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Good Morning

I work for a Local Community Partnership (LCP) that is funded through the CAA initiative. Due to demand, our programme works tirelessly in the area of School Based Apprenticeships and Traineeships, to promote these in the Newcastle and Lake Macquarie area. Unfortunately our CAA funding only allows for promoting SBAT's, but does not allow for us to support, monitoring, recruit employers, and assist parents, students and school to fully understand the benefits and commitments of SBAT as part of the HSC program.

Our area has one of the highest numbers of SBAT's in the state (approximately 200 students at the beginning of this year were undertaking SBAT), with over 400 in the Hunter Central Coast Region, but I have been very disillusioned lately by news that the DET is going to be cutting the funding to this successful program. As you could appreciate students undertaking a combination of paid work and additional study whilst completing the HSC, need additional support and mentoring throughout their apprenticeship or traineeship.

I feel that the government should be supporting and promoting these great achievements instead of cutting the funding. The popularity of SBAT in Newcastle and Lake Macquarie should be used as a model for other areas and the funding should reflect the success.

Career Links signed up the first Hairdressing SBA, first Jewellery SBA in Australia and first Plumbing SBA in the state. We hosted a one off SBAT information event that was attended by over 360 people including many employers, employer groups and RTO's!! We will have the first School Based Trainees in Local Government starting shortly to work with Lake Macquarie Council.

School Based Apprenticeships and Traineeships allow students to combine their part time work with schooling and assist them make the transition from school. We have had many success stories with students who were going to leave school, but instead undertook a SBAT and have had amazing

success. I am only too happy to be involved with any initiatives to save and improve this program to help the young people in this area.

Can the federal government consider increasing the funding given to LCP's specifically to set up and support this valuable program so we don't have to rely on the insulting scraps of funding offered from the state? We can do so much more to help our local students make the smooth transition from school.

Regards, Kerrie