

Question on Notice
No. 748
Asked on 24 May 2005

MR LAWLOR ASKED THE MINISTER FOR EDUCATION AND THE ARTS (MS BLIGH) -

QUESTION:

With reference to the 2005-06 Federal Budget—

Is there anything in the Budget that will have a positive effect on the education system in the Gold Coast region?

ANSWER:

In its 2005-06 Budget the Commonwealth Government merely maintains its financial support for existing programs in state schools. Recurrent funding for State schools announced in the Federal Budget reflects indexation increases only.

In contrast, the Commonwealth continues to direct more funding to non-state schools.

According to published figures from the Commonwealth Department of Education, Science and Training, the increase in general recurrent funding from the 2001-04 quadrennium to the 2005-08 quadrennium is estimated to be 27.9% for government schools, compared to 37.4% for non-government schools.

In the first year of the current funding agreement (2005-2008), state schools nationally will receive 33.62 per cent of Commonwealth Government funding (66.38 per cent to non-state schools). The end of the new agreement in 2008 estimates state schools to receive 33.15 per cent (66.85 per cent to non-state schools) – a drop of 0.47 per cent for State schools.

In per capita terms, students in non-state schools will be funded by the Commonwealth at more than four times that of state school students. By 2008, non-state students will receive \$5 410 per student as compared to \$1 362 per state school student.

The only new program that may support government schools in the Gold Coast region is the *Investing in Our Schools* Capital infrastructure program managed by the Commonwealth Department of Education, Science and Training. Schools can apply for up to \$150 000 through their Parents and Citizens Associations across the next three years.

The Federal Budget provided no assistance for the establishment of the Griffith University Medical School on the Gold Coast, despite containing measures to establish a medical training facility at the University of Western Sydney and to earmark additional student places for the James Cook University Medical School in North Queensland,