

Senate Standing Committee on Education Employment and Workplace Relations

**QUESTIONS ON NOTICE
Budget Estimates 2010-2011**

Outcome 2 - Schools

DEEWR Question No.EW0143_11

Senator Williams provided in writing.

Question

FUNDING CHECKS – SMARTER SCHOOLS NATIONAL PARTNERSHIPS

The funds are rolled out by the New South Wales Government. What checks and balances are in place by the Commonwealth to check this program is being administered properly?

Answer

The Australian Government has established comprehensive governance and reporting processes to ensure this initiative is administered appropriately.

Each Bilateral Agreement is underpinned by Implementation Plans that provide details on the agreed approach for each state, including reform activity, performance indicators, milestones, payments, participating government and non-government schools, and reporting and monitoring approaches.

States are required to report biannually on the progress of reform implementation and achievement of agreed milestones.

Facilitation payments to states are linked to the achievement of the milestones and provision of information by states in accordance with the National Partnership performance and reporting requirements. If milestones are not met, the Commonwealth is able to delay or withhold facilitation payments.

To ensure transparency and accountability, as schools participate they will publish online their school level plans which identify National Partnership funding and reform activities being delivered.

The Commonwealth established the National Partnership Implementation Working Group (NPIWG), which is made up of representatives from the Commonwealth, and government and non-government school sectors in each state and territory, to govern the implementation.

The Smarter Schools National Partnerships will also be evaluated to provide an evidence base for what works best in improving the quality of teaching, improved literacy and numeracy achievement and supporting schools servicing disadvantaged communities.

Details about National Partnership arrangements in New South Wales are available from http://home.deewr.gov.au/smarterschools/national_partnerships_map_nsw.htm.