

Senate Committee: Education and Employment

QUESTION ON NOTICE Supplementary Budget Estimates 2015 - 2016

Outcome: Schools and Youth

Department of Education and Training Question No. SQ15-000892

Senator Lines, Sue provided in writing

Number of students in special schools

Question

How many students are in special schools? Please provide a national total and a breakdown by state/territory and sector.

Answer

A special school (also known as a special assistance school) is defined by the Australian Bureau of Statistics (in conjunction with the Ministerial Council for Education for the National Schools Statistics Collection) as one which satisfies the definition of a school and requires one or more of the following characteristics to be exhibited by students before enrolment is allowed:

- mental or physical disability or impairment
- slow learning ability
- social or emotional problems, and/or
- in custody, on remand, in hospital.

The Australian Government Department of Education and Training only collects information on special and special assistance schools that receive Australian Government funding. Data on the number of special schools that receive Australian Government funding and the number of students in those schools is in Table 1 and Table 2 below.

Table 1: Number of special schools by state/territory and by sector, 2014

	ACT	NSW	NT	QLD	SA	TAS	VIC	WA	Australia
Government	4	101	4	44	17	4	79	64	317
Catholic	0	9	1	11	2	0	7	3	33
Independent	1	37	0	11	1	1	13	8	72
Total	5	147	5	66	20	5	99	75	422

Source: Australian Government Department of Education and Training internal data sets (2014).

Table 2: Number of special school students by state/territory and by sector, 2014

	ACT	NSW	NT	QLD	SA	TAS	VIC	WA	Australia
Government	331	5,207	306	4,364	1,153	226	11,586	3,547	26,721
Catholic	-	682	93	1,020	107	-	539	252	2,694
Independent	11	2,275	-	820	64	20	665	770	4,626
Total	342	8,164	399	6,204	1,324	247	12,791	4,569	34,040

Source: Australian Government Department of Education and Training internal data sets (2014).