

Senate Standing Committee on Education and Employment - Education

QUESTIONS ON NOTICE Budget Estimates 2014-2015

Outcome 2 - Schools and Youth

Department of Education Question No. ED0328_15

Senator McKenzie asked on 4 June 2014, Hansard page 120

Question

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander loading

Senator McKENZIE: Can I take you to the Australian Education Act—division 3, subdivision A—to the loading section. At 37 is the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander loading. I believe the regulation goes to the detail of how that loading is developed. Could you provide the committee with the research that underpins the development of that loading to be constructed in the way that it is constructed? Mr Cook: I am happy to take that on notice, in terms of research. Senator McKENZIE: I assume we have come up with these loadings based on evidence. Mr Cook: The loadings were based on consultation, and part of that was input into meetings with state and territory officials, and things like that. Ms Paul: I do not know that it is based on particular academic research, because it is basically a formula. It is basically a numbers base. Senator McKENZIE: It is a formula. When you go to the level of detail of the formula, why have we chosen certain variables to construct that loading the way we have? Those reasons would actually underpin the legitimacy of the loading as it is constructed within the act. I would like you to do the same for 38, 39, 40, 41 and 42. Ms Paul: Are you getting at the rationale for the detail of each loading? Senator McKENZIE: Why does the formula look like that? Ms Paul: For example, in the Indigenous loading the original Gonski review recommended a model that did not fund an Indigenous loading on the basis of every student, but only started after five per cent of a school's students were Indigenous, whereas, after quite an extensive period of consultation, the former government moved to a loading approach which recognised Indigenous enrolments from one. Senator McKENZIE: From one? Ms Paul: Yes. Senator McKENZIE: I guess what I am trying to understand is that— Ms Paul: It was quite different to the original review. Senator McKENZIE: We had a model and a methodology of constructing these loadings—the one you speak about is a case in point—that were then modified and changed by the previous government. Ms Paul: Yes; that is right. Senator McKENZIE: I am still not quite sure, other than for political reasons, why that happened, when you turn your back on evidence to base loading decisions on. If you could take that on notice for each of them I would really appreciate that. Mr Cook: Every loading in the Gonski report does not look like the final model. Senator McKENZIE: Every single one? Mr Cook: I am pretty sure that every single one— Senator McKENZIE: I am sure the previous government had a good methodological reason as to why they changed that—a good rationale—and if you could provide that, that would be great. Mr Cook: Sure.

Answer

The following documents and presentation provide an outline of the rationale behind the development of the schooling resource standard funding approach, including the loadings to target disadvantage.

Key Documents that informed development of the SRS funding model:

1. Deloitte Access Economics, *Assessing existing funding models for schooling in Australia* June 2011
www.deloitte.com/view/en_AU/au/industries/publicsector/education/6f33ca5db5fa2310VgnVCM1000001a56f00aRCRD.htm
2. Australian Council for Educational Research, *Assessment of current process for targeting of schools funding to disadvantaged students* July 2011
www.fundinginfo.catholic.edu.au/uploads/ckpg/files/ACER-AssessmentCurrentProcessTargetingSchoolsFundingtoDisadvantagedStudents.pdf
3. Nous Group, *Schooling Challenges and Opportunities* August 2011
www.nousgroup.com.au/about-us/news/gonski-review-of-funding-for-schooling-released
4. The Allen Consulting Group, *Feasibility of a National Recurrent Schooling Resource Standard Technical Report* February 2012
www.acilallen.com.au/projects/19/education/46/feasibility-of-a-national-schooling-recurrent-resource-standard
5. The Allen Consulting Group, *Schooling Resource Standard Technical Report* April 2012, see **Attachment A**.