

**Senate Standing Committee on Education Employment and Workplace
Relations**

**QUESTIONS ON NOTICE
Budget Estimates 2011-2012**

Outcome 2 - Schools

DEEWR Question No. EW0198_12

Senator Nash provided in writing.

Question

Students with Other Special Needs

During my travels and meetings with principals, the need for Occupational and Speech Therapists in schools was raised. There's a need for their presence to identify and address emerging problems in students to minimise the effect on their learning. The problem is that there's a shortage of these specialists, and funding to employ them. • Is the govt/dept aware of this need in schools? • Is it something that's been looked at? If not, can it be?

Answer

Yes, the Australian Government is aware of the important role that therapists and allied health professionals play in supporting students with disability and their families.

As part of the *More Support for Students with Disabilities*, (a 2011-12 Budget initiative), improved access to, and usage of, therapy and allied health professionals to support students with disability in schools, has been included as a possible activity for funding. Education authorities will select activities that have been identified as high priority in their schools and this may include therapy services.