

**Senate Standing Committee on Education and Employment - Education**

**QUESTIONS ON NOTICE  
Budget Estimates 2014-2015**

**Outcome 1 - Early Childhood Education and Care**

**Department of Education Question No. ED0099\_15**

**Senator Hanson-Young provided in writing.**

**Question**

**Universal Access to Preschool Education**

1. Will the Government be extending or negotiating a new National Partnership on Universal Access to Early Childhood Education? 2. Budget paper 3 states that a Provision has been made in the Contingency Reserve for additional funding in 2014-15 and 2015-16, subject to negotiations with the States. How much money is in the contingency? How many years funding will this amount of money provide for? 3. What will be the impact of not funding the National Partnership Agreement on UAECE on access to preschool will be on families? 4. The review of the National Partnership is currently scheduled. When will it be finalised? 5. Do you agree that this places parents in a very difficult position given they are currently enrolling and that it has been suggested that if the agreement does not continue, hours will be reduced –from 15 to 10 hours in some states, and parents will then need to make child care arrangements at short notice. 6. What are the educational impacts of dropping the hours children have access to preschool and kindy?

**Answer**

The Government will not pre-empt the findings of the review of the National Partnership on Universal Access to Early Childhood Education, or comment on arrangements beyond 2014, until the review (required under the terms of the National Partnership) is completed and due consideration is given to its findings.

A provision has been made in the Contingency Reserve for funding for the 2014-15 financial year, as reported in the 2014-15 Budget documents. Any decision regarding arrangements beyond the current National Partnership are subject to the findings of the review.

The Government is working with state and territory governments to progress the review as quickly as possible, noting that the provision of data has been delayed by most states and territories. The review is expected to be considered by the Education Council (formerly known as the Standing Council on School Education and Early Childhood) in 2014.