and Alice Springs. This follows extensive engagement with staff, students, and parents who have shown strong support for the proposed designs, while also offering valuable insights and considerations for implementation.

The creation of the comprehensive high school and regional industry, trade and flexible education college will provide the following benefits:

* ensure students in Alice Springs have a local high school they can attend from year 7 to 12. This will reduce the number of transitions points and enables greater continuity of learning and relationships for students and teachers
* increase access to career and industry programs and pathways for students within Alice Springs and those in the broader Central region.
* provide career and industry programs and pathways that are aligned to local industry and skills priorities
* build on and learn from the flexible learning models already underway in Alice Springs
* provide career pathways and development opportunities for staff.

What is an Industry, trade and flexible education college?

Industry, trade and technicalcolleges 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 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 technicalcolleges 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.

The college at the current Centralian Senior College site will also build on the existing flexible education pathways available and provide targeted and flexible support to better suit individual student needs and circumstances.

How and when are we planning for this change?

Over the next 18 months, the Department of Education and Training will work closely with the Alice Springs community to ensure a smooth transition. Planning will focus on:

* **Clear communication:** making sure students and parents understand what’s changing
* **School leadership**: recruiting and appointing a new transitional lead principal to lead establishment of the new school and manage the change. This position will work alongside the current principals of the two schools
* **School branding:** choosing a new school name and updating logos and uniforms.
* **School governance**: identifying and making changes to the school representative bodies
* **School workforce planning:**  looking at how the changes will affect teachers and making sure there’s a plan for support
* **Career and Industry pathways:** identifying the subjects and VET courses that will support students to prepare for a further education and employment after they finish school
* **Facilities and technology:**  upgrading infrastructure and IT systems for 2027 and beyond
* **Student transport:** establishing any changes to bus routes as schools grow
* **Student support:** making sure students, especially those that are vulnerable or have additional needs, get the support they need during the transition.

From Term 1, 2027, changes will begin, with the full transition to the new design of secondary education in Alice Springs to be completed by 2028.

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|  |  **2026**  | **2027** | **2028** |
| **Year level expansion** | * Schools amalgamated into one legal entity
* Centralian Middle School (CMS) site continues as a 7-9 site
* Centralian Senior College (CSC) site continues as 10-12 site
 | * Add Year 10 to CMS site. The school will operate as a year 7-10 school
* CSC site continues to operate as Year 11-12
 | * Add Year 11 and 12 to CMS site. The school will operate as a full comprehensive high school 7-12
* Establish industry college for Years 10–12 at CSC site
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| **Pathways and subjects**  |  | * CMS site: Add Year 10 Australian Curriculum, VET, and compulsory NT Certificate of Education and Training (NTCET) subjects
 | * CMS Site: Add Year 11 and 12 Career and Industry programs and pathways including VET, and NTCET subjects
* CSC: Career, industry and flexible education pathways and programs for Years 10-12
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### What is the priority enrolment area for Alice Springs?

# There is no designated priority enrolment area for Alice Springs.

# How will we communicate our progress?

The Department of Education and Training is committed to keeping schools, students, teachers, and communities well informed. Updates via the department’s website, social media and directly from schools will provide the latest information on progress including career and industry programs and pathways each secondary school will offer and the approach to managing staff changes.

Information for each school impacted by the transition away from middle schools, along with frequently asked questions is available on the Department of Education and Training’s website at [education.nt.gov.au/secondary-education](https://education.nt.gov.au/statistics-research-and-strategies/secondary-reform-program/information)