

Senate Standing Committee on Education and Employment - Education

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

Cross Portfolio

Department of Education Question No. ED0280_15

Senator Wright asked on 4 June 2014 , Hansard page 11

Question

Minister for Education said the Abbott government has an emotional commitment to non-government schools

Senator WRIGHT: He [Minister for Education] said that the government has an emotional commitment to non-government schools. I am interested in knowing what that might mean. I think a lot of the public would also be interested in knowing what that might mean and what the implications are. Senator Payne: It is a matter for the minister. Senator WRIGHT: Is it possible to take that on notice and explain what he means by an 'emotional commitment'? Senator Payne: I will take it on notice. Senator WRIGHT: Thank you for that. I am also interested in asking you if emotion is the best way to be making policy decisions in this very important and complex area of government policy? Senator Payne: I don't think my opinion on that matter will really shed any light for you, Senator Wright. If you want to pursue that further, then you might wish to take it up with the minister. Senator WRIGHT: Perhaps I could ask you to also put that question to the minister on notice. He is probably the person who is in the best position to comment. Senator Payne: I will.

Answer

The Commonwealth Government remains committed to choice and diversity in schooling, and to ensuring all students benefit from the best education. This includes investing \$64.5 billion in government and non-government schools over the next four years. Through its *Students First* policy, the Government is also focusing on four key areas it knows will make a difference to student outcomes: teacher quality, school autonomy, parental engagement and strengthening the curriculum.