

Senate Committee: Education and Employment

**QUESTION ON NOTICE
Budget Estimates 2015 - 2016**

Outcome: Agency: ACARA

Department of Education and Training Question No. SQ15-000415

Senator Wright, Penny provided in writing

ACARA: enrolment figures

Question

Please provide enrolment figures for each Socio-Educational Advantage (SEA) quartile (1 - 4) by school sector (Government, Catholic & Independent) by state/territory and at a national level for the years 2009 to 2014.

Answer

The Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority (ACARA) has provided the following response:

The attached spreadsheet contains the percentages of student enrolments by Socio-Educational Advantage (SEA) quarters based on weighting the percentage of students in each quarter by the total enrolments at each school and aggregating these numbers to the state by sector level.

These enrolment percentages exclude schools for which SEA quarters have not been calculated (e.g. no student background or NAPLAN data provided, special schools). This accounts for approximately 3 per cent of total enrolments, but is unlikely to change the percentages at the state by sector level. As no data is available for these students, there is no simple way to incorporate this into the analysis.

Due to the change in the Index of Community Socio-Educational Advantage (ICSEA) calculation methodology, enrolments by SEA quarter for the years 2009–2012 are not comparable to those of 2013 and 2014. Data for 2012 and earlier are not readily available in the format that facilitates this calculation, and considerable resources would be required to reconstruct the data in this way. Therefore, percentages have not been provided for 2009-2012 as requested. Moreover, given the different method of calculation the pre 2013 data is not comparable with 2013 and 2014 data.

The total percentages shown in the attached spreadsheet are not exactly 25 per cent in each quarter since the weighting of SEA quarters to the total enrolments at each school will yield a slightly different number to counting the number of students who provide student background data or sit NAPLAN (depending on the source of the ICSEA data). Counting the raw number of students has the disadvantage that schools for which ACARA tends to have less complete student background data (mostly independent and Catholic schools) may be understated in the total percentages, as the count of students is just those participating in NAPLAN tests.