

EDUCATION, SCIENCE AND TRAINING

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

Outcome: 1

Output Group: 1.2 – Assistance for individuals including those with special needs

DEST Question No. E307_05

Senator Crossin provided in writing.

Question:

A recent announcement was made regarding provision of \$700 vouchers to parents whose children fail these year 3, 5 and 7 tests.

1. What happens to these vouchers if, as may well be the case in remote communities, tutors cannot be found?
2. Exactly what can these vouchers be used for?
3. Will such tutors have to provide tutoring plans and programs to anyone – if so who?
4. How many hours tuition will be expected for \$700?
5. Will they have to actually meet any performance indicators to get the money?
6. Who will monitor these tutors and how?
7. Who will actually pay these tutors and how?
8. Who will do the necessary admin tasks relating to tutors, such as taxation payments?
9. Who will meet such admin costs?

Answer:

Tutorial Credit Initiative

The pilot Tutorial Credit Initiative is an innovative and practical measure which has been introduced to assist parents of children who were below the Year 3 national reading benchmark in 2003 to access extra tutorial assistance in the form of a \$700 Tutorial Credit.

1. It is intended that tutorial assistance will be available in all areas, including remote areas. In remote areas, in the case that a qualified tutor (such as a current teacher is not available) teachers' aides and people with extensive relevant experience will be considered as possible tutors. All tutors must undergo child protection screening. If no suitable tutor is available travel and accommodation costs will be reimbursed for tutors who are required to travel to these areas.
2. Vouchers can only be used for one-on-one reading tuition, including pre and post tuition assessment, through a tutor registered with the broker.
3. Tutors will be required to develop a Work Programme (tutoring plan) for each child, and have this agreed to by the parents. A copy of the agreed plan is to be provided to the broker.
4. The provision of a certain number of hours has not been specified as the number of hours will depend on the hourly rate of the tutor which may vary due to market rates differing between areas. An indicative guide to the numbers of hours can be obtained by using the ATAS rate as a guide – currently \$35 per hour for tuition. In this case \$700 would equate to some 20 hours of tuition.
5. \$700 is for the provision of tutorial service, and is not based on performance outcomes of the child. The tutorial service will include conducting a pre-tuition assessment from which the tutor will develop a Work Programme for the child. The

agreed Work Programme will include overall tuition objectives, the student's goals, the tuition strategies to meet these goals, and a timeline which must be assessed against after each tutorial session. There will be on-going verification by the parent that tutoring has taken place, and a post-tuition assessment to measure the student's improvement. Tutors will be paid in arrears by the brokers, on receipt of parent verification that the session has taken place.

6. The brokers are required to ensure that tutors are legally bound and perform their obligations in accordance with the pilot Tutoring Credit Initiative Guidelines, the Tutorial Credit Initiative Code of Conduct and the terms of their contract with the broker.
7. The Department will pay the broker on receipt of a detailed invoice for tuition services that have been provided. The brokers will be required to pay tutors, including payment for tuition provided, and reimbursement of travel/accommodation costs (if required) in accordance with their contract.
8. The brokers will be responsible for the administrative details regarding tutors.
9. Brokerage fees will be paid to the brokers to administer the pilot including administering the tutors.