

Senate Standing Committee on Education and Employment - Education

**QUESTIONS ON NOTICE
Budget Estimates 2014-2015**

Outcome 1 - Early Childhood Education and Care

Department of Education Question No. ED0236_15

Senator O'Neill provided in writing.

Question

Early Years Quality Fund

Regarding the early years quality fund, the department previously advised that around \$66 million had been committed to under the Labor government's scheme. The fund was for \$300 million. The professional development fund recently announced by the government is for \$200 million. What happened to the rest of the money? a. With regards to the new fund, how will the department ensure that the money is spent on its intended purpose?

Answer

In relation to the funding of \$300 million in the Early Years Quality Fund Special Account:

- approximately \$63 million has been paid to providers with signed funding agreements under the former Early Years Quality Fund (EYQF)
- approximately \$200 million has been allocated to the Long Day Care Professional Development Programme (LDCPDP)
- \$30 million has been allocated for additional training and support for long day care early childhood educators working with vulnerable and disadvantaged children
- the remaining funding was set aside to cover the costs of claims for reimbursement of costs associated with developing an enterprise agreement for the purposes of the EYQF. Any funding not spent on claims for reimbursement will be available for the LDCPDP.

The LDCPDP Funding Guidelines set out the requirements for the programme, including what funding can and cannot be used for.

Funding recipients must also comply with the terms and conditions in funding agreements which includes providing two progress reports, a final report and an audited financial report, which the department will use to ensure funding is spent for its intended purpose.