

Senate Committee: Education and Employment

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

Outcome: Schools and Youth

Department of Education and Training Question No. SQ15-000523

Senator O'Neill, Deborah provided in writing

Section 3 of the Australian Education Act 2013

Question

In relation to Section 3 of the Australian Education Act (2013) which says:
(2) The Commonwealth will work with the governments of the States and Territories, and non-government education authorities, to implement the National Plan for School Improvement set out in the National Education Reform Agreement to meet the objects of this Act by addressing the reform directions set out in subsections (3) to (8).

1. Is the Government complying with this requirement of the Act?
2. Can the Department provide an update on the implementation of the National Plan for School Improvement?
3. What actions, reporting and accountability measures are in place with respect to the plan?
4. If the National Plan for School Improvement is not being implemented - what other measurement and reporting mechanisms are in place to ensure Commonwealth investment in schools is leading to an improvement in student outcomes?
5. Are there any specific accountability and reporting requirements in place for schools and school systems to meet the objective of the Act and the NERA?

Answer

Implementation of the National Plan for School Improvement is not a requirement under the *Australian Education Act 2013* (the Act). The Australian Government is continuing to implement its *Students First* package of reforms, focusing on teacher quality, school autonomy, engaging parents in education, and strengthening the curriculum, which address the reform areas listed in Section 3 of the Act.

The Act has a number of specific accountability and reporting requirements for approved authorities of schools that advance the objects of the Act, including basic approval requirements, ongoing policy requirements, ongoing funding requirements, financial acquittals and record keeping requirements. These are monitored by the department.

In order to meet their ongoing policy requirements, an approved authority must comply with requirements under the Australian Education Regulation 2013 to enhance principal and teacher performance and professional development, provide information on data collected on schools and school education, provide reports to persons responsible for students at a school, and to make information publicly available.