



Indigenous Education Funding

**An overview of the impacts of the changes
to
Commonwealth Indigenous Education Funding
for the
2005/08 Quadrennium**

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Commonwealth Indigenous Education Funding 2001-2004

- *National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education Policy (1989)*
- *Indigenous Education Targeted Assistance Act (2000)* appropriated:
 - Abstudy payments (made through Centrelink)
 - Indigenous Education Strategic Initiatives Program (IESIP)
 - Higher Education Payments
- Indigenous Education Direct Assistance (IEDA) was appropriated through different legislation

Commonwealth Indigenous Education Funding 2001 - 2004

- IESIP provided:
 - Supplementary Recurrent Assistance (SRA) funding
 - Per head capita funding through systems or individual schools
 - English as a Second Language/Indigenous Language Speaking Students (ESL/ILSS)
 - funding for Indigenous Language Speaking Students in their first years of schooling
 - National Indigenous English Literacy and Numeracy Strategy (NIELNS) funding
 - Funding to support the implementation of the NIELNS
 - Away from Base/Mixed Mode Delivery funding
 - To Universities and VET Institutions to support student travel
 - Indigenous Education Project funding
 - Capital and non-Capital Projects

Commonwealth Indigenous Education Funding 2001-2004

- Indigenous Education Direct Assistance (IEDA) Program provided:
 - Aboriginal Student Support and Parent Awareness Scheme (ASSPA)
 - Available to all on a submission basis
 - Paid per head capita to schools
 - Aboriginal Tutorial Assistance Scheme (ATAS)
 - Individual tuition
 - Homework centres
 - In-school tuition
 - Vocational and Educational Guidance for Aboriginals (VEGAS) scheme
 - Available to all on a submission basis

Commonwealth Indigenous Education Funding 2005 – 2008

- Changes to overarching programs are minimal:
 - IESIP remains
 - IEDA remains
- *National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Policy* (1989) remains
- *Indigenous Education (Targeted Assistance) Amendment Act* passed in Federal Parliament December 2004
- Funding for IEDA program will now be appropriated under the *Indigenous Education (Targeted Assistance) Amendment Act, 2004*
- Most changes have been written in to DEST guidelines rather than the legislation

Commonwealth Indigenous Education Funding 2005 – 2008

HOWEVER

- changes to the detail of the program funding arrangements are substantial
 - Redistributed funding
 - Competitive funding
 - Abolition of programs

Commonwealth Indigenous Education Funding 2005 – 2008

- IESIP Funding
 - Supplementary Recurrent Assistance (SRA) Funding
 - Still paid on a per capita basis
 - BUT State Capital Cities and Canberra will have funding frozen at 2004 levels
 - Remoteness boundaries have been re-defined and funding will be redistributed to remote areas

Commonwealth Indigenous Education Funding 2005 – 2008

- IESIP Funding
 - Strategic Initiatives (SI) Funding
 - Re-oriented “NIELNS”, based on ‘what works’
 - Dare to Lead Program
 - ESL/ILSS Program
 - Scaffolding Literacy Program
 - Croc Festivals
 - AECGs/IECBs
 - Mentoring Pilots

Commonwealth Indigenous Education Funding 2005 – 2008

- IEDA Funding
 - ITAS (formerly ATAS)
 - The In-class tuition scheme, targeting those students not meeting the year 3, 5 and 7 literacy and numeracy benchmarks
 - A tuition scheme targeting year 10, 11 and 12 students
 - Bulk funding arrangements to tertiary institutions (excluding TAFE and other VET providers)
 - Schools are allocated money based on those students who have failed the benchmark tests, but recent policy changes have enabled schools to allocate the funding to all students as they see fit.
 - It is not clear whether this change has been applied in all systems. It is definitely the case in the NT, Tasmania and WA).

Commonwealth Indigenous Education Funding 2005 – 2008

- IEDA Funding
 - Whole of School Intervention Strategy
 - Combines former ASSPA and VEGAS funding for the:
 - Parent School Partnership Initiative (PSPI)
 - Continuation of Homework Centres

Commonwealth Indigenous Education Funding 2005 – 2008

- IEDA funding
 - Parent School Partnerships Initiative (PSPI) (under the WOSIS)
 - Formerly available to all
 - Now available on a competitive submission basis
 - 50% of funding allocated to remote areas
 - 2 stage process – a concept plan and then the submission itself
 - Homework Centres will be continued

Commonwealth Indigenous Education Funding 2005 – 2008

- Underpinning philosophy as outlined in the DEST Discussion Paper “*Indigenous Education – Achievement through choice and opportunity*” (April/May 2004)
 - redirect resources to programmes that have demonstrably improved outcomes;
 - provide greater weighting of resources towards Indigenous students of greatest disadvantage – those in remote areas; and
 - improve mainstream service provision for Indigenous students, particularly those in metropolitan areas.

Commonwealth Indigenous Education Funding 2005 – 2008

- Issues – No growth funding
 - Funding growth for the IEDA program is about half of the total growth in enrolments
 - Between 1998 and 2002, Indigenous school enrolments grew by approximately 4% per annum, or a total of 16%
 - Between 2001 and 2002, Indigenous VET enrolments grew at 8.4%
 - Total IEDA funding for the quadrennium will grow at 2% per annum, or a total of 8%
 - IESIP Supplementary Recurrent Assistance (SRA) funding growth is 20.2%
 - This ‘growth’ includes enrolment growth 16%, leaving 4.2%
 - Indexation is therefore factored in at 1.05% per annum when mainstream primary program funding is indexed at 7.8%
 - IESIP Strategic Initiatives (SI) funding will be maintained at the same level as the last quadrennium

Commonwealth Indigenous Education Funding 2005 – 2008

- Issues – Re-defining disadvantage
- Principle adopted by the Commonwealth Government:
 - *provide greater weighting of resources towards Indigenous students of greatest disadvantage – those in remote areas*
- The AEU agrees that Indigenous students in remote areas are greatly disadvantaged.
- However, the Grant's Commission found that, relative to non-Indigenous Australians, Indigenous Australians in *all* regions suffer great disadvantage.
- Weighting of resources, as per the Commonwealth's principles, means the re-distribution of *existing Indigenous-specific* funding from urban and rural *Indigenous* students, not re-distributing funds from the most advantaged in society to the most disadvantaged, or an additional injection of funds.

Commonwealth Indigenous Education Funding 2005 – 2008

The Commonwealth Grant's Commission Inquiry found that:

- *“Indigenous people in all regions have high needs relative to the non-Indigenous population. An important question is whether new methods of distribution should be applied to existing programs and funds. Any change in methods of distributing existing resources means that some regions would lose funding and others would gain. Large redistributions risk losing the benefits of investments made over long periods of time, including those in developing organizational capacity and people. The real costs of redistribution may be high”*

Commonwealth Indigenous Education Funding 2005 – 2008

- Nevertheless, the Commonwealth has gone ahead with the changes, on the policy principle of:
 - Improved mainstream service provision for Indigenous students, particularly those in metropolitan areas
(Achievement through Choice and Opportunity, 2004)
- Yet, there has been little or no discussion with the States and Territories about how this ‘service provision’ will be improved, or how the funding shortfalls will be met

Commonwealth Indigenous Education Funding 2005 – 2008

- The Senate Workplace Relations, Employment and Education References Committee completed the *Indigenous Funding Inquiry* in June 2005
- The committee tabled a report to parliament which was supported by Government and Opposition members
- A unanimous report of this kind is almost unprecedented

Commonwealth Indigenous Education Funding 2005 – 2008

- The Inquiry found that:
 - There has been an unprecedented policy shift in relation to DEST's direct interaction and relationship with schools. This could have implications for mainstream policy areas.
 - There has been inadequate consultation in relation to the implementation of the new policy
 - Changes to the programs were not included in the Legislation. They are only written in to the guidelines, effectively negating the first stages of the process of parliamentary scrutiny

Commonwealth Indigenous Education Funding 2005 – 2008

- The Committee handed down 12 recommendations. Some of the key ones are:
 - The Parent School Partnerships initiative should revert back to per capita funding (as opposed to competitive submission based funding).
 - If this cannot be achieved then there should be application rounds twice a year (as opposed to the current five times).
 - That the administration of the program by DEST be referred to the Auditor General.
 - That the report of the committee is sent to the Social Justice Commissioner.
 - That the Parent School Partnerships Initiative encourage participation for parents, through training and other initiatives.

Commonwealth Indigenous Education Funding 2005 – 2008

- What is the AEU doing?
- In the short term:
 - Report to the Senate Inquiry
 - Campaign web-site
 - Survey of school principals
 - Media and other awareness raising activities
- We want to build alliances and gather information to try to force changes to the current system, although changes will be unlikely in this quadrennium

Commonwealth Indigenous Education Funding 2005 – 2008

- What is the AEU doing?
- In the long term:
 - We want to talk to members and develop a better model for Commonwealth Indigenous Education Funding for future years
 - Discussions **MUST** include State and Territory Government funding responsibilities and priority areas such as attendance and retention

Commonwealth Indigenous Education Funding 2005 – 2008

- Some preliminary survey results from Tasmania
 - Number of Surveys Received 14
 - Number of Indigenous enrolments 432
 - ASSPA funding lost to date (29.06.05) \$49 520
 - ASSPA Committees not operating 11
 - Number of ITAS tutors not reemployed 29/30
 - Number of these who are Indigenous 4
 - Number of Indigenous students not receiving tutorial assistance 126

Commonwealth Indigenous Education Funding 2005 – 2008

- Please encourage ALL schools to complete the survey and return it to the AEU Federal Office