

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

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

Outcome 2 - Schools and Youth

DEEWR Question No. EW0614_12

Senator McKenzie provided in writing.

Question

Regional Victoria Students

"Background: In 2010, the Year 10 - 12 apparent retention rates of full-time equivalent students in the Loddon Mallee region was 77.6 per cent. This was lower than the apparent retention rate across Victoria (82.4 per cent). In 2009, 68.5 per cent of young people aged 19 years in Greater Bendigo had attained Year 12 or its equivalent. This was lower than the proportion across Victoria (79.8 per cent).

Questions: 1. Regional Victoria has a much high school student higher attrition rate than Melbourne. Can you tell me about how the department is working to address this? 2. And what performance measures do you use? Do you have any evidence that these programs are working? 3. how does the high attrition rate feed into the low participation rate in higher education by regional students? "

Answer

1. Under constitutional arrangements, states and territories are responsible for the policy, operation and administrative aspects of their schooling systems.

The Australian Government is working with all state and territory governments, under the National Partnership on Youth Attainment and Transitions, to achieve the COAG target of 90 per cent Year 12 or equivalent attainment by 2015.

As part of this work the Department manages a national network of Youth Connections providers which deliver individualised case management services to help vulnerable young people to re-engage with education or training and support them to complete a Year 12 or equivalent qualification.

There are Youth Connections program providers providing services in all regions across Victoria.

2. A Youth Connections provider's performance is measured by the outcomes they achieved. These are assessed against the:
 - contracted number of young people outcomes must be achieved for
 - the proportion of outcomes required against each Service Type
 - the proportion of outcomes achieved for Indigenous or Humanitarian Refugee young people, in regions where this has been flagged as a priority.

In the first 18 months of the Youth Connections program's operation (1 January 2010 to 30 June 2011), a total of 32 562 young people were supported by the program. Of these, almost 15 000 (14 853) young people have re-engaged with education and training and a further 6 470 overcame a significant barrier towards re-engaging with education or training.

3. Attainment of Year 12 or equivalent qualifications is positively associated with higher rates of participation in further education, including higher education, throughout a person's life.