

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

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

Outcome 2 - Schools

DEEWR Question No.EW0213_12

Senator Nash provided in writing.

Question

AIC Scheme

1. What is being done to address absenteeism in remote and rural schools?
2. The ICPA and BCEF believe the provision of experienced and motivated teachers and counsellors could make a difference especially if linked to TAFE programs in the senior years with some guaranteed job opportunities on the completion of schooling – is this something the govt would seriously consider?
3. The ICPA and BCEF recommend the govt provide funding for intensive and on-going training for teachers willing to relocate to remote area schools experiencing severe social disruption. There would also be the provision for differential salary agreements for such teachers – what is the govt doing to attract teachers to these schools? What are the results?

Answer – Question 1

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

The Australian Government has doubled its investment in schooling over the quadrennium to over \$64 billion to support government and non-government educational authorities to deliver on these objectives. State and territory Governments, in consultation with the Catholic and Independent sectors identified the school communities being targeted under the three Smarter Schools National Partnerships based on those most in need of support. These are the National Partnership for Low Socio-Economic Status Communities National Partnership, the National Partnership for Literacy and Numeracy and the National Partnership for Improving Teacher Quality.

Under the National Education Agreement, all governments have agreed to performance monitoring that includes measuring and reporting enrolment and attendance rates. These measures are reported on annually by the COAG Reform Council in its National Education Agreement Performance Report.

In addition, school level attendance data are now publicly available through the MySchool website. Schools can now share information to sustain good practice and address poor attendance rates.

Answer – Question 2

The Australian Government has a number of national initiatives to increase employment opportunities for students and ensure successful transitions from school to work.

Helping young people make a successful transition through school to further study or work is a priority. Evidence shows that young people who have achieved Year 12, or its equivalent, find the transition easier. All Australian governments have committed, under the National Partnership on Youth Attainment and Transitions, to achieve a national target of 90 percent of 19-24 year olds achieving Year 12 or its equivalent by 2015.

All Australian governments are backing the strong education and training focus and have agreed to a National Youth Participation Requirement, also known as 'learning or earning', that requires all young people to complete Year 10 and participate full time in education, training or employment – or a combination of these activities – until the age of 17 years.

Answer – Question 3

The Australian Government continues to drive systemic educational reform, recognising the key role of teachers in engaging and supporting students to achieve a world-class education. The National Professional Standards for Teachers (the Standards) were endorsed by the Ministerial Council on Education, Early Childhood Development and Youth Affairs in December 2010 and launched by the Minister for School Education on 9 February 2011. This reform increases public confidence in the professionalism of teachers by providing a nationally agreed quality assurance mechanism that will ensure Australian teachers and school leaders have the required competencies to be effective educators.

The Australian Government recognises that regional and remote schools have particular staffing challenges. The recently announced 'Teach Remote' initiative will have an intense focus on recruiting, training and supporting teachers working in remote communities. In this first stage, it will be implemented by the National Alliance for Remote Indigenous Schools, a partnership between the Northern Territory, Western Australia, Queensland, South Australia and New South Wales governments.

'Teach Remote' will build upon a range of existing programs and strategies operating within education authorities which are tailored to address local needs.