



AUSTRALIAN GOVERNMENT FUNDING FOR QUADRENNIUM 2005 - 2008

Summary of Australian Government Expenditure on Schools 2005 - 2005

	Total	"Increase" ¹	Real Increase ²
Overall	\$31.3	\$8 bn	
Public (Total)	\$9.8 bn	\$1.9 bn	
Private (Total)	\$21.5 bn	\$6.1 bn	
Recurrent	\$27.4 bn	\$2.4 bn	
Public	\$7.2 bn		
Catholics	\$12.6 bn		\$362 m
Independent	\$7.6 bn		
Capital grants	\$1.5 bn	\$182 m	\$17 m ³
Targeted Programmes			
LNSLN⁴	\$2 bn	\$393 m	\$21m ⁵
(Public)	(\$1.3 bn)		(\$4 m public, \$12 m Catholic, and
(Private)	(\$700 m)		\$5 m independent)
			\$4.5 m to non-government centres
Country Areas Programme (CAP)	\$113 m	\$21 m	
ESL – New Arrivals	\$231 m ⁶	\$56 m	
Languages	\$110 m	\$21 m	

Notes:

1. Includes indexation
2. New money
3. For Remote and Isolated private schools in NT
4. Literacy, Numeracy and Special Learning Needs Programme replaces Strategic Assistance for Improving Student Outcomes (SAISO)
5. For Student with Disabilities School Grants element
6. Seems to include some increase in the number of students

The funding arrangements for schools in the quadrennium 2005 to 2008 were announced by Brendan Nelson on 11 March 2004.¹

Funding over the quadrennium is set to be \$31.3 billion, a claimed increase of \$8 billion over the last four years. In reality, other than normal indexation, there is only a \$400 million increase, nearly all of which is to the private sector.

¹ See 'Learning Together: Achievement through Choice and Opportunity' at http://www.dest.gov.au/ministers/nelson/N_media.asp?v=2004&m=03

Public Schools

Funding to public schools will be increased by indexation only, apart from a small share of the Schools Grants element of the LNSLN. Public Schools receive 31% of the total package. This means the share of funding to private schools continues to increase. (The 2006-07 Forward Budget Estimates gave 32.8% to public schools).

General Recurrent Funding

Increases due to "indexation and policy change", and discounted for projected enrolment changes show 28% for public, 27% for Independent and 32% for Catholic.

Independent school enrolments are projected to grow 20% over the period, Catholic

schools 7%, whilst public schools could decline 1%.

For the first time, expenditure on Independent schools alone (\$7.6 bn) exceeds that on public schools (\$7.2 bn).

Independent schools, currently with 11% of the enrolments will get 28% of the recurrent funding, Catholic schools (21% enrolments) get 46% and public schools with 68% of the enrolments get 26%.

Capital Programmes

In capital expenditure there is an increase over indexation of \$17 million, all of which is for isolated and remote private schools in the Northern Territory.

Targeted Programmes

The only real increase is \$25.6 million for students with disabilities. Of this \$21 m goes to a Schools Grants component. Of this, \$12 m (57%) goes to Catholic schools, \$5 m (24%) to Independent and only \$4 m (19%) to public schools. This is despite the fact that 81% of students with disabilities go to public schools!

Conditions of funding

Funding to schools is to be tied to a number of matters related to public reporting of school performance, reporting to parents, a common national starting age by 2010, and creating safer schools.

For public schools, many of these things are on the cards or already done anyway in most states and territories. They are included to enable Nelson to seize the moral high ground in public and make him appear as the one leading the charge for more accountability. They provide a diversion from the real issue of funding.

Survey

The announcement also referred to “seeking input from parents”. This refers to a survey available from the DEST website² which is a blatant piece of push polling to get apparent parent support for the agenda previously laid out in Nelson’s ten point plan.³

For more detailed information on these and other issues see the other Fact Sheets in this series at

<http://www.aeufederal.org.au/Debates/schoolscampaign.html>

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² <http://nefs.dest.gov.au>

³

<http://www.dest.gov.au/Ministers/Media/Nelson/2003/11/n526131103.asp>