

EDUCATION, SCIENCE AND TRAINING

SENATE LEGISLATION COMMITTEE - QUESTIONS ON NOTICE 2006-2007 BUDGET ESTIMATES HEARING

Outcome: 1

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

DEST Question No. E306_07

Senator Wong provided in writing.

Question:

1. Please provide details of the funding levels and student participation in the Literacy, Numeracy and Special Needs Programme, separately for each state and territory and for the government, catholic and independent sectors:

- a. Students with disabilities
 - i. Recurrent element
 - ii. Per capita element
- b. Literacy and numeracy support:
 - i. For students from low socio-economic backgrounds
 - ii. For students from language backgrounds other than English
 - iii. For any other groups of students

Answer:

Assistance for individuals including those with special needs

The Literacy, Numeracy and Special Learning Needs (LNSLN) Programme will provide an estimated \$2 billion over the four years 2005 to 2008. The Programme is comprised of three distinct elements as outlined in the *Australian Government Programmes for School Quadrennial Administrative Guidelines 2005-08*. See **Attachment A**. The Guidelines are available at:

http://www.dest.gov.au/sectors/school_education/programmes_funding/forms_guidelines/quadguide/schools_quadrennial_administrative_guidelines_2005_to_2008.htm

The Schools Grants element of the LNSLN Programme will contribute around \$1.8 billion over 2005 to 2008. Three of the allocative mechanisms (see **Attachment B**), namely:

- Socio-economic disadvantage;
- Language background other than English; and
- Special education

comprise the recurrent component of the Schools Grants element. The fourth allocative mechanism is the per capita component based on the number of students with disabilities.

Both the recurrent and per capita components, including the 2006 per capita rates and the sector allocations (prior to supplementation) for the recurrent component, are outlined in the Guidelines (see **Attachment C**).

Conditions of Funding

6. Government and non-Government education authorities must make certain commitments as set out in Appendix E, Part 3.

Accountability Requirements

7. Financial and educational accountability requirements will be specified as appropriate in agreements or contracts with clients, consistent with the *Schools Assistance Act 2004*, and regulations. See Appendix F, Part 3 for more information.

Supplementation

8. Programme grants are supplemented annually in respect of movements in average government school recurrent costs through the application of the AGSRC Index and in accordance with Section 124 of the *Schools Assistance Act 2004*. See Appendix G, Part 3 for more information.

Literacy, Numeracy and Special Learning Needs Programme

Introduction

9. The Literacy, Numeracy and Special Learning Needs (LNSLN) Programme has three distinct elements:

- A. Schools Grants (formerly known as the Strategic Assistance for Improving Student Outcomes Programme);
- B. Non-Government Centres Support (formerly known as the Special Education Non-Government Centre Support Programme); and
- C. National Projects (formerly known as the Grants for National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies and Projects Programme)

Objective

10. The LNSLN Programme aims to improve the literacy, numeracy and other learning outcomes of students who are educationally disadvantaged through Schools Grants, and Grants for National Projects and to assist children and students with disabilities through Grants for Non-Government Centres Support.

A. Schools Grants Element

Introduction

11. The Schools Grants element constitutes the Australian Government's key targeted programme contributing assistance for schools to meet the needs of educationally disadvantaged students, including students with disabilities. Schools Grants funding is allocated to government and non-government school education authorities in the States and Territories.

12. Schools Grants funding, including the strategic assistance (per capita) payment, is not intended to represent the benchmark or ceiling level of support for educationally disadvantaged students. The Schools Grants element is only one source of funding available to schools to meet the needs of educationally disadvantaged students and is not related to the total level of resources required.

Appendix 2.3.A: Allocative Mechanisms For Australian Government Targeted Programmes

Literacy, Numeracy and Special Learning Needs Programme

Schools Grants Element

1. The Australian Government uses a composite allocative mechanism for determining funding allocations to State and Territory government and non-government school education authorities under the Schools Grants element.
2. The composite allocative mechanism is made up of the following four elements
 - A. Approximately 38% of Schools Grants funding is allocated using a mechanism of socio-economic disadvantage which uses the ABS Index of Relative Socio Economic Disadvantage (IRSED) and ABS school enrolment data for the 500,000 most disadvantaged students.
 - B. Approximately 28% of Schools Grants funding is allocated using a Language Background Other than English (LBOTE) mechanism which uses ABS Census data of students with ESL characteristics.
 - C. Approximately 26% of Schools Grants funding is divided into a government funding pool and a non-government funding pool and these funding pools are allocated to sectors on the basis of their shares of government or non-government enrolments.
 - D. Approximately 8% of Schools Grants funding for a strategic assistance (per capita) payment which is calculated using the formula:

strategic assistance amount \times *Number of eligible students with disabilities for the year immediately before the programme year.*

A. Socioeconomic disadvantage mechanism

3. The mechanism of socio economic disadvantage examines the distribution of socio-economic disadvantage between Government, Catholic and Independent schools. The mechanism uses information from the Index of Relative Socio Economic Disadvantage (IRSED) Index of the ABS Socio-economic Indexes for Areas (SEIFA) in conjunction with the latest (2001) ABS Census school enrolment data.
4. Education authorities' funding allocations are based on calculated percentage shares of the total amount of funding available for distribution using this element of the mechanism. Allocations for each education authority are derived from calculations at the national level of the distribution of the 500,000 most disadvantaged students between sectors.
5. The IRSED assigns each collection district (the primary unit for the collection and dissemination of Census data) with an index score. All Australian collection districts are ranked according to their index scores. Student enrolment numbers for each collection district are used to identify the collection districts with the 500,000 most disadvantaged students. ABS Census data on the number of student enrolments by type of school for each collection district enables a

Table 10: Capital Grants Programme - Allocations for General Element, 2006 - Non-government Component

State	Block Grant Authorities			
	Catholic \$'000	Independent \$'000	Joint \$'000	TOTAL \$'000
NSW	24,811	11,626		36,437
VIC	19,614	9,152		28,766
QLD	11,524	8,050		19,573
WA	6,487	4,114		10,601
SA	4,720	3,547		8,267
TAS	1,462	830		2,293
ACT	-	-	2,455	2,455
NT	-	-	5,360	5,360
Total*	68,617	37,320	7,816	113,753

*Totals may not add due to rounding.

Includes \$4.4 million in special additional funding for remote areas

Literacy, Numeracy and Special Learning Needs (LNSLN) Programme - Schools Grants Element

12. Supplementation for the LNSLN Schools Grants element will be paid as soon as possible following publication by the Ministerial Council on Education, Employment, Training and Youth Affairs of the 2004-05 Average Government School Costs figures and the making of a regulation under the *Schools Assistance Act 2004*.

Table 11: LNSLN (Recurrent) - Schools Grants element - Allocations for Government, Catholic and Independent Schools, 2006

State	Government Schools \$'000	Catholic Schools \$'000	Independent Schools \$'000	Total \$'000
NSW	99,761	32,284	15,939	147,984
VIC	60,033	25,095	11,998	97,126
QLD	44,689	10,273	7,142	62,104
WA	23,227	7,778	4,134	35,139
SA	21,303	5,946	3,359	30,608
TAS	8,138	1,434	717	10,289
ACT	2,498	1,382	479	4,359
NT	4,598	1,132	490	6,220
Total*	264,247	85,324	44,257	393,829

*Totals may not add due to rounding

Table 12: LNSLN Per Capita Strategic Assistance Amounts, 2006

Government (\$)	Non-government (\$)
147	743

Table 13: Payment Schedule for the LNSLN – Schools Grants Element - Government Schools, 2006

1-12	Jan – Dec	Each payment is one twelfth of entitlements
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Table 14: Payment Schedule for the LNSLN – Schools Grants Element - Non-government Schools, 2006

Payment	Month	Proportion of grant paid
1	January	Payment is one quarter of entitlement
2	April	Payment is one quarter of entitlement
3	July	Payment is one quarter of entitlement
4	October	Payment is one quarter of entitlement