Communiqué 1
11 November 2014

The Education Act review reference group met for the first time on 11 November 2014. The reference group consists of nominees of key stakeholder groups.

The Minister for Education and Training, Hon Jeremy Rockliff, opened the meeting and outlined why the review is an important part of the Government’s plans to lift Tasmania, welcomed members and thanked them for their willingness to participate on the reference group.

The Department of Education is managing the review process and the development of legislation. The Reference Group has been established to act as a sounding board and as an advisory group to the Department. The Reference Group’s role is to:

- provide feedback to the Department of Education at key points during the review; and
- ensure that the stakeholder group representatives are informed about the project’s progress and have opportunities to provide feedback.

The Department of Education provided an overview of the Education Act review process and timeframes. Submissions on the discussion paper that was released on 10 September 2014 close on 31 December 2014. Submissions will be put on the website unless there are privacy issues (e.g., a child can be identified by issues a parent may raise) or the author requests the submission is not made public.

The reference group were advised that there will be a further round of public consultation on an exposure draft of legislation, which will include concrete reform proposals for community and stakeholder feedback. The intention is for legislation to be introduced into Parliament during 2016.

The reference group was briefed by the Department of Treasury and Finance and the Department of Premier and Cabinet about the importance of improving education outcomes for Tasmania’s future as well as the key drivers for achieving better education outcomes. The way the Education Act review fits within this context was discussed. It was noted that changing legislation alone will not solve the challenges that Tasmania faces and that a multi-faceted approach is needed at legislative, policy and community levels. The review covers those things that will require a legislated response.

The next meeting of the reference group will be held in February/March 2015 and will consider the major themes and issues arising from the submissions to the discussion paper.

Further information on the review of the Education Act and a copy of the discussion paper is available on the Department of Education’s website www.education.tas.gov.au
Organisations represented on the Reference Group include: the Australian Education Union; the Catholic Education Office Tasmania; the Community and Public Sector Union; the Independent Education Union Victoria Tasmania; Independent Schools Tasmania; Tasmanian Association of State School Organisations; Tasmanian Catholic Schools Parents Association; Tasmanian Home Education Advisory Committee; Tasmanian Principals Association; TasTAFE; United Voice; and the University of Tasmania.