

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

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

Outcome 2 - Schools

DEEWR Question No. EW0212_12

Senator Nash provided in writing.

Question

AIC Scheme

1. How many students use the hostel system?
2. The DEEWR website states the AIC scheme is a demand-driven program based on the numbers of eligible claimants, and numbers are based on a calendar year – how many families are eligible and are receiving the AIC?
3. The ICPA and BCEF also raised with me student attendance at schools. They advise absenteeism during is endemic in some isolated rural schools. They cite 2009 NAPLAN reading results that saw an average of 46.9% of students in very remote areas perform below the national minimum reading standard, with 40% performing below the minimum numeracy standard – is the govt/dept aware of this issue?

Answer – Question 1

The Department does not have data on the number of students using a given hostel or the hostel system as a whole. This would be a matter for state and territory education departments.

Answer – Question 2

As of April 2011, 6488 families received assistance through the scheme, based on the number of recipients located at the same residential address.

Answer – Question 3

The Australian Government is aware that there is a difference across NAPLAN testing between schools based on remoteness.

The Australian Government recognises that school enrolment, attendance and participation are essential for the educational achievement of all students. While State and territory governments have constitutional responsibility for schooling and attendance and have measures in place to regulate and monitor school enrolment and attendance, the Australian Government supports their efforts through a range of intergovernmental arrangements, policies and local level programs.

All governments in Australia have committed to the National Education Agreement (NEA), which contains an agreed set of objectives including that all children are engaged in, and benefiting from, schooling.

Through the NEA and other agreements, the Australian Government has almost doubled funding to schools over the current funding period compared to the previous.

The Government's *Smarter Schools National Partnerships* are delivering \$2.5 billion in funding to improve teacher skills, enhance literacy and numeracy teaching and support schools serving disadvantaged communities. 57.5 per cent of schools identified as being assisted through the *Smarter Schools National Partnerships* are located in non-metropolitan areas of Australia.

The Australian Government is also working to improve the skills of the teaching workforce through National Professional Standards for Teachers and School Leaders.

Additional dedicated support to address the development of the teacher workforce in remote schools is offered through the Teach Remote program. Teach Remote aims to build a high quality, committed teaching workforce in remote communities across Australia through targeted recruitment, induction, mentoring and support. Teach Remote funding will support for teachers and leaders in 180 remote schools over 2011, 2012 and 2013. Funding totals \$5 million.