

EDUCATION, SCIENCE AND TRAINING

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

Outcome: 1

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

DEST Question No. E559_06 – Final

Senator Crossin provided in writing.

Question:

Would the same happen to non-Indigenous parents who failed to send their kids to school?

Answer:

Halls Creek District High School Attendance Strategy

The 2005 trial was progressed as part of the Australians Working Together initiative, focussed in part on Parenting Payment customers. The payments are administered by Centrelink on behalf of the Department of Employment and Workplace Relations (DEWR).

DEWR advise that the 2005 trial was established by the Halls Creek Remote Area Service Centre (Centrelink) and the Halls Creek District High School and targeted families on income support payments whose children attended school 59-79% of the time. Participation was voluntary, did not specifically target Indigenous families and privacy and anti-discrimination principles were adhered to.

DEWR also advise that the trial worked within the existing Social Security legislation whereby parents' income support may be suspended if they failed to meet activity requirements, such as attendance at compulsory interviews. No parent was financially disadvantaged due to their participation in the trial.