

## 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. E835\_04**

Senator Carr provided in writing.

#### **Question:**

##### *Other Schools*

The Department's response to E617 advises that the following schools received a capital grant, on advice of the relevant Independent School Block Grant Authority, since 1996:

##### *NSW*

Sydney Church of England, Redlands  
Sydney Church of England Girls' Grammar School  
Masada College  
Queenwood School for Girls  
St Ignatius College, Riverview  
The Emanuel School

##### *Victoria*

St Catherine's School  
Bialik College

##### *Western Australia*

Presbyterian Ladies College  
Scotch College  
St Hilda's Anglican School for Girls

##### *Queensland*

St Aiden's Girls School

All the above schools have SES scored of 120 or more – in the top rank of SES. If the SES is a measure of a school's financial capacity, how can they be eligible for a Federal capital grant under the 'needs' guidelines issued to the BGA? What were the 'needs' criteria used in these cases? Please provide details. Include increases in Federal funding since that time.

The following schools also received capital grants since 1996. Although they have SES scores less than 120, they are in the 'high fee' category, and were formally categories 1-3 schools:

##### *NSW*

Claremount College  
The Scots School

##### *Queensland*

St Hilda's School

##### *Victoria*

##### *Western Australia*

Hale School  
Penrhos College  
Wesley College  
All Saints College  
Perth College  
St Mary's Anglican Girls' School

##### *Tasmania*

Kingswood College  
Yarra Valley Grammar  
The Knox School  
Woodleigh School

The Friends School  
Launceston Grammar  
Scotch Oakburn  
The Hutchins School

**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 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. BGAs assess educational disadvantage using a combination of different methodologies and indicators such as SES scores, numbers of isolated or special needs students, and health and safety issues.

In assessing projects for grants, BGAs examine school financial data to determine the school's capacity to contribute to or fund the project from its own resources. They take into account the total resources available to the school, such as fee income, other income or borrowings and debt servicing capacity. Projects are rejected if the BGA determines that the project could be funded by the school.