

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

**QUESTIONS ON NOTICE
Budget Estimates 2012-2013**

Agency - Australian Curriculum, Assessment & Reporting Authority

DEEWR Question No. EW0321_13

Senator Mason asked on 30 May 2012 , Hansard page 15

Question

ACARA - Schools Being Categorised as Red

Senator MASON: In 2010, I understand that 110 schools were identified as red schools. These schools were provided with a one-off payment by the government to support better outcomes for their students. In 2012, only 17 of those schools were identified as red. Of the 110 schools identified as red in 2010, how many statistically similar schools were used in the comparison group? Mr Randall: I would need to take that on notice. I am not sure if my DEEWR colleagues will have a bit more information. What we have done is identify some schools who then, as you said, received some additional funding. Senator MASON: A benefit, yes. Mr Randall: I will take that on notice. Your question is: what was the basis of those 110 schools being categorised as red? That is on the basis of their comparison, because they can be red against statistically similar schools or in other comparisons. So if you are happy we will take your question on notice, which is, I understand, who are those 110 schools compared with? Senator MASON: Yes. How many statistically similar schools were they compared with? Mr Adams: The colouration will be on two bases. It will be on the statistically similar schools and all schools. Senator MASON: Yes, of course; that makes sense. Mr Adams: I think there were two parts to the question. It is the comparison and then it is the effect of the intervention. But the comparison is on the basis of statistically similar schools, and all schools in Australia—the national average. Senator MASON: I am not a statistician, gentlemen! But, all right, I take your word for it. Mr Randall: We will provide you with some advice and we will need to work with DEEWR on that. I think you are asking: with which schools were they compared? Senator MASON: All right. Mr Randall: Is that right? Senator MASON: I think so. That makes sense to me. I can understand that. I am no statistician but I can follow that. Finally, on this issue of statistics, are the schools that were compared in 2010 the same schools that were compared in 2012? Mr Randall: Those schools were identified on the basis that they received additional payments. We will have to start with those schools and work with DEEWR to be able to say with whom those schools were compared and whether, when we look at the 2012 data, we are comparing the same group. Senator MASON: Correct. That is where I am going. Mr Randall: Okay. We will take that on notice. I think we got the gist of that.

Answer

ACARA has provided the following response:

Identification of the 110 'red/red' schools was undertaken using the 2009 NAPLAN results and selected from schools that were not currently in the National Partnership Agreement on Literacy & Numeracy (LNNP). Schools were classified as 'red/red' because they were performing below or substantially below both the national average and similar schools for all year levels and domains assessed in the school.

In relation to comparison with the national average NAPLAN scores and for a particular year level and domain, a school is identified as 'red' if it is more than 0.2 of a standard deviation below the national average.

In relation to comparison with similar schools and for a particular year level and domain, a school is identified as 'red' if it is 0.2 of a standard deviation or more below the average NAPLAN score of statistically similar schools. Statistically similar schools are a group of up to 60 schools with a similar Index of Community Socio-Educational Advantage (ICSEA) value. The 59 schools that are identified (through ICSEA) as the most statistically similar to a specific school may change from year to year if, for example, there are changes in schools' student in-take for a particular year which leads to a change in one or more school's ICSEA values.