

**Senate Committee: Education and Employment**

**QUESTION ON NOTICE**

**Supplementary Budget Estimates 2015 - 2016**

**Outcome: Schools and Youth**

**Department of Education and Training Question No. SQ15-000858**

Senator Lines, Sue provided in writing.

***Foreign language education for preschool children***

**Question**

In relation to The Coalition's Policy for Schools: Students First p14:  
Give every preschool child the opportunity to study a foreign language  
The Coalition will commit \$10 million for a one year trial of online language learning for children at pre-school. Early exposure to language learning is an important platform for encouraging language learning in the later years of school education. Delivering this using an online learning environment has significant potential to provide young children with their first foreign language experience quickly and effectively. Such an approach is common in many countries. An estimated 400,000 pre-school children would benefit as part of the online language learning trial for one year.

- a. Have 400,000 pre-school children participated in the trial?
- b. Has the trial been evaluated? What were the findings?
- c. How will the Government give every preschool child the opportunity to study a foreign language?
- d. Are any additional teachers, or teacher professional development required to expand the program to every child? Are all preschool teachers in Australia currently qualified to teach a foreign language?

**Answer**

- a. More than 1700 children in 41 services providing a preschool programme across Australia are currently participating in the one year Early Learning Languages Australia (ELLA) trial. Extension of this trial will be considered after the initial evaluation is received in early 2016. Results of the trial will inform the potential roll-out of apps to all preschool aged children, which exceeds 400,000 as stated in the policy.
- b. The ELLA trial is currently being evaluated by an independent consultant.
- c. The Australian Government will consider the evaluation findings.
- d. The ELLA trial will determine whether online language learning can be delivered effectively and efficiently by preschool educators without the need for a qualified language teacher in every classroom.