

**Senate Standing Committee on Education Employment and Workplace
Relations**

**QUESTIONS ON NOTICE
Budget Estimates 2011–2012**

Outcome 2 - Schools

DEEWR Question No.EW0204_12

Senator Nash provided in writing.

Question

Indigenous Supplementary Assistance (ISA)

ISCA says consequently, because of reduced funding, some schools are forced to cut back on staffing. Further indigenous students have left the schooling system due to reduced support for these needy schools and that it's unlikely they will return.

- Is the govt/dept aware of these consequences?
- Are they being investigated?
- Does it not conflict with the govt's efforts to close the gap in indigenous education?

Answer

The Department has examined the concerns raised by the Independent Schools Council of Australia.

The Indigenous Funding Guarantee was introduced as a transition mechanism to help non-government schools adjust to the introduction of the Indigenous Supplementary Assistance, which has been available since 2009 to all non-government schools with Indigenous students.

The Indigenous Funding Guarantee covers the gap in funding for schools where the combined recurrent and Indigenous Supplementary Assistance funding amounts are less than 2008 levels. The policy is designed to ensure schools do not experience a reduction in funding since the introduction of the new Indigenous funding arrangements.

The Department's investigation of individual schools' entitlements found that no school has experienced a reduction in per capita funding since the introduction of the new Indigenous funding arrangements.