

Senate Committee: Education and Employment

QUESTION ON NOTICE Budget Estimates 2017 - 2018

Outcome: Schools and Youth

Department of Education and Training Question No. SQ17-000691

Senator Collins, Jacinta asked on 1 June 2017, Proof Hansard page 119

Analysis of 35 schools identified by Senator Collins

Question

This table represents a list of 35 what could be classed as wealthy schools where the net primary income is greater than \$17,000 per student that are all set to receive significant funding increases greater than 4 per cent per student per annum. All of these schools are well resourced, have highly advantaged students and achieve strong results in year 9 NAPLAN tests in reading and numeracy tests—about 50 points above the national average on average. What I would like to understand with this list—again, given that I am presenting you with a list at 10 o'clock at night I will understand if you want to take it on notice—is why these schools will receive significant funding increases under this proposal? How are these funding increases consistent with the new needs based funding model? What needs do these schools have that attracts additional funding? Are we back to the Commonwealth common share problem? Are there other factors to the common Commonwealth share issue that would achieve these outcomes?

Answer

Two of the 35 schools are part of a system and so the funding estimate is a notional allocation and may be redistributed by their system authority. Of note, the net primary income of these schools, which is greater than \$17,000 per student, includes Commonwealth funding, state and territory funding and private contributions.

The Schooling Resource Standard (SRS) is a measure of school need. It is made up of a base amount for every primary and secondary student, along with loadings to provide extra funding for disadvantaged students and schools. For most non-government schools, the base amount is discounted by the anticipated capacity of their school community to financially contribute towards the school's operating costs. This is called the 'capacity to contribute' assessment and is based on the socio-economic status (SES) score of the school. There is no capacity to contribute discount applied to the loadings.

All the schools listed are currently funded below the target Commonwealth share of 80 per cent of the SRS. 2017 Commonwealth funding ranges from 43.5 per cent to 75.2 per cent of the individual school SRS. As these schools are below the target Commonwealth share, they will transition to 80 per cent of the SRS over 6 years (by 2023). Schools funded above the target Commonwealth share of 80 per cent will transition down to 80 per cent over 10 years (2027).

Under current arrangements, all these schools receive at least 3 per cent annual growth. 19 of the 35 schools are considered 'below' their SRS, which means that if the current arrangements were to continue these 19 schools would have their existing Commonwealth funding grown at 4.7 per cent each year and may have attracted additional funding as well.