

EDUCATION, SCIENCE AND TRAINING

SENATE LEGISLATION COMMITTEE - QUESTIONS ON NOTICE 2003-2004 ADDITIONAL ESTIMATES HEARING

Outcome: 1
Output Group: 1.1 – Funding for schools

DEST Question No. E834_04

Senator Carr provided in writing.

Question:

Inner City Montessori School, Balmain, NSW

Received a capital grant of \$100,000 in 2002 for a range of purposes.

The school has an SES score of 121 – in the top rank.

How can any capital grant to a school with this SES score be justified?

Answer:

Capital grants to non-government schools

Block Grant Authority (BGA) Schedules of recommended projects for funding must comply with requirements listed in the *Commonwealth Programmes for Schools Quadrennial Administrative Guidelines 2001-2004* and the *Administrative Arrangements for Block Grant Authorities*. These include specific requirements that BGAs: ascertain whether there is a need for a project and what level of funding the school itself can provide; and then, within the total Australian Government funding available, prioritise projects on the basis of relative educational disadvantage of the students at the applicant schools.

In assessing projects for grants, BGAs take into account the total resources available to the school, such as fee income or borrowings, to determine whether the school can fund the project from its own resources. Projects are rejected if the BGA determines that the project could be funded by the school.

In each yearly funding round, BGAs rank eligible projects according to the relative educational disadvantage of the students at the school, and funds are allocated progressively from the most disadvantaged to the less disadvantaged until the BGA's allocation is exhausted.

In making its recommendation to fund the Inner City Montessori School, the BGA took into account the total resources available to the school. The Department does not obtain detailed information on a school's financial resources for the purposes of the Capital Grants Programme.