



Syd Stirling

MINISTER FOR EMPLOYMENT, EDUCATION & TRAINING

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SENIOR SCHOOL AT ELCHO PART OF NEW ERA IN TERRITORY INDIGENOUS EDUCATION

The opening of a new Senior secondary school at the Galiwin'ku community on Elcho Island shows the dramatic changes occurring in education in the bush, according to Minister for Employment, Education and Training, Syd Stirling.

"This \$2.5 million secondary facility and sports centre, jointly funded with the Federal Government, will give students the best possible chance to improve their results, and graduate with flying colours," said Minister Stirling.

"These brand new facilities are well placed in a community that values and respects senior secondary education.

"As part of the celebrations I will be presenting the first three Northern Territory Certificate of Education graduates in 2005 with their certificates. This is great news in itself.

"The first ever Indigenous graduates to go through a full 12 years of education in their home community received their NTCE certificates in 2003 at Kalkaringi. That happened as a result of the Martin Government's determination to have proper secondary education in Indigenous communities.

"The three students I provide certificates to today are among 25 Indigenous students who graduated in 2005. This may seem like a small number but it is a very large achievement for those students, their families, their teachers and the Government.

"It shows that great things are happening in Aboriginal communities and that education is taking hold in the bush. This will lead to a significantly improved life and opportunities for Aboriginal youth," Mr Stirling said.

"These achievements are backed by a program of infrastructure improvement which has seen the Government build and complete five secondary schools in remote communities, including Maningrida, Papunya, Kalkaringi and Minyerrii.

"It has also seen the Government implement most of the recommendations of seminal Collins Report into Indigenous education.

"In addition to this, late last year the Government announced the first ever extensive, Territory wide community education engagement program which will see the Government and Indigenous communities signing historic contracts regarding the delivery of education and training services in 15 major centres across the Territory.

“I applaud this community today, its students and the college on its successes,” Mr Stirling said.

Shepherdson College has a student population of about 700 students, including 78 senior secondary students and a further 50 part-time adult students enrolled in night classes.

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