

Senate Standing Committee on Education and Employment

QUESTIONS ON NOTICE Supplementary Budget Estimates 2013-2014

Outcome 1 - Early Childhood Education and Child Care

Department of Education Question No. ED0091_14
Senator Lines provided in writing.

Question

Better Schools - before and after program

On Monday 5 August the Government announced the \$450 million Better Schools - Before and After program to benefit up to 500 schools and 345,000 children by funding better before and after school care services, delivering:

- More places – in areas where parents need access to out of school hours care;
- More flexible opening hours – before and after school and during school holidays; and ‘
- New, high quality activities and programs for children, such as sporting activities, music lessons and homework clubs.

The program was fully funded by the previous government and is due to commence in the 2014 school year. Election policy costings submitted to the Parliamentary Budget Office by the current government did not propose any changes to this program.

Are you able to confirm that Better Schools - Before and After will commence in the 2014 school year? What process is the Government using to select schools to benefit from this program? And when will schools be notified that they will be able to deliver improved before and after school care services for Australian families? How many schools will benefit in the first year and for each year of the forward estimates? What are the names of the schools that will benefit in 2014 (and each year of the forward estimates), how much funding will each receive, and what services will the additional funding deliver?

Answer

The Government has reinstated \$1.2 billion in school funding removed by the previous government to ensure that all schools and systems will have Commonwealth funding determined under the *Australian Education Act 2013*, which includes a base per student amount and loadings to target disadvantage. This required savings to be found across the portfolio which include not proceeding with the Better Schools – Before and After Programme.

Outside School Hours Care is an important element of the Productivity Commission Inquiry into Child Care and Early Childhood Learning and will be considered in the context of current and future needs of parents and children, the different types of care available, the changing patterns of work in families, and how future government assistance should be provided.