



**Cape York Institute**  
For Policy & Leadership

# **IMPROVING LITERACY IN CAPE YORK**

**Discussion Paper**

**January 2007**

## **Introduction**

There is a literacy crisis in Cape York without historical precedent. Many grandparents in Cape York communities possess greater functional literacy than their grandchildren. Over 100 Indigenous students leave Cape York schools every year unable to read at or above the minimum level expected for their age. At every year level, Indigenous students are up to four years behind the non-Indigenous student average. There are almost 1,200 Indigenous students in Cape York today, who are in urgent need of remedial literacy instruction. Action is needed now to stem the crisis and its devastating social and economic effects.

We believe literacy is the most significant and urgent of the education problems facing Cape York's Indigenous communities. It is the foundation skill that underpins all others. From literacy, everything else follows. Children who struggle to read will struggle and underachieve in every other area of education. Cape York needs a targeted intervention strategy around literacy, focused on reading in particular.

This discussion paper describes the magnitude and severity of the problem in Cape York through an examination of literacy levels among Indigenous children. It also outlines a four-part strategy to tackle the issue, based on evidence of what works and the relative merits of alternative solutions. The key recommendation is the immediate establishment of a Literacy Academy and rolling out a remedial reading program – MULTILIT – that will quickly deliver a step-change improvement in reading ability. The paper also recommends some longer term initiatives to support this initial intervention. Our strategy is consistent with the recommendations of the National Reading Inquiry, in particular the value of early diagnosis and remedial intervention, and the importance of teacher quality.

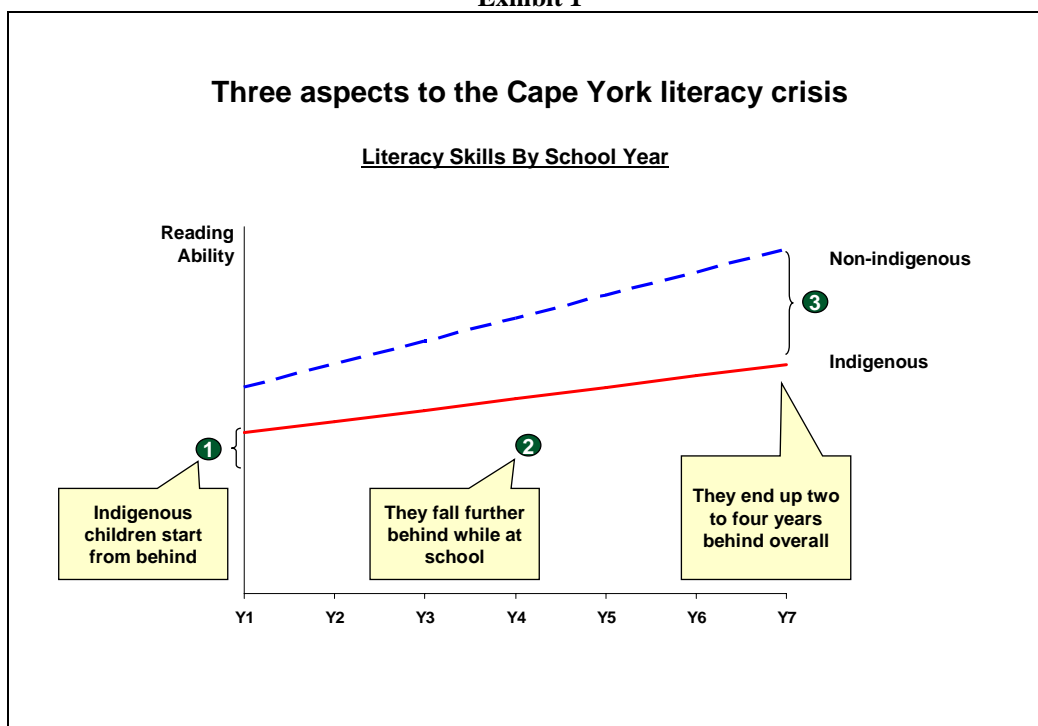
## **The literacy crisis in Cape York schools**

Cape York has 13 schools catering to around 2,400 Indigenous and non-Indigenous students from Years 1 to 12. Indigenous students lag non-Indigenous students on every literacy measure. In some Cape York schools, as few as 21% of Indigenous students achieve minimum benchmark levels in national literacy tests for Years 3, 5 and 7. The best result for Indigenous students in a Cape York school is 54%. Relative to average literacy levels for Queensland students – the most relevant benchmark – Cape York's Indigenous students are two to four years behind. These are critically low levels of literacy.

Our analysis of objective measures of students' literacy progress (Exhibit 1) shows that:

- Indigenous children start school behind their non-Indigenous peers;
- Those who start behind stay behind, or drop even further behind; and
- By Year 7, they are two to four years behind their non-Indigenous peers.

## Exhibit 1



### Indigenous children start from behind

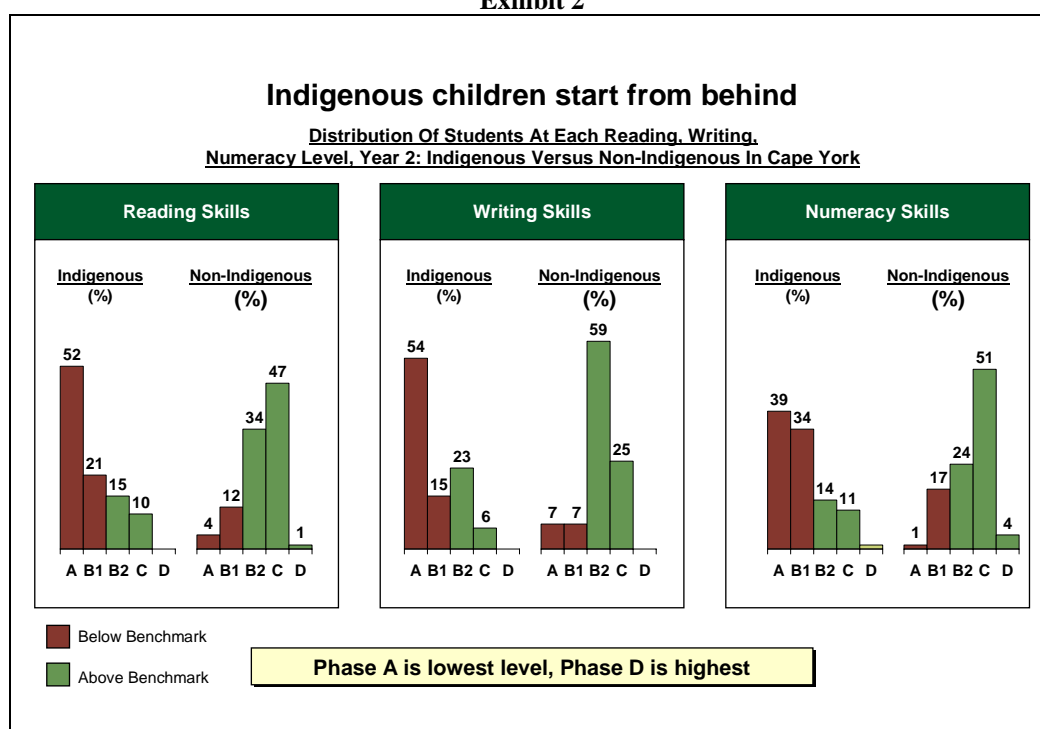
The first point at which a Queensland child's progress in literacy and numeracy is objectively measured is in the Year 2 Diagnostic Net assessment.<sup>1</sup> Results show that Cape York's Indigenous students are clearly behind from the very beginning of their schooling.

Exhibit 2 shows the distribution of Cape York students at each literacy/numeracy level (Phase A is lowest, Phase D is highest)<sup>2</sup> averaged over 2001-2006. It is clear that the vast majority of Cape York's Indigenous students have below-benchmark literacy and numeracy skills. By Year 2, some 60-80% of students require additional support, compared with 10-25% for non-Indigenous children.

<sup>1</sup> Education Queensland assesses literacy and numeracy in the second year of compulsory schooling to allocate funds for additional support. This assessment (the 'Year 2 Diagnostic Net') is based on teacher observation and records of existing student work. The results of special validation tasks are sometimes used when a student's eligibility for support funding is unclear.

<sup>2</sup> Each of Phases A, B1, B2, C, D, etc ('Role Play', 'Experimental', 'Early', 'Transitional', etc) has a set of indicators. A child is said to be in a particular phase if he or she demonstrates all the indicators of that phase but not all those of the next one. Phase A includes children who demonstrate no reading (or writing or number) ability, as well as those who demonstrate all but one of the indicators of Experimental reading and potentially some indicators of Early reading. Children in the first (lower) Phase B group demonstrate all the indicators of the Role Play and Experimental phases but not all the key indicators of the Early phase. The upper phase B group demonstrates all the indicators of the Role play and Experimental phases, plus all the key indicators of Early reading. And so on for Phases C and D.

## Exhibit 2



### Those who start behind stay (or drop further) behind

On entering the school system, Indigenous children are behind their peers in literacy, fail to make gains relative to them, and in many cases slip further behind.

As Exhibit 3 shows, the gap in reading skills between Cape York’s Indigenous students and their non-Indigenous classmates widens between Years 3 and 7, while slight relative gains are made in writing and numeracy.<sup>3</sup> Measured against Queensland as a whole (Exhibit 4), the picture for Indigenous students is even bleaker.<sup>4</sup> The reading, writing and numeracy skills of Cape York’s Indigenous student population not only start well behind those of the rest of Queensland’s students but slip further behind those of their Indigenous counterparts, and, more dramatically, those of Queensland’s non-Indigenous student population.

While the analysis confirms that Cape York Indigenous students fall further behind their peers in middle school, it also shows that most of the gap observed at Year 7 is already present at Year 3. As the school system appears unable to close the literacy and numeracy gap between Indigenous and non-Indigenous students, early remedial action is needed to offset the literacy disadvantage with which most Indigenous students begin their education.

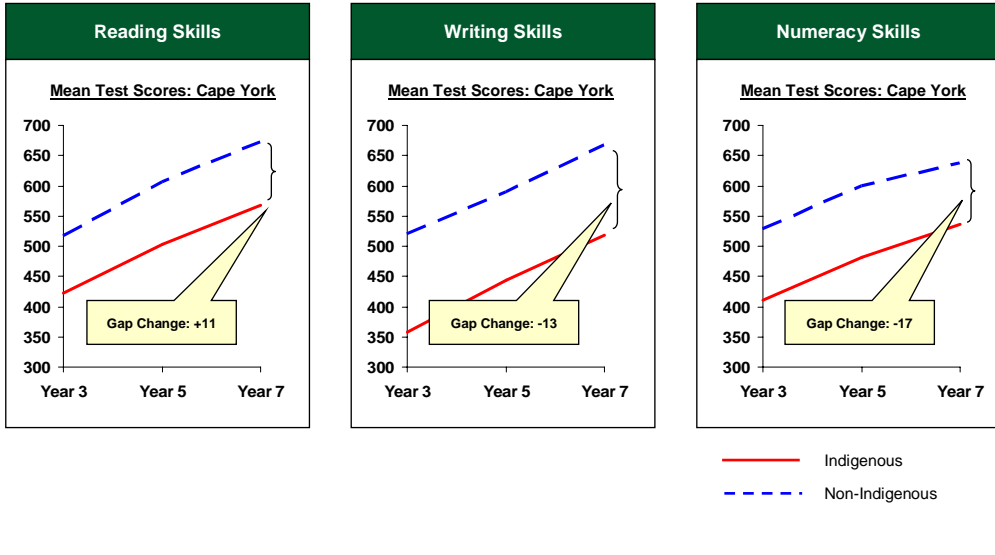
<sup>3</sup> Queensland publishes mean scores for reading, writing and numeracy on the Years 3, 5 & 7 assessments. Since assessments are measured on the same scale it is possible to define and measure rates of progress.

<sup>4</sup> Queensland’s non-Indigenous results are approximated by total results.

### Exhibit 3

#### Those that start behind stay behind

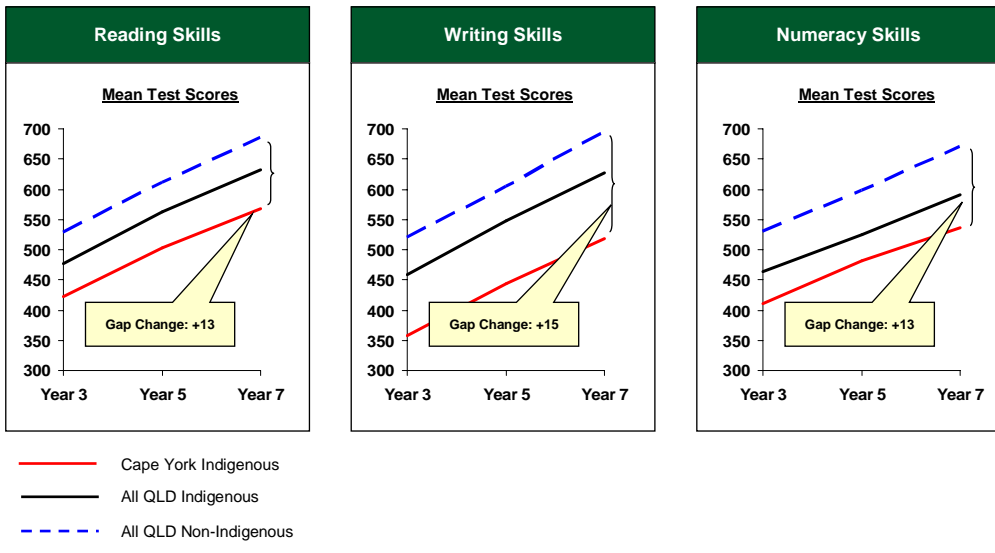
Comparison Of Progress In Reading, Writing, Numeracy: Indigenous Versus Non-Indigenous In Cape York



### Exhibit 4

#### Cape York slips further behind Queensland

Comparison Of Progress In Reading, Writing, Numeracy: Cape York Indigenous Versus QLD



## **A four-part strategy to improve literacy outcomes**

We believe a targeted, four-part strategy is needed to deliver both short and long-term impact:

1. **Widespread roll out a proven remedial reading program across Cape York** to address the immediate needs of low progress readers already in the school system. The objective is to achieve a step-change in reading performance in a very short time through the establishment of a Literacy Academy that will execute the accelerated and large-scale rollout of a proven remedial literacy program.
2. **Ensure that Indigenous children start school with better literacy levels** through significant enhancements to early childhood learning. Evidence shows that simple things like reading to children and access to books can make a substantial difference. Early access to a Standard Australian English environment will help to prepare Indigenous children to develop their literacy skills.
3. **Make sure that students meet grade expectations once they are at school** through a combination of supply-side and demand-side strategies to ensure attendance and to provide teachers with the skills and resources they need to help Indigenous students to reach their full potential.
4. **Provide continuous assessment and reporting, with an unrelenting focus on results.** The National Reading Inquiry highlighted the need for consistent, rigorous, and frequent measurement of every child's development, mapped on common scales. These reports should be used by schools, teachers and parents to diagnose and remediate, monitor progress and provide feedback.

The first part of the strategy can be put in place quickly to deliver results in the short and longer term. The fourth part should be executed in parallel, to ensure that progress is monitored and tracked. The second and third parts require longer term initiatives but are crucial in achieving sustainable improvement.

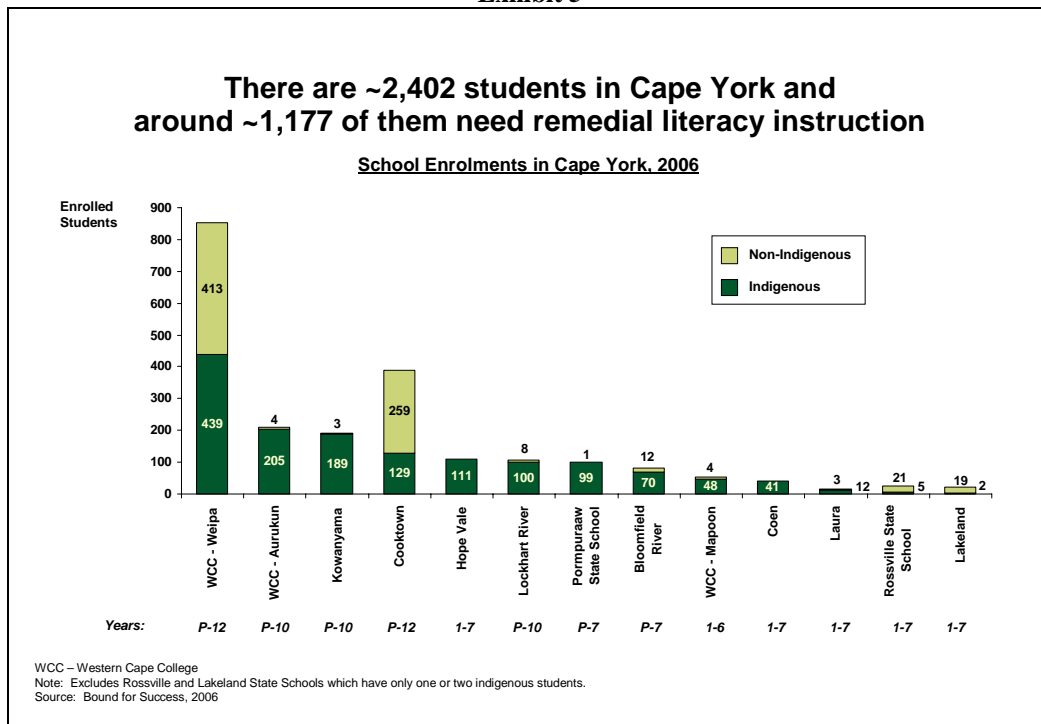
The following section outlines the steps that need to be taken in each of the four parts of the recommended strategy.

### **1. Rollout of a proven remedial reading program across Cape York**

The first and most urgent step is the rollout of an effective remedial literacy program that will dramatically increase the reading levels of Indigenous students who are already in the school system. Children who fail to learn to read in the first few years of school need intensive, systematic reading instruction, based on programs with demonstrable, proven efficacy.

Around 2,400 students are enrolled in Cape York's 13 schools. Almost 1,500 of them are Indigenous (Exhibit 5). Based on benchmark testing results and base-lining assessments, we estimate ~1,200 Indigenous students need some level of remedial literacy instruction.

## Exhibit 5



### Using MULTILIT as the remedial program

Our strong view is that the MULTILIT (Making Up Lost Time In Literacy) program should be rolled out to all schools in Cape York. MULTILIT was developed by Professor Kevin Wheldall and Doctor Robyn Beaman of the Macquarie University Special Education Centre (MUSEC).

MULTILIT is specifically designed for low-progress readers in Year 2 and above (about seven years upwards) who are reading at a level considerably below (typically two or more years) that expected for their age.<sup>5</sup> The objective of the program is for students to master fluent alphabetic decoding, whatever the reason for their initial failure to do so.

The program has three independently paced components - MULTILIT Word Attack Skills, MULTILIT Sight Words, and MULTILIT Reinforced Reading. It is based on a direct instruction model, with more naturalistic approaches for generalisation also embedded. It is generally delivered in small groups by a qualified instructor or tutor, with three to four weeks' specific MULTILIT training.

<sup>5</sup> There is also a MULTILIT program available specifically for younger students. MINILIT is targeted at Year 2 and below and is based on the same proven methods and techniques.

Our rationale for recommending MULTILIT above other programs is fourfold:

- It is an effective, intensive program with a long track record of success in a wide variety of settings;
- It has solid foundations in reading and literacy research;
- Both Commonwealth and State Governments have acknowledged its success; and
- It is the most effective solution, given the nature and size of the literacy crisis in Cape York.

This rationale is described in more detail below.

**(i) MULTILIT is a highly effective, intensive program with a long track record of success in a wide variety of settings.**

MULTILIT has been demonstrated to work in multiple settings, including a remote Indigenous community. The program has delivered substantial improvements in reading ability wherever it has been introduced (Exhibit 6).

**Exhibit 6**

<b>MULTILIT HAS ACHIEVED OUTSTANDING RESULTS</b>				
<b>Results</b>	<b>MULTILIT Centre MUSEC</b>	<b>Exodus Foundation Schoolwise Ashfield</b>	<b>St Marys Primary School, Sydney</b>	<b>Coen State School</b>
<b>Improvement in reading accuracy</b>	<b>15 months</b>	<b>16 months</b>	<b>20 months</b>	<b>21.4 months</b>
<b>Improvement in reading comprehension</b>	<b>13 months</b>	<b>12 months</b>	<b>20 months</b>	<b>10.7 months</b>
<b>Improvement in single word recognition</b>	<b>15 months</b>	<b>19 months</b>	<b>19 months</b>	<b>19 months</b>
<b>Improvement in words read correctly per min.</b>	<b>96%</b>	<b>50%</b>	<b>44%</b>	<b>75%</b>

The Exodus Foundation Tutorial Centre in Ashfield provides a strong example of the value of the MULTILIT program. The Centre has been running the Schoolwise Program based on MULTILIT for over 10 years. It serves students who are typically from socially and economically disadvantaged backgrounds and, on average, three to four years behind their peers in reading literacy. Students on average gain 15-20 months in reading accuracy and comprehension with less than 6 months of instruction.

Similar results were achieved in a trial in Cape York in 2005/6. In conjunction with Cape York Partnerships, MUSEC conducted a 12-month trial of MULTILIT at Coen State School. Initial assessments showed that students were on average 3¼ years behind expected benchmarks in reading accuracy and 3¾ years behind in reading comprehension. A tutorial centre was established at the school (in a separate building) and two MULTILIT instructors flown in for 6 months at a time to deliver the program to two groups of 10 students in Years 4 to 7. The results of the trial were outstanding. Students were given 17-18 weeks of instruction and on average, gained 21.4 months in reading accuracy, a 19 month increase in word recognition and a 10.7 month increase in reading comprehension, after only one year. They could also correctly read 75% more words per minute. A more detailed analysis of the results in Coen are outlined in Appendix C of this paper.

While the immediate effects on reading ability are impressive, MULTILIT can also produce significant flow-on effects from improved literacy levels. For example more than 98% of students involved in the MULTILIT program at the Gladstone Tutorial Centre go on to complete Year 10 or above. Forty-six percent gain full-time employment or apprenticeships and 52 percent are enrolled in senior school or school-based apprenticeship programs. Similarly, follow-up surveys of the Schoolwise program three years after completion show that 90% of students remain in mainstream schooling, 56% plan to undertake further study at TAFE and 33% percent intend to go to university.

**(ii) MULTILIT has solid foundations in literacy and reading research.**

MULTILIT is a flexible, balanced and integrated program. It covers all five areas - phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary and comprehension - identified by the National Inquiry into the Teaching of Literacy (Australia) and the National Reading Panel (US) as essential for effective reading instruction.

- *Phonemic awareness*: the ability to hear and manipulate the sounds in oral language. Phonemic awareness is typically taught to young students prior to formal reading instruction. Given the target age of students participating in MULTILIT programs (Year 2 and above), instruction in phonemic awareness is provided alongside instruction in the alphabetic principle within the MULTILIT Word Attack Skills program;
- *Phonics*: the relationships between letters and sounds. The cornerstone of the approach is the MULTILIT Word Attack Skills program, an explicit, systematic direct instruction program predicated on synthetic phonics;
- *Fluency*: the ability to read quickly and naturally, recognise words automatically and group words quickly. Reading fluency is an essential component of the Word Attack Skills program. Similarly, the MULTILIT Sight Words program emphasises automatic sight word recognition by requiring responses to each sight word flash card within 2 seconds. Finally, within the MULTILIT Reinforced Reading program, based on the Pause, Prompt and Praise (PPP) strategy, there is a specific version of the technique targeting reading fluency with connected text;

- *Vocabulary knowledge*: new words and what they mean. The introduction of new words and what they mean is a focus within the Pause, Prompt and Praise procedures within the Reinforced Reading program. Prior to the student commencing to read (fresh) text each day, the tutor identifies and discusses new words that will be coming up in the text passage about to be read; and
- *Text comprehension*: understanding what is being read and developing higher-order thinking skills. Text comprehension is specifically addressed within the Reinforced Reading program, both in the main PPP strategy and in what is known as PPP-C. In the main PPP strategy, students are initially required to recall features of the text passage read the previous day prior to continuing to read from where they left off. At the end of each session students are asked questions about the passage they have just read to demonstrate their understanding. In PPP-C, which specifically targets comprehension, students read text at recreational level (95% plus accuracy) and are required to answer 5W+H questions (who, why, where, what, when, how) at regular intervals. This has been demonstrated to be a very powerful procedure for improving overall reading comprehension.

MULTILIT is based on the well supported 'simple view of reading', which regards oral comprehension and decoding as independent skills, the product of which is reading comprehension. It can therefore be integrated with programs aimed at oral reading competency. In other instances, standard SRA packages have also been used to support and develop spelling and comprehension skills.

MULTILIT uses direct instruction methods with proven effectiveness. The Australian Council for Educational Research (ACER) recently conducted a large-scale experiment on the use of direct instructional methods for Years 4-6 students with literacy and numeracy difficulties. The success of this experiment supports the general MULTILIT approach for low-progress students.

The whole MULTILIT approach is evidence-based and data driven (i.e., teaching is based on the assessed needs of individual students).

**(iii) Commonwealth and State Governments acknowledge the effectiveness of the MULTILIT program.**

In October 2006, Education Queensland awarded the Exodus Tutorial Centre in Gladstone the Award for Excellence in the Middle Phase of Learning. The Centre delivers intensive literacy instruction based on MULTILIT to students at risk of disengaging from the education system. Since its establishment in 2001, it has helped 173 students from 15 cluster schools to achieve increases in reading age of up to 4.75 years.

In October 2002, the House of Representatives Standing Committee on Education and Training released *Boys, Getting it Right*, the report from its Inquiry into the Education of Boys. The report endorsed MULTILIT and the work of the MUSEC team: 'The knowledge and practical instructional techniques developed in MULTILIT by the researchers at Macquarie University should inform and enhance the initial and remedial literacy instruction throughout Australia and form the core of remedial reading programs in primary and high schools.' (5.62 p. 114)

**(iv) MULTILIT is the most effective solution, given the size and nature of the literacy crisis in Cape York**

A range of literacy programs and initiatives are available. The potential solutions evaluated for Cape York include the National Accelerated Literacy Program (NALP) (or Scaffolding Literacy), Reading Recovery, Yachad Accelerated Learning Project (YALP), University of Queensland Early Literacy Fundamentals (ELF), and UQ Phonological Awareness for Literacy (PAL). Each of these has its merits. However, MULTILIT stands out as an evidence-based, remedial program, able to be implemented on a large scale quickly and with a track record of results.

While evidential support for education program results is generally low (see Appendix B), we summarise our evaluation of alternative programs as follows:

- **Reading Recovery** was developed in the 1970s, has accumulated evidence on its effectiveness and is already an official Education Queensland program. However, its focus is mainly on reading comprehension rather than alphabetic decoding, and its mode of delivery (one-on-one by a teacher with up to a year's training in the program) is expensive and not well suited to the scale or urgency of the problem in Cape York. It is not a solution for middle school and it is unclear whether it would be effective as a remedial program. Reading Recovery is promoted as a preventative program to get 'at-risk' readers back on track early rather than to compensate for a two- to four-year deficit in reading ability.
- **UQ-ELF** focuses explicitly on phonological awareness and motor skills, and can be delivered in groups or in class. An implementation at Boondall State School, which won a best practice prize from Education Queensland in 2006, has had a dramatic effect on year 3 and later assessment results. However the program focus is early primary (i.e., Prep and Year 1) rather than middle school. UQ-ELF could be a useful element of a longer-term strategy for the early years of schooling. Trials are planned for two Cape York schools in 2007.
- **UQ-PAL** is focused on middle school students and achieves significant improvements in literacy (e.g., 24-month gains in reading accuracy and 44 month gains in reading comprehension) from short, targeted interventions (20 hours over 10 weeks). Instructors require as little as one day's training. However, the program focuses exclusively on phonological awareness, a prerequisite for successful reading, rather than reading itself. While phonological awareness may be a problem for some Indigenous students in Cape York, the target group is much larger than would be expected if this were their major cause of literacy difficulties.
- **Yachad Accelerated Learning Project** is a \$3 million, three-year intervention program aimed at raising the academic achievements of students in remote locations, particularly low achieving Indigenous children. It is based on a 'whole of community' education approach developed by the Hebrew University of Jerusalem, Israel. The program is currently running in five sites:

Alice Springs (NT), Aurukun (Qld), Halls Creek (WA), North Adelaide (SA) and Shepparton (Vic). The program appears to have had some success in improving literacy and numeracy levels, but the critical literature is limited and the program has not been implemented at the secondary school level.

- National Accelerated Literacy Program / (Formerly Scaffolding Literacy)** aims to accelerate reading. NALP can be used from Prep to Year 12, is integrated into the curriculum, and is delivered by teachers in the classroom. It is funded by DEST and has been used in Qld, SA and WA. NALP will be rolled out to 100 schools in the Northern Territory by 2008. The program operates at the level of meaning and assumes the presence of basic alphabetic decoding skills (i.e., the skills that MULTILIT develops). It also depends on a fairly comprehensive training program for teachers, who have to be willing and able to explicitly model and explain what they want students to do. The average reading gain of 1.6 years per year of instruction is slightly lower than that for MULTILIT. NALP lends itself to the teaching of higher order literacy skills and may be useful in future for professional development for Cape York teachers. However it does not offer a literacy solution in the short term.

### **How should the program be delivered?**

The rollout of a MULTILIT program in Cape York should be based on a delivery mode that is known to be effective and for which there is clear evidence of success. Any deviation from this could add uncertainty and risk or even dilute the effectiveness of the program. MULTILIT delivery is usually done via intensive, small group environments, with some minor variations as described in Exhibit 7.

**Exhibit 7**

<b>MULTILIT HAS BEEN IMPLEMENTED IN SEVERAL WAYS</b>					
<b>Delivery Model</b>		<b>MUSEC School</b>	<b>Schoolwise Exodus Foundation Ashfield</b>	<b>St Mary's Primary School, Sydney<sup>(1)</sup></b>	<b>Coen State School, Cape York</b>
<b>Students</b>	<b>Year range</b>	Years 2 - 6	Years 5 - 7	Years 3 - 6	Years 5 - 7
	<b>Mean age</b>	10 yrs 5 mos	11 yrs 7 mos	9 yrs 8 mos	10 yrs 10 mos
<b>Staffing</b>	<b>Ratio</b>	Varies	1:5	1:5	1:5
	<b>Groups</b>	From 1:1 to larger groups	6 groups 6 students per group	2 groups 19 students per group	2 intakes 10 students per intake
	<b>Teachers</b>	ML instructors	ML instructors ML tutors	School teachers Teachers aides	ML instructors
<b>Duration</b>	<b>Hours</b>	Full-time	3 hrs / day	1.75 hrs / day	3 hrs / day
	<b>Terms</b>	2 terms	2 terms	2 terms	18 weeks
<b>Location</b>	<b>Venue</b>	Special school	Tutorial centre	In-class	Tutorial centre
	<b>Site</b>	Off-campus	Off-campus	On-campus	On-campus

(1) Pseudonym used for privacy purposes

The model used by St Mary's Primary School in Sydney<sup>6</sup> has achieved good results on campus, using existing teachers, however, compared with Cape York's Indigenous students, St Mary's students are on average less delayed in terms of reading accuracy (two rather than four years behind), have fewer learning difficulties of other kinds, and are less socio-economically disadvantaged. In this context, the St Mary's results may not be achievable in a Cape York setting.

We therefore recommend that the Coen trial delivery model be retained, but with the staffing structure used by Exodus Foundation. The Commonwealth Government has already agreed to fund the expansion of the Coen trial at in 2007. While instructors and tutors will continue to fly into Coen to deliver the program, the MULTILIT classes will be run out of purpose-built areas in the classroom, rather than out of a separate tutorial centre. This approach will more tightly integrate MULTILIT into the school environment and curriculum, and make it more visible than before. This is expected to deliver knock-on effects for teachers in terms of behaviour management and closer interaction between school staff and the MULTILIT instructors.

The Coen trial relied on MULTILIT staff moving to Cape York for extended periods to deliver the program. However, MULTILIT (MUSEC) does not have sufficient staff to handle a Cape-wide rollout and is not in the business of employing a large workforce of instructors/tutors. However, it will offer franchising or licensing of the product.

Three possible ways to obtain the required number of instructors are described below.

1. *Using school staff (EQ teachers and teacher aides) for delivery in school hours.* Existing EQ teachers and teacher aides could potentially deliver MULTILIT as part of the curriculum. They could be trained as part of their ongoing professional development, or through the induction training for new teachers before their placement in Cape York. However, MULTILIT is an intensive course with an ideal ratio of instructors to students of between 1:5 and 1:8. It would be unrealistic to expect teachers to combine their normal teaching load with the delivery of such a program.
2. *Using non-school staff for delivery during school hours.* A team of dedicated and specialist instructors and tutors could be used. They would need to have similar skills and experience to, say, the Schoolwise instructors (who typically have a post-graduate qualification in special education or progressing towards one). Accommodating MULTILIT into the timetable will also be a challenge, as the remedial literacy lessons could clash with students' other classes. Support from Education Queensland, principals and teachers will be essential to making the timetabling work.
3. *Using non-school staff for out of hours/out of school delivery.* The remedial classes could take place before or after school to avoid the timetabling issues mentioned above. All other factors being equal, this solution will delay full rollout because there would be less time and fewer students would be able to participate in before or after school sessions than during school hours. With school

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<sup>6</sup> Note, St Mary's is a pseudonym for privacy and confidentiality reasons.

attendance already low, an out-of-hours program could suffer from even lower attendance, significantly delaying impact.

We believe the option two is the most attractive and feasible. This would require around 14 full time instructors to roll out the program in Cape York over a four-year timeframe. This assumes an even distribution of students over the four years and an average teacher to student ratio of 1:7.

While a permanent, stable workforce of instructors would be ideal, in reality it will be difficult to find and retain a stable workforce of this size. More creative solutions are needed. For example, partnerships could be developed with selected universities to offer 6-12 month secondments to the Cape for students studying post-graduate courses in education or special education. Students could be given subject credits for the work they undertake, and develop skills that would be relevant and useful for their future careers as teachers.

### **What organisation structure is required?**

The recommendation is that a Literacy Academy be established to develop and implement the MULTILIT rollout across the Cape. There are a number of partners who should be involved in the Academy. These include:

- MULTILIT Pty Ltd, a spin-off subsidiary of Macquarie University which owns the intellectual property for MULTILIT; and Macquarie University Special Education Centre (MUSEC) to ensure academic rigor, credibility and access to the experience and knowledge of Prof. Wheldall and Dr. Beaman;
- The Commonwealth Department of Education, Science and Training (DEST), which is seeking to fund programs that work, especially those supporting the implementation of *Teaching Reading, the National Inquiry into the Teaching of Reading*;
- Education Queensland (EQ), which runs the schools in Cape York under the Department of Education and the Arts (DEA), and employs the principals and teachers who work in those schools;
- Griffith University through the Cape York Institute for Policy and Leadership (CYI). CYI's Welfare Reform Project has interdependencies with this initiative, and has strong relationships with the key government agencies and knowledge of the communities involved. CYI could share office space, meeting rooms and training facilities with Literacy Academy staff based in Cairns, thereby minimising overheads. In addition, CYI's existing policies, procedures and staff could be leveraged to provide IT, HR and finance services; and
- Cape York Partnerships (CYP), which operates the Every Child is Special Project in Coen and is working with the school to roll out MULTILIT in the broader school in 2007.

After consideration of a range of organisational and structural solutions, we believe that CYI (via Griffith University) is the ideal vehicle to kick-start the Academy. CYI's funding and governance model already includes DEST and DEA as key stakeholders, which would help to accelerate the Academy's establishment. A separate advisory board or steering committee including all of the partners outlined above would be established. A formal agreement between Macquarie and Griffith Universities would need to be negotiated. Funding for the academy could be directed through CYI as an addendum to funding agreements already in place. In the medium term, the Academy could be established through CYI and later spun off as a separate entity if required.

Each instructor would require an initial three to four weeks of training. This could be conducted in Cairns before the start of the school term, using existing facilities at CYI or CYP to keep costs down. Instructors and tutors may also receive on-the-job training at one of the tutorial centres in Sydney, where possible. This training would equip them with the skills they need to deliver the program, but they would also require on-the-job coaching and supervision to ensure ongoing delivery quality. The Academy should therefore engage two 'roving supervisors' to travel regularly to the schools and observe the instructors, providing them with on-the-job training and performance assessments, quality assurance and support as required. These supervisors could be employed by MULTILIT or the Academy directly.

In addition, parents and community leaders need to do more than just make sure their kids go to school. The MULTILIT program involves parents and other volunteers to listen to children read and provide corrections and support when necessary.

Support from principals, teachers and teacher aides is also essential, as is support from Education Queensland and principals to enable non Education Queensland staff to teach in the classroom. The additional skills and approaches offered by MULTILIT training, such as Positive Teaching, will provide significant benefits to teachers.

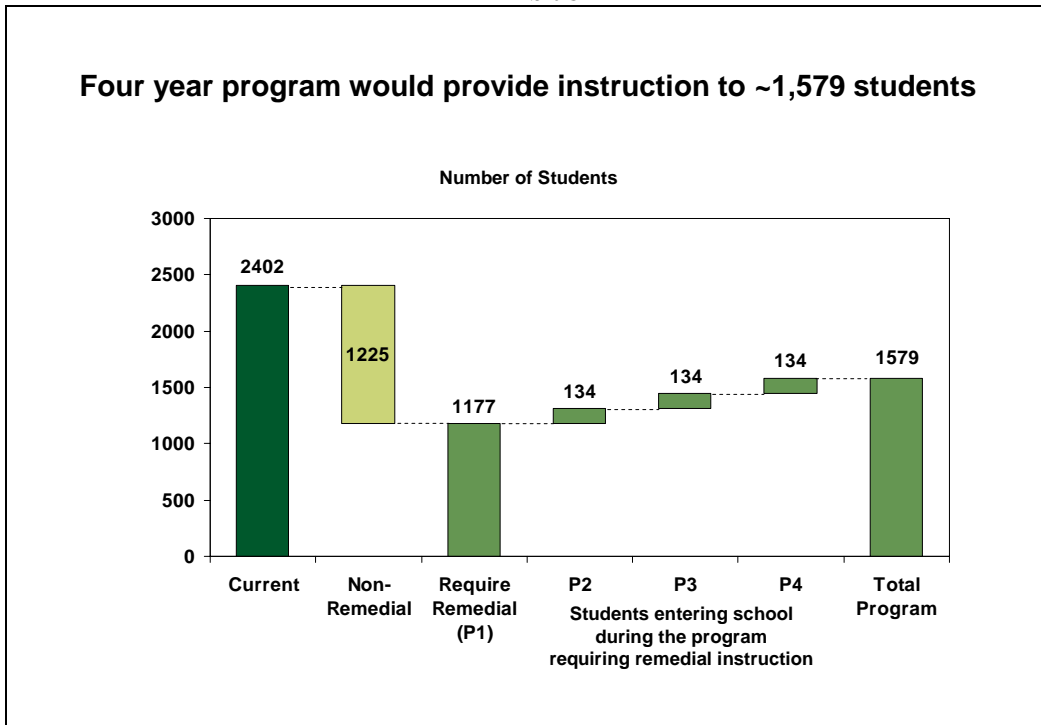
### **What are the expected costs and benefits?**

Our initial costings suggest that the Literacy Academy will require ~\$8 million over four years. This will provide MULTILIT instruction for ~1,580 students, including travel and accommodation costs, car expenses, books and materials, computers etc., a project manager/director to oversee program delivery, and a small amount of administrative support.

Our costings assume that the program will target every student who needs remedial instruction over a period of four years. We have based the number of students on the number now known to need remedial literacy instruction plus the number expected to enter the school system over the life of the program (Exhibit 8).

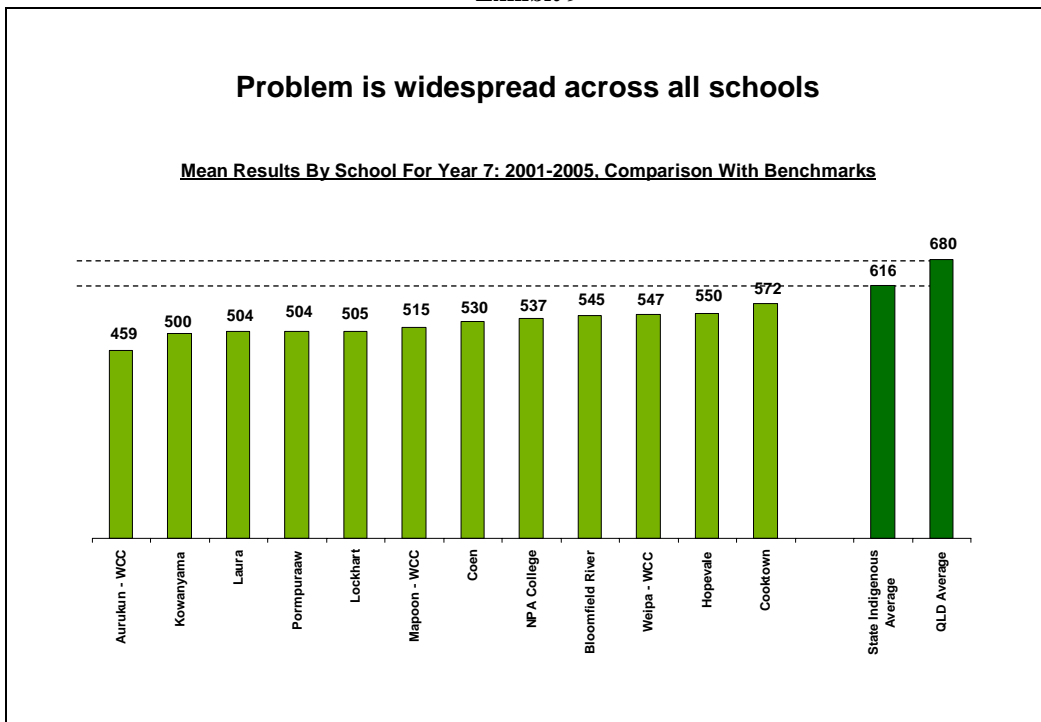
In theory it is possible to achieve this over a shorter timeframe, however, we believe the four-year timeframe is conservative, based on known difficulties in recruiting staff to work in remote locations and the shortage of suitable accommodation in the communities.

Exhibit 8



We have assumed an even distribution of students over the four years. As Exhibit 9 shows, the problem is widespread across all schools, so there is no compelling reason to prioritise between them. The program should target the lowest level readers across all years and gradually move up.

Exhibit 9

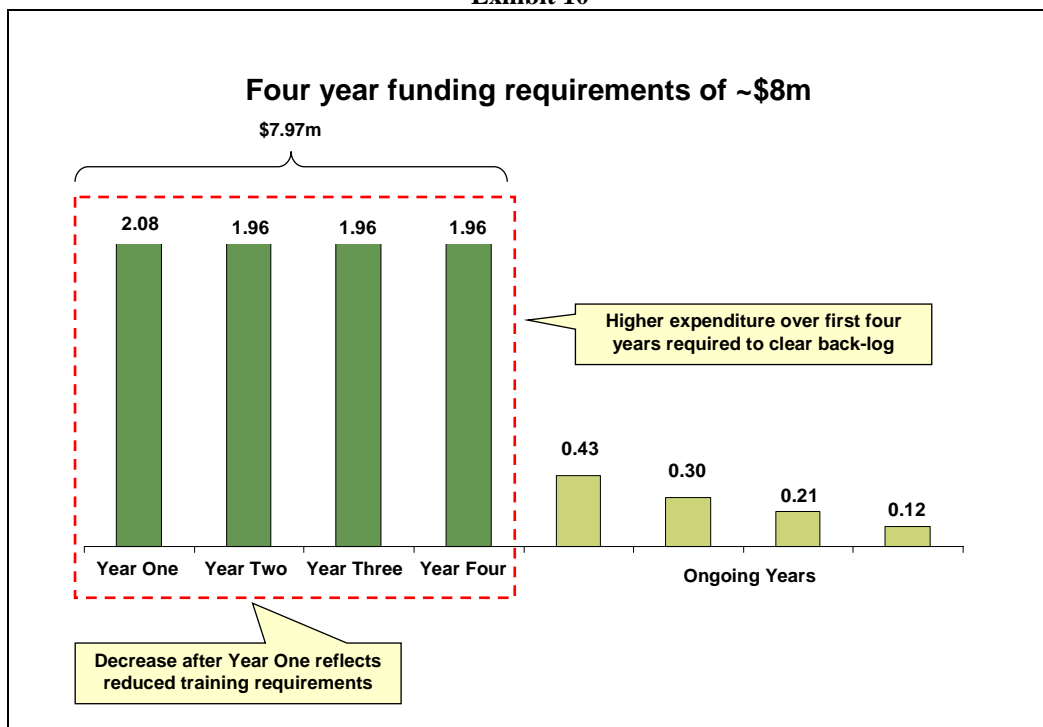


While the initial investment in the program will be significant, ongoing costs should be substantially lower. Upfront costs will be higher largely because of the existing backlog of low-progress readers. While there will always be some students who need

remedial literacy instruction in future, this should be a small minority that reduces further over time (Exhibit 10).

The cost per intervention under this proposal is about \$5,000 per student. In comparison, the Exodus Foundation will fund the Schoolwise program in 2007 to the tune of \$650,000 for 88 students, or an average of ~\$7,400 per student. The MULTILIT Intensive Program is commercially available to the public at a retail cost of \$2,950 per student per term, or \$5,900 for two terms.

Exhibit 10



The expected impact of the program is an average increase in reading age of 12-24 months over a six-month period. The number of students achieving the minimum benchmarks in the Years 3, 5 and 7 reading tests would increase from less than 20% to over 60%. While a substantial improvement, this would still be below non-Indigenous peer results. Parts 2 and 3 of the recommended strategy are required to make a more significant impact over the longer term.

## 2. Improving literacy levels in early childhood

As discussed earlier, Indigenous children in Cape York are disadvantaged in literacy skills by the time they begin school. Action to improve early childhood literacy skills will reduce the number of children requiring remedial literacy instruction in their school years.

We believe a number of actions should be explored at both the institutional and the family levels.

### **a) Institutional initiatives**

In 2007, Education Queensland is introducing an in-school, non-compulsory Prep year for all Queensland students as an alternative to part-time pre-school programs largely delivered by childcare and kindergarten organisations. An Early Childhood Curriculum Framework has been written to link Prep with Years 1-3. The opportunity is to ensure a strong focus during this year on reading and literacy. Suggested actions include:

- Ensuring that the Prep curriculum has substantial oral language development and pre-literacy content;
- Ensuring that all participating teachers and teachers' aides are trained in practical methods of early childhood literacy development; and
- Pursuing community-level participation and attendance targets.

Most eligible Indigenous Cape York children already attend pre-school programs, often full-time and in-school. These programs are seen to improve social readiness for school but not to foster literacy and other development. The new Prep year curriculum should incorporate elements of reading to ensure it has a real impact on low initial literacy levels.

The Prep year could also include the use of Reading Role Models – literate elders, high-achieving older school students or literate community figures. This strategy is used in NZ (family members), South Africa (older students), the UK (community figures) and the USA (older students).

To further develop early childhood literacy skills in Cape York, library services could be established in communities where they don't already exist. International experience, such as that of READ Global, suggests that community-supported libraries can have a major impact on literacy and economic development.

In Australia, the provision of local library services is a local government responsibility attracting varying levels of state/territory funding. In Queensland, Indigenous councils can apply to the State Library for financial and technical assistance in establishing a library service, known as an Indigenous Knowledge Centre (IKC). Queensland has six IKCs in the Torres Strait, seven in Cape York and one at Cherbourg. However, not all Cape York councils run library services and only some of those with libraries allow clients to borrow books. Only two of Cape York's IKCs have formal reading programs.

### **b) Family initiatives**

Families exercise direct and indirect influence on early childhood literacy development. The National Reading Inquiry noted the significant impact that parents and carers have on their children's literacy skills. Even simple things such as adult-child and child-adult reading aloud activities. Family initiatives that should be considered include:

- **Partnering with Books in Homes Australia (BiHA) to increase book ownership and home reading.** In some Indigenous communities, 90 per cent

of children live in homes without a single book. BiHA provides each child with nine new books (three per term for three terms). The result is improved reading and word recognition, enhanced motivation to read for fun, more family participation in children's reading, and the creation of a legacy of books in homes where once there were few or none.

- **Establishing adult literacy and reading to children programs through schools and IKCs.** When adults talk with children it stimulates their oral language development; when they read to them it establishes books and writing as part of daily life; and when they read for their own pleasure and information it demonstrates that reading is a valued adult activity. All these things stimulate early childhood literacy skills. Research suggests that the more the parents read, the more likely their children will read for pleasure.

### **3. Beyond remedial: sustaining higher rates of literacy performance**

Literacy development is largely a function of the appropriateness, quality and quantity of instruction. Instruction must target the right problems and be well delivered. Students need to attend school and be rested, fed and healthy. There should be no excuses for poor attendance

Demand-side interventions should be targeted at parents to ensure their children's attendance and school readiness, and supply-side interventions should be used to deliver school reform.

#### **a) Demand-side interventions**

'Demand' for education needs to be rebuilt in many Cape York Indigenous communities. No progress will be made if children do not attend school.

Two relevant demand-side projects are already underway: CYI's Welfare Reform Project and Cape York Partnerships' Every Child is Special (ECiS) Project.

- The Welfare Reform Project is developing the potential to attach obligations to welfare payments to re-establish norms and expectations around school attendance.
- Every Child is Special is developing approaches to school readiness (ensuring children are fed, well rested) and a case management framework for monitoring and improving school attendance.

Better information for parents and communities can also assist 'demand' for education. Cape York schools, parents and community leaders must expect students to achieve at least at mainstream levels.

- Parents should be told in plain language how their children are tracking against state-wide standards and what their school attendance rates are.

- Community councils could also play a role in increasing the ‘demand’ for education if students’ attendance and literacy rates were tracked over time and against other Cape schools.

## b) Supply-side initiatives

Cape York schools can and must do better to achieve and sustain improved literacy levels. A number of measures are available.

- **More flexibility in recruiting quality teachers and principals.** Research shows that teacher quality has a significant impact on student performance, but it is incredibly difficult for Cape York schools to attract and retain teachers and principals. We need to look beyond the traditional talent pools and encourage more creative recruitment strategies. For example, the current principal of Coen State School was recruited through Cape York Partnerships (CYP). CYP was better positioned than Education Queensland to attract interest in, and applicants for, the role. Going outside the standard recruiting approaches could enable Cape York schools to tap into a much wider and deeper pool of resources than would otherwise be available. Given the high levels of variability in teacher education and low literacy components in some courses (noted as part of the National Reading Inquiry), careful selection will be needed to ensure that teachers have the skills needed to teach in Cape York.
- **Performance based incentives and rewards.** At the moment, very limited financial incentives are available to attract and retain quality teachers. Schools and principals should be empowered to offer more money to attract better teachers, and be able to pay good teachers more to stay. Teachers should be supported with increased pay and rewards for good performance and achieving results, particularly in relation to literacy outcomes.
- **High expectations.** Expectations need to be reset. Teachers, principals and the school system in general need stop making excuses for students. While remote communities are disadvantaged, teachers should still expect students to perform at mainstream levels. This mindset was critical to the approach adopted by Dr Chris Sarra at Cherbourg State School, Queensland. Between 1998 and 2005, that school achieved a 58% improvement in Year 2 literacy, 81% improvement in Year 7 literacy, a 94% reduction in unexplained absences and 93% real school attendance.
- **Sharing good practice.** Greater efforts could be made to share good practices. What is working in the Cape and what isn’t? Richer information on initiatives and outcomes, using common formats and metrics, could be a powerful driver of school quality improvement. Beyond MULTILIT, other literacy programs with proven efficacy should also be introduced in the Cape.
- **Extended schools days and terms.** Students from disadvantaged backgrounds often need extra time to catch up and keep up, let alone get ahead. In the US, Knowledge is Power Program (KIPP) schools focus on students with disadvantaged backgrounds and special needs. These schools

provide more time in the classroom through an extended school day, week and year. Students attend from 7:30am to 5:00pm on weekdays and alternate Saturdays, and over 3 weeks in summer.

- **Independent quality assurance monitoring.** Teachers need constant and constructive feedback on their performance. Regular ‘in-class’ observations and assessments should be a key input into every teacher’s individual professional development plan.
- **Ensuring that new curriculum changes are implemented on the ground.** Education Queensland has introduced a number of curriculum initiatives for Cape York from 2007. These include an increased emphasis on explicit instruction, phonics, and a more directive approach in curriculum documents. It is imperative that these policy level directions filter down into practical changes in the classroom and teaching methods. Independent reviewers could be engaged to monitor the implementation of the changes.

#### **4. Provide continuous assessment and reporting, with an unrelenting focus on results**

Other than the Years 3, 5, 7 and 9 literacy benchmark tests, there are no external measures to assess how students are tracking against state-wide standards. Apart from the rich tasks mandated in the New Basics Curriculum, no students work is moderated. Inexperienced teachers do not even have a reference point of experience from other schools to fully assess their students’ progress. Parents are not told on a regular basis whether their child is on track against the standards expected of a Queensland student.

This situation needs amending. Progress in literacy should be assessed as early as possible at the beginning of school and then regularly (every six months) on common scales to identify what is working well and where improvement and additional support are required. Parents need to be kept informed in plain language as to how their child is performing. We need an unrelenting focus on results.

The need for regular ongoing assessment on common scales was a key finding of the National Reading Inquiry. It found that :

- The assessment of children in the early years of schooling, from school entry, is “of critical importance in teaching reading and, in particular, identifying children who are at risk of not making adequate progress.” It recommended that “consistent assessments on-entry to schooling be undertaken for every child, including regular monitoring of decoding skills and word reading accuracy using objective testing of specific skills.”
- The reading growth of individual children should be closely monitored by ongoing assessment within schools mapped on common, empirical scales (“progress maps”). These progress maps would enable the monitoring of both individuals and groups across the years of schooling. It recommended that the monitoring and reporting of progress should occur twice each year in the first

three years of schooling. It said that data from assessments of and for learning are “essential to (a) assist teachers in determining the extent to which a student has mastered the skills that been taught and learned; and (b) inform both teachers and parents what must be done to meet the learning needs of the student.”

These recommendations need to be implemented for Cape York students as a priority. It is particularly important as we embark upon a more concerted effort to improve literacy performance. The Australian Council of Educational Research, or a similar body, should be engaged to develop the assessment tools and progress maps to be used in Cape schools.

## **Conclusion**

Urgent action to improve literacy outcomes in Cape York is required. Why literacy above other education goals? As Nobel Prize winning economist James Heckman explains, ‘literacy competence is an essential area of learning investment in the young, being a skill that begets many other skills because it constitutes a key part of our ability to increase our capacity’.

We seek through this paper to initiate a discussion with the State and Commonwealth Governments on the potential for a major literacy program for Cape York’s Indigenous communities, as well as broader initiatives to achieve sustainable improvements in literacy levels.

We believe this targeted intervention strategy will have a radical and immediate impact, and provide long-term and downstream benefits for individual students, their families and communities.

The Cape York Institute would like to move quickly on this proposal, with a target to begin implementation of the remedial literacy strategy from mid 2007. This is an aggressive timeframe, but every month that passes is another blow to the future prospects of hundreds of Indigenous children. The time for trials and pilots is over. We know what needs to be done. We need to get on with the job and do it.

## Appendix A: Literacy data for Cape York

The data used in this discussion paper were provided by Education Queensland to the Cape York Institute. The data on literacy in Cape York schools comprise:

- The average scores and percentage above the benchmark for Years 3, 5 & 7 assessments for 2001-2005; and
- The Year 2 Diagnostic Net results for 2001-2006.

The data was de-identified,<sup>7</sup> so do not fully cover smaller schools and groups. However, it is still possible to look at differences between Indigenous and non-Indigenous students, and between schools, as well as changes over time.

### Cape York Indigenous Mean Results by School 2001-2005 (Composite data)

School	Year 2 Support Required	Year 3	Year 5	Year 7
Bloomfield River	>69%	420	481	545
Coen		387	473	530
Cooktown	52%	431	512	572
Hopevale	72%	398	479	550
Kowanyama	>80%	351	407	500
Laura		406	465	504
Lockhart		335	425	505
NPA College	60%	405	487	537
Pormpuraaw	>75%	356	415	504
WCC - Aurukun	>85%	313	379	459
WCC - Mapoon	>68%	442	519	515*
WCC - Weipa	50%	457	523	547
<b>Notional State Indigenous average 2001-2005</b>	<b>44%</b>	<b>474</b>	<b>549</b>	<b>616</b>
<b>Notional all Queensland average 2001-2005</b>	<b>21%</b>	<b>528</b>	<b>605</b>	<b>680</b>

\* Data only for 2001-2002.

In the table above:

- The means are composite values covering reading, writing and numbers. The smoothing is justified on the basis that all are measured on a common scale
- Scores for the Years 3, 5 & 7 assessments average over all available Indigenous mean values in the 2001-2005 period for the given school. They are rough figures of merit. They do not represent the average marks a student would receive on successive assessments but the scores achieved by average students at different levels in the same period. However they can be compared with similar averages for all Queensland Indigenous students, and all Queensland students, which suggest what the levels and differences between the levels should be.

<sup>7</sup> The data are suppressed where there is only one student in the assessment group or when 100% of students in the group receive the same score, as this would allow a score to be assigned to individual students. This is quite common for Year 2 Diagnostic Net assessments for Indigenous students in small schools, where very often all students need support.

- The estimates for Year 2 support are averages of the Indigenous support percentages for a given school for the various components of the diagnostic net over the period 2001-2006. As data are missing – particularly for smaller schools – the figures are probably underestimates in the cases flagged.

This analysis understates the achievements of schools that have improved over the period – particularly if they have improved from the lower years up. In particular, Mapoon now only offers classes to Year 6, but has the second highest results at Years 3 & 5, so its Year 7 score should be ignored.

Looking at the differences in average scores for students at the same level in the same school only, the average gaps over 2001-2005 for Cape York schools where sufficient data are available are shown in the following table.

	<b>Year 3</b>	<b>Year 5</b>	<b>Year 7</b>
<b>Reading</b>	75	72	100
<b>Literacy overall</b>	86	73	108
<b>Numeracy overall</b>	97	88	114

The size of the gaps for students in the same school suggests that the problem is not that Indigenous students are concentrated in generally underperforming schools. Cultural background appears to be the main factor, with schools are failing to find a solution.

## Appendix B: Evaluation of literacy programs

Five literacy programs were identified for further consideration:

- Making Up Lost Time In Literacy (MULTILIT)
- National Accelerated Literacy Program (NALP)
- Reading Recovery (RR)
- University of Queensland Early Literacy Fundamentals (ELF)
- University of Queensland Phonological Awareness for Literacy (PAL)

The following table provides a summary of each program:

	MULTILIT	NALP	RR	UQ-ELF	UQ-PAL
Year level targeted	Y3-Y10	P-Y12	Y2	P/Y1	Y3-Y8??
Skills targeted	Focus on decoding and fluency	Focus on text usage: understanding & manipulation	Focus on comprehension	Focus on phonological awareness	Focus on phonological awareness
Program length	Two terms to a year	Whole of schooling	20 weeks	12 one hour sessions	20 hours in total
Program type	Remedial	Standard/ Preventative	Preventative/ Remedial	Supplementary/ preventative	Remedial
Indigenous success	Coen trial replicated Sydney results	Remote and urban success	ATSI version exists		
One-on-one	Yes	[Potentially]	Yes	Yes	Half time in one-one or pairs
(Levelled) groups	Yes	[Potentially]		Yes	Half time in small group (3-4)
Whole of class		Yes		Support activities for re-integration	
Teacher/trainer/tutor or training	1 day (tutor) 1 month (controller)	Grad Cert (2 year PT) recommended	1 year	1 day	1 day
Distribution	NSW (Catholic, Independent, State, also non-school youth) QLD SA	NT QLD SA WA	Australia Canada NZ UK USA	QLD (Now published internationally)	QLD
Political support or recognition	EQ best practice prize (Gladstone 2006) Mentions in Commonwealth reports and NSW Hansard	DEST funded. Official NT DEET program to be rolled out to 100 schools by 2008	Official EQ program	EQ best practice prize (Boondall 2006)	
Evidential support	A quantitative evaluation report was written for DEST by the program founders in 1999. No independent research found.	Favourable qualitative ACER review 2002. A 2003 quantitative evaluation report written for DEST by program founders.	Several studies. US Promising Programs website gives RR a promising rating. RR plus phonetic instruction is superior to original RR.	Study currently underway with EQ schools including control schools	Published research reports by designer

The quality of evidential support for educational programs is generally low as randomised trials with control groups tend to be the exception. Controls are usually at the school rather than at the class or individual level. Often there is no control for either the Hawthorn effect (where a group singled out for special treatment responds positively, independent of the treatment) or the teacher effect (a known major source of educational outcome variation). In addition, only programs in widespread use can generate large-scale experiments, or quasi experiments. This, and the fact that it was conceived in the 1970s, explains the relatively large amount of evidence available for Reading Recovery.

## **Appendix C: A Year of MULTILIT in Coen, 2005-2006**



### **A Year of MULTILIT in Coen, 2005-2006**

**A report of a pilot project to increase the literacy levels of aboriginal  
low-progress readers in a small remote community**

**Kevin Wheldall and Robyn Beaman  
MULTILIT Research Unit  
Macquarie University Special Education Centre**

*This report summarises the results obtained by older low-progress readers attending the MULTILIT Tutorial Centre facility, established as part of the Computer Culture Project of Cape York Partnerships, in Coen, Cape York, during the year July 2005 to June 2006.*

MULTILIT® is a research-based initiative of Macquarie University

## **What is the problem?**

“... the soft bigotry of low expectation ...”

(George W. Bush)

Aboriginal students are typically found to be substantially behind their non-indigenous peers in terms of performance in reading and related skills.

The 2005 Aboriginal Education Review in New South Wales (NSW) presents compelling evidence of the failure of our schools to cater for the needs of Aboriginal students. Findings based on state-wide testing of very large numbers of students showed that by Year 3 Aboriginal students are typically already nineteen months behind their non-indigenous peers on the reading component of the NSW Basic Skills Test. This gap in literacy skill has typically increased to five years by Year 7. Clearly, contemporary approaches to the education of Aboriginal students, have failed these students, not least as a result of low expectation.

The aim of this small-scale project was to demonstrate that students from Aboriginal backgrounds can make very large gains in reading and related skills when offered non-categorical, intensive skills-based instruction daily for three hours for two school terms. The instructional model employed was the MULTILIT Program developed for low-progress readers by the authors and their research and development team from Macquarie University Special Education Centre. MULTILIT encompasses all five major facets of effective literacy instruction (phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension) identified by both the National Reading Panel in the United States and the National Inquiry into the Teaching of Literacy in Australia.

The MULTILIT program of research conducted by the authors since 1996 has consistently demonstrated that low-progress readers make substantial gains in reading and related skills following MULTILIT intervention. This project extends the MULTILIT methods to meet the literacy education needs of Aboriginal students in a remote community, the township of Coen situated approximately 500 kilometres north-west of Cairns on the Cape York Peninsula.

## **What was the situation in Coen?**

At the start of the pilot project in June 2005, all available primary aged students from Coen State School were assessed by trained research assistants on a battery of tests measuring aspects of reading and spelling performance. The data available for the 24 older students in Years 4, 5, 6 and 7 showed that this group, whose average age was 10 years and 10 months, were typically over three years (40 months) behind their average age peers for reading accuracy and nearly four years (46 months) behind for reading comprehension.

## **What did we do?**

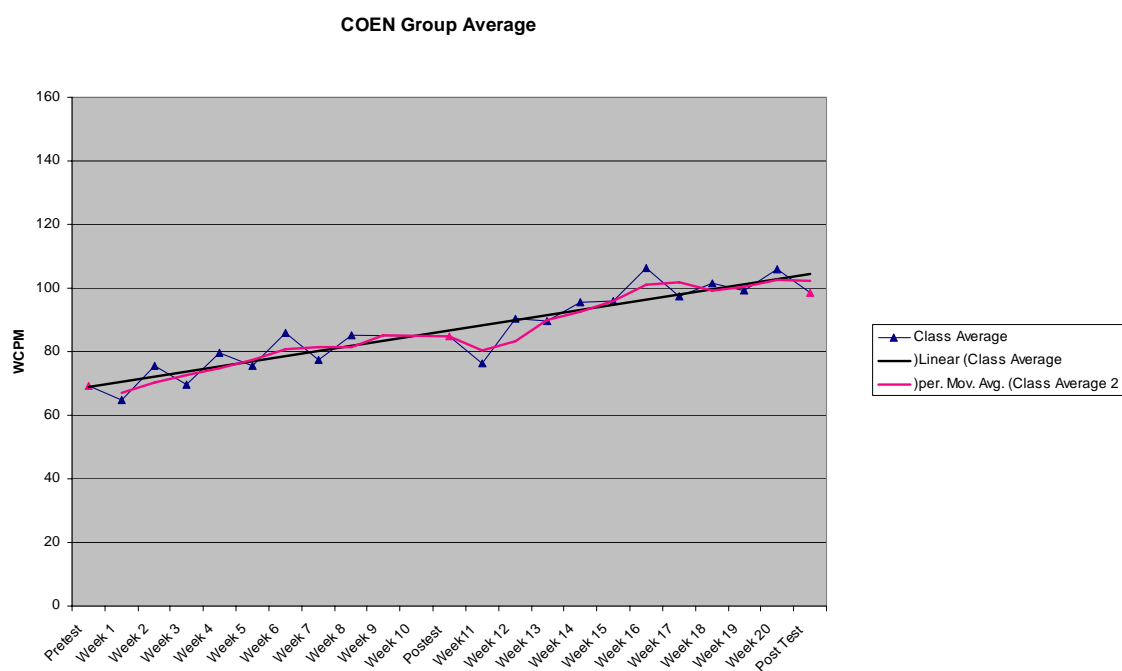
We established a MULTILIT Tutorial Centre on site at Coen State School in the middle of 2005. Two highly trained MULTILIT instructors were relocated to Coen for five months to offer the MULTILIT Program in the Tutorial Centre to the first intake of students and were replaced by a further two MULTILIT instructors from Sydney for the second intake. During Terms 3 and 4, 2005, ten Year 6 and 7 students received about 17 weeks of intensive MULTILIT instruction between initial and final assessments. Similarly, during Terms 1 and 2, 2006, eight Year 5 and 6 students received about 18 weeks of intensive MULTILIT instruction between initial and final assessments (two students having dropped out from the program in Term 1). All students were assessed on a battery of literacy measures on entry and re-assessed after two terms at the end of their program. [Note: In addition to MULTILIT for the

older students, a modified version of MULTILIT (MINILIT) was offered to groups of younger students in Years 2 to 3 for one hour per day but these results will not be reported here.]

### What were the results?

The ten low-progress readers comprising the first intake into the MULTILIT Program were, on average, aged 11 years and 6 months and were about four years behind in both reading accuracy and comprehension at the commencement of their MULTILIT Program. Attendance in the program averaged 75%. These ten students made average gains of :

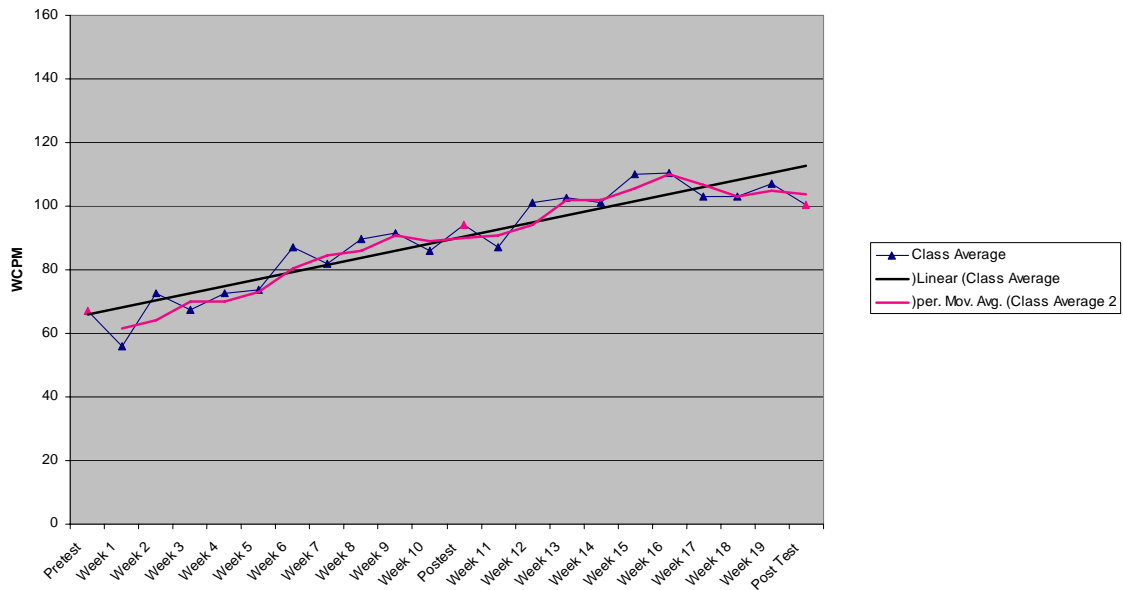
- 13.6 months in reading accuracy,
- 4.3 months in reading comprehension,
- 12 months in single word recognition,
- 24.3 months in phonic decoding,
- 15.9 months in spelling,
- 43% more words read correctly per minute (see graph below).



The second intake of eight low-progress readers had an average age of 10 years 6 months and were over three years behind their grade peers in terms of reading accuracy and four years behind in reading comprehension, at program commencement. Attendance in the program for the second intake averaged 67%. The eight students made average gains of:

- 15 months in reading accuracy,
- 7.5 months in reading comprehension,
- 14.6 months for single word recognition,
- 25.4 months in phonic decoding,
- 11.4 months in spelling,
- 50% more words read correctly per minute (see graph below).

COEN Group Average



Various students joined and left the school during the course of the year and all of the Year 7 students left for high school at the end of 2005. Of the original 24 primary-aged students, 15 were present for the whole year and were assessed mid 2005 and re-assessed mid 2006. These 15 students made average gains over the year of:

- 21.4 months in reading accuracy,
- 10.7 months in reading comprehension,
- 19 months for single word recognition,
- 25.9 months in phonic decoding,
- 22.8 months in spelling,
- 75% more words read correctly per minute.

Whereas this group of students were typically three and a quarter years behind their average age peers in reading accuracy in mid 2005, they were only two and a half years behind by mid 2006. They had closed the gap substantially.

### What might we do next?

The clear implication of this project is that aboriginal low-progress readers can be helped to improve their literacy skills substantially when offered effective programs of instruction such as MULTILIT. It should be noted that these gains were achieved in just three hours per day of MULTILIT instruction for two terms with very low attendance rates (75% and 67% for the two intakes). The next step would be to offer MULTILIT programs *daily* throughout the year for all students in need and to attempt to *increase attendance* to, say, 95%. To this end it is proposed that the collaboration between Cape York Partnerships and MULTILIT should continue, building on the success of this pilot project, and to introduce MULTILIT school wide in 2007 together with an effective case management system to increase attendance.

*Acknowledgements: We would like to thank the dedicated MULTILIT Instructors (Megan Cooper, Sarah Biffin, Helen Ward and Owen Bridgman) without whose commitment and skill this project would not have been possible.*

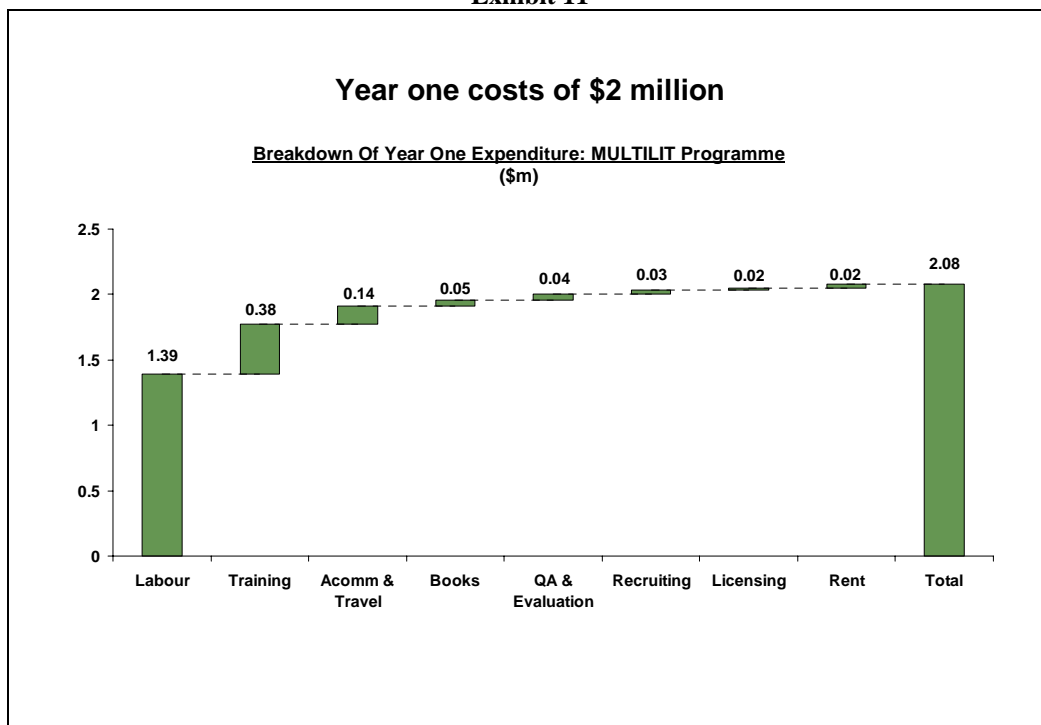
## Appendix D: Indicative Costings

Cost estimates for a MULTILIT program in Cape York were determined by the Cape York Institute in consultation with Mr Wayne Rosen, Chief Financial Officer for MULTILIT. They are based on CYI's experience running similar projects in Cape York. These estimates are intended to be indicative only and subject to change prior to the development of a formal funding submission or contract.

### *Year One Costs*

The estimated cost of delivering MULTILIT in Year One is \$2m, most of which is made up of salaries, training for the program's instructors and associated travel and accommodation (Exhibit 11).

Exhibit 11



### *Four Year Funding Requirements*

A large number of current students require remedial instruction. The modelling assumes that this backlog will be cleared over four years, with the program then scaled back to deal with new students as they enter the system.

The estimated funding required to deliver MULTILIT over four years is ~\$8m. The ongoing cost would be under \$500k per annum, declining gradually as longer term strategies begin to take effect.

### Major Assumptions

The table below outlines the major assumptions underpinning the funding calculations. Detailed spreadsheets are available if required.

Category	Assumption	Figure Used
Labour	Number of Students Requiring Remedial	1,579 over 4 yrs
	Ratio of Students: Instructors	7:1
	Mix of Instructors (Senior:Tutors)	50:50
	Cost of Instructors (Senior, Tutor)	\$65k, \$45k
	Average Length of service (Instructors)	6 months
	Number of and Cost of Supervisors	2, \$75k
	Number and Cost of Project Managers	1, \$100k
	Number and Cost of PA's	0.5, \$50k
	Additional Cape York Salary Premium	10%
	On-costs	19%, 27%
Training	Supervisor Training (initial)	4 weeks
	Supervisor Training (ongoing)	1 week
	Instructor Training	4 weeks
	Training Cost Per Hour	\$300
	Associated Accommodation	\$200 p/n
	Associated Room Hire	\$300 p/d
Accommodation, Meal & Travel	For Instructors	\$100 p/w
	For Supervisors On The Road	\$150 p/n
	Cost Per North-South Cape Trip	\$1,000
	Number of Supervisor Trips Per Year	4
	Number of PM Trips Per Year	4
	Vehicle Costs Per Year	\$25k
	Number Of Vehicles	1
Books & Materials	Cost Per Student	\$100
	Cost Per Master Kit (Per Instructor)	\$500
Quality Assurance	Average hourly rates	\$150
	Number of weeks per year	4 weeks
Recruiting	Cost Per Ad (For Recruiting)	\$1,150
	Number Of Ads Required	25 pa
MULTILIT License Fees	License Fee Per School	\$1,000
	Number Of Schools	15
Rent & Other Expenses	Rent Per Person Per Year	\$10k
	Space Required (Number of People)	2

## Appendix E: References

### Government Reports

*Bound for Success*, Education Strategy for Cape York, Education Queensland, Department of Education and the Arts, 2006.

*Literacy: the Key to Learning*, Education Queensland, Department of Education and the Arts 2006

*Teaching Reading*, Report and Recommendations, National Inquiry into the Teaching of Literacy, Department of Education, Science and Training, December 2005

### Data sets

Education Queensland Corporate Data Warehouse:

1.11 Year 2 Reading Diagnostic Net Distribution, by Cultural Background and Gender, 2001-2005

1.14 Year 2 Writing Diagnostic Net Distribution, by Cultural Background and Gender, 2001-2005

1.17 Year 2 Number Diagnostic Net Distribution, by Cultural background and Gender, 2001-2005

1.20 Year 3 Literacy Test Performance, by Gender and Cultural Background, 2001-2005

1.23 Year 3 Numeracy Test Performance, by Gender and Cultural Background, 2001-2005

1.26 Year 5 Literacy Test Performance, by Gender and Cultural Background, 2001-2005

1.29 Year 5 Numeracy Test Performance, by Gender and Cultural Background, 2001-2005

1.32 Year 7 Test Performance, by Gender and Cultural Background, 2001-2005

Available at: <http://education.qld.gov.au/schools/statistics/stat-achieve.html>

Cape York Schools – Bound for Success and NPA – statistics (de-identified):

Percentage above 3, 5 & 7 benchmarks by ATSI/non-ATSI

Mean scores on 3, 5 & 7 assessments by ATSI/non-ATSI

Year 2 diagnostic net results by ATSI/non-ATSI

Aggregate year 2 diagnostic net result against year 3 benchmark results

(Special data request from Performance Monitoring and Reporting Branch, Department of Education Training and the Arts Queensland)

### Websites

Exodus Tutorial Centre Ashfield (Sydney), <http://www.billcrews.com.au>

MULTILIT website, <http://www.multilit.com>

National Accelerated Literacy Program, <http://www.nalp.cdu.edu.au/>

National Reading Panel, <http://www.nationalreadingpanel.org>

Promising Practices Network on children families and communities – what works for children and families, <http://www.promisingpractices.net/>

What Works Clearinghouse – a trusted source of scientific evidence of what works in education, <http://www.whatworks.ed.gov/>

University of Queensland Early Literacy Fundamentals & Phonological Awareness for Literacy, School of Health and Rehabilitation Sciences,  
[http://www.shrs.uq.edu.au/shrs/clinics\\_and\\_services/multidisciplinary-program.html](http://www.shrs.uq.edu.au/shrs/clinics_and_services/multidisciplinary-program.html)

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