

EDUCATION, SCIENCE AND TRAINING

SENATE LEGISLATION COMMITTEE - QUESTIONS ON NOTICE 2004-2005 BUDGET ESTIMATES HEARING

Outcome: 1

Output Group: 1.3 – Assistance for quality teaching and learning

DEST Question No. E139_05

Senator Crossin provided in writing.

Question:

In the budget and reported in Campus Review of May 19 – 25 Page 3, Government is allocating \$35m over four years for values, civics and citizenship education.

How is this to be allocated to schools?

What guidelines are there?

What schools are eligible?

Will this be using existing programs or are these seen as too “values neutral?”

Answer:

Values, civics and citizenship education

The 2004-2005 Budget provides funding of \$29.7 million over four years to help make values education a core part of Australian schooling through support for:

- school community values education forums in every school in Australia and drug education forums in every school,
- clusters of champion schools showcasing best practice approaches in line with a national framework,
- curriculum and assessment resources for all schools to teach values, and
- national partnership projects with parents, teachers, principals and teacher educators.

In addition the Budget provides funding of \$4.9 million for civics and citizenship education over four years.

The values education funding will help schools focus on values education in their mission/ethos. It will help develop student civic and social skills and build student character and resilience. It will also help schools incorporate values into teaching programmes across the key learning areas.

While final arrangements are to be confirmed, the drugs forums are envisaged as Peer Drug Education Forums which focus on informing students about drugs, drawing on peer education. It is expected that the forums would involve the selection of young people seen as role models by their peers and teachers. While a focus is on peer education, it is expected that these forums will involve parents and others in the local community in further developing young people's attitudes, knowledge and values in relation to drug issues.

The values forums will offer school communities the opportunity to consider what place values education plays in their school policies and practices. Their focus would need to be consistent with the National Framework on Values Education. Funding for these forums (\$10 million in total) will be channelled through State and Territory education authorities.

It should be noted that the drugs and values forums are separate activities. The drugs forums are linked to the National School Drug Education Strategy. The values forums are linked to the National Framework on Values Education.

The clusters of champion schools component will work in a similar manner to the Boys Education Lighthouse school clusters. A national manager for the clusters will be chosen by open tender. The selected champion values education schools could disseminate information and develop, facilitate and implement a programme for teachers in a 'cluster' of surrounding schools. In particular, they could disseminate, deliver and document agreed activities on values education for teachers and school leaders. The lighthouse/champion school concept is based on Australian and overseas research on school effectiveness and school improvement (see eg Peter Cuttance, *School Innovation: Pathway to the Knowledge Society*, Department of Education, Training and Youth Affairs, 2001).

Information for schools wishing to conduct forums or apply to take part in the cluster of champion schools component will be published after the contractual arrangements for these components of the values education initiative have been finalised.

Funding will be available for all schools to conduct values forums and drugs forums. All schools will also be eligible to apply to take part in the cluster of champion schools component.

In organising forums or in applying for champion cluster funding, it can be anticipated that many schools would draw on existing values programmes.

The \$4.9 million civics and citizenship education funding will be provided for curriculum resources through a continuing civics and citizenship education website and national activities including *Celebrating Democracy Week* in schools and the National Schools Constitutional Convention. The website will be for all schools and all schools will be invited to showcase their civics and citizenship education initiatives during *Celebrating Democracy Week*. Senior students (Year 11/12) from all schools can seek to participate in the National Schools Constitutional Convention through being selected at State and Territory Conventions.