

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. E551_06

Senator Crossin provided in writing.

Question:

The AEU survey showed that only 11% of the 561 respondents had anything positive to say about your new system, while 67% commented that the changes were negative. What do DEST intend doing to improve the system for 2006? How will they make application easier? How will they gain the trust and confidence and involvement of Indigenous parents again?

Answer:

AEU Survey

For 2006, the implementation of the Indigenous Tutorial Assistance Scheme and the Whole of School Intervention Strategy will be refined in several ways. Firstly, Indigenous Education Agreements have now been signed between State and Territory school jurisdictions, Catholic education systems and Independent schools for the delivery of In-Class Tuition for the four years from 2005-2008. This provides for longer term planning and certainty of the tuition programme from one school year to the next.

Secondly, the final Whole of School Intervention Strategy funding round for 2005, which closed on 1 November 2005, supports projects from the commencement of the 2006 school year. The timing of the 2006 funding rounds has been promulgated to schools and schools authorities. There will be two funding rounds in 2006. Applications for the first round will close on 31 March 2006, and second round applications will close by 31 August 2006.

A single stage application process has been adopted with effect from Funding Round 5, which closed on 1 November 2005. The development of a Concept Plan is no longer required.

The Department continues to seek out advice from the Indigenous Education Consultative Bodies and other advisory bodies on the administration of the Indigenous Education Programmes.

The relationship between the Department, particularly staff in its Indigenous education network and Indigenous parents, has been developed over many years. Whilst the implementation of the reshaped Indigenous Education Direct Assistance programmes has not been without its challenges, the Department's relationship with Indigenous communities continues to be strong. This has been affirmed through the 2005 DEST Stakeholder Perceptions Survey.