

Senate Standing Committee on Education and Employment - Education

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

Outcome 2 - Schools and Youth

Department of Education Question No. ED0652_15

Senator O'Neill asked on 22 October 2014 , Hansard page 111

Question

Schooling Resource Standard (SRS)

Senator O'NEILL: I have a couple of detailed questions that I will put in on notice, but can I just ask this question: the Australian Education Act says that the SRS grows by 3.6 per cent a year. Is that correct? Mr Cook: Correct. Senator O'NEILL: Using that, could you please also show what the SRS will increase to, in each year to the end of the decade? And can you show the gap between what school funding will be in each state and territory, compared to the SRS? I understand that, past a certain point, you are only going to be able to anticipate the Commonwealth. Mr Cook: I will obviously have to take that on notice. ...

Senator O'NEILL: Where does the SRS fit into that model then, in your view? Ms Paul: Perhaps—let us say, to be technically correct, I think what we might do is take it on notice, as we have just done—we can roll it into that other question which Mr Cook has just taken on notice. And we will give you the proper description of the SRS, which is not in front of me here. I think that would be the most helpful thing.

Senator O'NEILL: Some plain-speaking language for Australians to understand, please. Ms Paul: Sure, we can try that!

Answer

Commonwealth recurrent funding for schools is provided in accordance with the *Australian Education Act 2013*, under which the Commonwealth pays its share of this funding.

All schools are entitled to a base amount of funding for every student. Students and schools that need extra support also attract loadings targeting disadvantage. The combination of base and loadings represents the Schooling Resource Standard (SRS), expressed as a per-student amount of total public funding for each school.

The funding for a school for a year reflects their enrolments and the per-student funding amount. For non-government schools, the base amount is discounted by the capacity of the school's community to contribute financially to the school. The additional loadings are calculated as publicly funded no matter what school a child attends.

The SRS funding amount is indexed each year by 3.6 per cent.

Because of transitional funding arrangements, not all schools will immediately attract the SRS amount. Schools which have been funded above the SRS amount will continue to receive their old amounts of Commonwealth funding, indexed by three per cent each year, until they reach their SRS. Schools which have been funded

below their SRS amount will receive their old Commonwealth funding amounts grown by 4.7 per cent each year plus some additional funding to bring those schools towards their SRS.

Given the above factors, there is no single SRS amount to demonstrate year on year increases as requested. The SRS base amounts of funding will however grow by 3.6 per cent per year to be \$10,309 for a primary student and \$13,558 for a secondary student by 2017.