

Senate Committee: Education and Employment

QUESTION ON NOTICE Additional Estimates 2016 - 2017

Outcome: Schools and Youth

Department of Education and Training Question No. SQ17-000543

Senator Paterson, James, provided in writing.

TIMSS and PISA results

Question

What do the most recent TIMSS and PISA results show about Australian student education outcomes - in absolute and relative terms? What has been the increase in schools funding (total Commonwealth and State and by the Commonwealth, in real dollars and per cent) over the same period?

Answer

Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA)

Overall Australia's PISA results have declined both in relative terms to other countries and in absolute terms in all domains (reading, mathematics and science). Australia is above the OECD average in all three domains.

Australian students' **absolute** performance has significantly declined in every domain:

- performance in scientific literacy has declined by 17 score points, or seven months of schooling, since 2006 (527 to 510)
- performance in mathematical literacy has declined by 30 score points, or one year of schooling, since 2003 (524 to 494)
- performance in reading literacy has declined by 25 score points, or ten months of schooling, since 2000 (528 to 503).

Australian students' **relative** performance has also significantly declined between 2012 and 2015:

- in scientific literacy Australia was significantly outperformed by nine countries in 2015, compared to seven countries in 2012
- in mathematical literacy Australia was significantly outperformed by 19 countries in 2015, compared to 16 countries in 2012
- in reading literacy Australia was significantly outperformed by 11 countries in 2015, compared to nine countries in 2012.

Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study (TIMSS)

Australia's TIMSS results have remained largely the same in **absolute** terms. However, other countries have improved and Australia's **relative** performance declined between 2011 and 2015:

- in Year 4 mathematics Australia was significantly outperformed by 21 countries in 2015, compared to 17 countries in 2011
- in Year 8 mathematics Australia was significantly outperformed by 12 countries in 2015, compared to six countries in 2011
- in Year 8 science Australia was significantly outperformed by 14 countries in 2015, compared to nine countries in 2011

The only assessment to see an improvement in relative performance was Year 4 science, in which Australia was significantly outperformed by 17 countries in 2015, compared to 18 countries in 2011.

School funding

School funding in Australia has been growing in real terms for several decades:

- Commonwealth and state/territory spending between 1987–88 to 2011–12 has increased by 100 per cent in real terms while student numbers grew by only 18 per cent
- between 2003–4 and 2013–14, total Commonwealth spending on schools increased by 49.2 per cent in real terms.