

Senate Committee: Education and Employment

**QUESTION ON NOTICE
Additional Estimates 2016 - 2017**

Outcome: Schools and Youth

Department of Education and Training Question No. SQ17-000280

Senator Hanson-Young, Sarah provided in writing.

Addressing disadvantage

Question

A report issued by the OECD last December [PISA 2015 Results (Volume II): Policies and Practices for Successful Schools] drawing on data from PISA 2015 revealed some startling and shocking gaps in human and material resources between advantaged and disadvantaged schools in Australia. Given the huge achievement gap between advantaged and disadvantaged schools in Australia, how does the Government propose to overcome the vast inequity in human and material resources between advantaged and disadvantaged schools?

Answer

The Australian Government is committed to needs-based funding for all Australian students and has committed record levels of recurrent funding for Australian schools, growing from \$16.1 billion in 2016 to \$20.2 billion in 2021. Commonwealth recurrent funding is calculated with reference to a base per student amount plus additional loadings that target student and school disadvantage, including for students from lower socioeconomic backgrounds, students with disability, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students, students with low English proficiency, and school size and location.

Research by the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD)¹ has shown that for high-income countries like Australia, building an excellent education system requires more than just money – it matters more how resources are spent. The Government is therefore pursuing the *Quality Schools, Quality Outcomes* package of reforms through the Council of Australian Governments Education Council to improve outcomes for all Australian students. This includes focusing on reforms that support students who need it most.

¹ OECD, 2012, *Does money buy strong performance in PISA?*, PISA in Focus, no. 13, OECD Publishing, Paris.