

EDUCATION, SCIENCE AND TRAINING

SENATE LEGISLATION COMMITTEE - QUESTIONS ON NOTICE 2005-2006 SUPPLEMENTARY ESTIMATES HEARING

Outcome: 1

Output Group: 1.2 – Assistance for individuals including those with special needs

DEST Question No. E550_06 – Final

Senator Crossin provided in writing.

Question:

The survey found that there was a reduction in ITAS programs which left 2745 students unable to get tuition as they had received in the past. How many indigenous students were there in Year 3, 5 and 7 during 2004 nationally. How many students would have been eligible for ITAS funding in 2004 that have now been unable to access this support.

Answer:

Indigenous Tutorial Assistance Scheme (ITAS)

In 2004, there were 34,312 Indigenous students in Years 3, 5 and 7 nationally (11,698, 11,493 and 11,121 respectively).

We are unable to quantify a response to the second part of the question. Eligibility of Indigenous students for assistance under ATAS in 2004 relied on assessment by their education or training providers that they needed tuition to improve their educational outcomes. A range of approaches was used across states and jurisdictions. The availability, intensity and duration of tuition varied across jurisdictions. In addition, the Department's records for ATAS relate to the engagement of tutors, not the number of students eligible for assistance.

From 2005, ITAS has been specifically targeted at critical stages of schooling, allowing provision of more intensive assistance than was available under ATAS. An additional \$58 million has been allocated for tutorial assistance over 2005-2008 (an increase of 45% over funding for 2001-2004). Under ITAS:

- In-Class Tuition (ICT) targets Indigenous students who do not meet the Year 3, 5 and 7 literacy and numeracy benchmarks, providing up to 2.5 hours a week of tuition for up to 32 weeks each year;
- education providers also have flexibility to use some ITAS funds for tutoring other Indigenous students between Years 1 and 9 of schooling who are assessed by their classroom teacher as at risk of not meeting the relevant curriculum/syllabus standards for their age level;
- supplementary tutoring is also available for Indigenous students in Years 10, 11 and 12 (up to 4 hours a week for up to 35 weeks each year); and
- from January 2006, eligible Indigenous students who leave their remote community to attend school in a non-remote location or to attend a remote boarding school may also receive weekly tuition (up to 4 hours a week for up to 35 weeks).

In 2005, ICT was administered by education providers rather than the Department. Consequently, the Department will not be in a position to provide actual numbers of Indigenous students receiving tuition until ITAS funded education providers submit their performance reports which are due on 31 May 2006.