

Question on Notice

No. 1320

Asked on 31 October 2006

Mr Copeland asked the Minister for Education and Training and Minister for the Arts (Mr Welford) —

QUESTION: With reference to the State Community Development Fund stage of the Government's Tomorrow's Schools – Providing for a Smarter Future package-

- (1) What amounts were paid to schools under the fund prior to the 2006 Election campaign (reported separately by recipient school and amount received).
- (2) What amounts were promised to schools under that fund during the 2006 Election campaign (reported separately by recipient school and amount received)
- (3) What amounts have actually been paid to schools under that fund since the Government was returned in the 2006 Election (reported separately by recipient school and amount received)
- (4) What specific guidelines does the Department of Education, training and the Arts consider when assessing applications for funding under that fund.
- (5) Further to (4), when were those guidelines released?

ANSWER:

I thank you for your interest in this great initiative by the Beattie Government.

Each of Queensland's 1276 state schools will receive funds for local projects through the Beattie Government's \$50 million School Community Development Fund. In your electorate of Cunningham, 23 state schools will share in a total of \$452,800 as part of our commitment improve facilities for students.

It will be up to the school community how this money is spent in partnership with the principal and within some very flexible guidelines. There is a great degree of scope – it depends on what the school P & C considers most important. It could involve installing water tanks, upgrading the library, refitting the science lab or putting in playground equipment.

The amount of the grant is determined by a combination of factors, including the size of the school, the enrolments and the locality. These grants do not replace our existing capital works or maintenance programs – they are part of our long-term commitment to modernise state schools.

Under our *'Tomorrow's Schools'* program, we are committing \$1 billion over the next five years to upgrade our state schools, and these grants are part of that commitment. This is the most comprehensive school renewal program ever undertaken in Queensland.

This \$1 billion commitment includes a one-off payment of \$100 million to Catholic and Independent schools to support urgent capital programs and new technologies, and the \$50 million School Community Development Fund.

A detailed list of grants for schools in the Cunningham follows:

Back Plains State School	\$9,400
Brookstead State School	\$9,400
Cambooya State School	\$14,400
Cecil Plains State School	\$11,100
Clifton State High School	\$22,300

Clifton State School	\$11,800
Darling Heights State School	\$51,400
Drayton State School	\$33,500
Emu Creek State School	\$9,400
Gabbinbar State School	\$38,700
Greenmount State School	\$9,400
Karara State School	\$9,400
Leyburn State School	\$9,400
Middle Ridge State School	\$55,500
Millmerran State School	\$30,200
Nobby State School	\$9,400
Pilton State School	\$9,400
Pittsworth State High School	\$36,600
Pittsworth State School	\$34,500
Ramsay State School	\$9,400
Ryeford State School	\$9,400
Southbrook Central State School	\$9,400
Vale View State School	\$9,400

In terms of your other specific questions, no payments have yet been made to schools. The guidelines were provided to schools on 12 September 2006, and schools were asked to make submissions by 3 November.



Asset Management Guideline

School Community Development Fund

*Version 1.2
Dated 6 October 2006*

*Document prepared by
Tomorrow's Schools Project team*

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School Community Development Fund

1. *General Information*

1.1 *Introduction to the School Community Development Fund*

Tomorrow's Schools will direct \$50 million in 2006-07 through the School Community Development Fund (SCDF) towards immediate improvements in Queensland's state schools. Schools will be eligible for this State Government funding up to a limit determined by a formula that distributes funding to every state school. This program will enable the school and its community greater opportunity to improve and shape learning environments.

The Tomorrow's Schools program is a unique and innovative approach to the future schooling needs of Queensland communities. It will build on the State's education achievements, enhance school resources and facilities, and better integrate schooling into communities. The School Community Development Fund as the first stage of Tomorrow's Schools, will provide a major one-off capital investment that should assist schools to leverage other funding available to the school, allowing schools to deliver either larger scale or a greater number of minor capital works projects

Significant features include school based identification and priority setting of needs, local development of the solution and program flexibility that facilitates school based coordination of funding sources to deliver enhanced solutions.

The guidelines for this program will encourage school communities to coordinate the funding available through the School Community Development Fund with other funding available to school communities to achieve the most effective outcomes for the enhancement of school facilities.

The approach developed for the initial phase of the program, the implementation of the School Community Development Fund, draws on the best and most relevant aspects of the variety of facilities grants and subsidy based programs already familiar to state schools.

1.2 *Overview of the Fund*

1.2.1 *Aim/Objective*

The SCDF represents the first stage of "Tomorrow's Schools – Providing for a Smarter Future" and aims to provide school communities with funding to complete minor Capital Works Projects that will enhance the schools learning environment. Schools are expected to consult widely with their school community to ensure that parents and other school community members are given the opportunity to shape the future of students through facilities improvement.

1.2.2 *Outcome*

Projects developed through the SCDF will enhance the school learning environment through the provision of improved school facilities.

1.3 *Nature of funding*

"Tomorrow's Schools – Providing for a Smarter Future" established the \$50 million School Community Benefit Fund for distribution to schools on a submission basis in the 2006/07 financial year.

Schools will be allocated funding up to a limit determined by either a base amount for schools with an enrolment of 100 students or less, or for schools with an enrolment greater than 100, a formula that takes into account locality and socio economic indices. **All State Schools will receive notional funding** based on the allocative model appearing below:

- School communities will be provided with notional budgets to support their minor capital works projects.

- Budgets are established using a base of \$9,400 for every primary school and high school and a combination of enrolment, locality and socio-economic indices. Schools with enrolments of less than 100 receive the base only.
- Special Schools have the base adjusted to \$18,000 to compensate for smaller enrolments and high facilities utilisation.
- New schools constructed over the past 10 years have a discount factor applied that recognises their condition of facilities relative to much older schools.
- Outdoor and Environmental Education Centre have no permanent enrolments and are provided with a base only of \$9,400.

Schools will also be permitted to use SCDF grants in combination with other facilities funding available through State and Commonwealth funding sources or funds raised by the school community. SCDF allocations must be fully acquitted by June 2007 and Principals will be required to provide written acquittal evidence at the conclusion of the financial year.

Schools will be able to submit several projects for funding providing total cost of projects does not exceed the notional allocation to the school.

1.4 Eligibility

All Queensland State Schools are eligible for funding under the SCDF. Schools will be required to formally nominate their project/s and to provide some basic detail around the important elements of projects and costing. This will take the form of SCDF Project Submission and will be completed on line by the School Principal.

Consultation and community engagement are key elements of the SCDF and require an innovative approach to planning and delivering renewed school facilities that better meet Queensland School community needs. There will be an expectation that Principals engage in community consultation prior to nomination of projects. Approval to commence nominated projects will not be given until sufficient evidence exists that community consultation has occurred and the school P&C Association are fully supportive of the nominated project.

1.4.1 Eligible projects – how can the funds be used?

Functional areas eligible for inclusion in the program include:

- General learning area enhancements (construction of practical leaning areas, new furniture, construction of partitions between rooms, enclosing the veranda to expand classroom space, developing outdoor learning areas, where the scope of the work is significant such as a combination of minor capital works and maintenance work to deliver a complete upgrade of the facility)
- Specialist learning area enhancements such as science (redesign and refit of science rooms) and libraries (upgrade of shelving and redesign of functional areas)
- Support for the Healthy Schools initiative and the outcomes of the Obesity Summit (playground equipment, fitness areas, oval and playing field enhancements)
- Upgrade of existing tuckshops (redesign and refit of tuckshop facilities)
- Environmental sustainability, in particular, projects aimed at efficient water management in the school environment (installation of tanks, upgrading watering systems, redevelopment of water efficient landscaping, installation of water saving devices and water management systems).
- Enhancement of special education facilities and facilities to assist students with disabilities (redesign and construction of improved classroom and practical learning areas, new furniture)
- Improved community access to learning environments (modifications to security systems to allow easier access to certain facilities in the school, new access points and paths into and around schools)

1.4.2 Ineligible projects

Schools are reminded that the SCDF is a grant to provide facility enhancement, not resources or staffing costs. It is a one-off opportunity for minor Capital Works assistance and is not a recurrent grant.

Projects specifically excluded from this funding are those funded either through the capital works program or elsewhere. These include:

- Air-conditioning
- Maintenance work, (one-off replacement of carpet, floor resurfacing or repainting work normally completed as condition-based maintenance projects or through special purpose maintenance programs)
- Construction of After School Hours Care facilities.
- Computers
- Vehicles
- Resources and staffing costs

Please note that if the project involves conversion or demolition of existing facilities, it cannot lower the permanent student capacity of the school below that provided for projected enrolments.

1.4.3 Suggested Project Elements

The suggested project elements listed below are intended as a guide only. They are by no means exhaustive but have been included to assist you in considering project elements that should be considered and subsequently can impact on full completion of your project.

- Project management costs (Refer <http://www.qed.qld.gov.au/facilities/mng-proj/html/pm-fwk.html> for more information on Project Management)
- Project design costs
- Building Act compliance costs and siting approval
- Construction costs (including allowance for work performed in an area where asbestos could be present) (Refer to <http://www.qed.qld.gov.au/strategic/eppr/facility/fcmpr003/> for more information on asbestos management)
- Equipment/furniture costs
- Contingency Sum (5% of building costs)

The effect of the Building price index (BPI) must also be taken into account between the date schools are advised of their notional funding amount and the date when the funds are actually released to schools, some 4-5 months later. Your Facilities Account Manager will also be able to assist you with the estimation of these costs. The total project cost should be quoted as GST exclusive. GST costs are the responsibility of schools however GST is redeemable by schools through its BAS process.

1.5 The Application Process

Access to overview information about the program will be available on the internet with guidelines and application details available on the DEA intranet and submitted electronically through the school. The aim is to simplify the application process and make it readily available to school communities.

Panels, with school and parent representation, will be established at regional and state levels to oversee the application process and recommend funding to schools through clearly articulated, transparent processes.

Panels at the regional level will consist of: a nominee of the QCPCA, a nominee from each of the Primary, Secondary and Special School Principals' Associations and the Regional Facilities Manager (Chair). Technical support will be provided as requested. Regional Panels will recommend projects to the Regional Executive Director for endorsement and forwarding to the State Panel requesting approval.

Application details:

- Applications are to be developed by school communities (parents and school staff) based on facilities enhancements that will assist in achieving the educational vision for the school.
- School communities will be invited to apply for funding up to the amount allocated through the notional budget established for each school, with funds expected to be expended by June 2007.
- Grants will be sent to schools based on applications meeting the agreed criteria that link with the educational vision for the school, the DEA and the Smart State agenda.
- Projects must fall within the functional areas listed for inclusion in the program. They should be minor capital works in nature and may include design and project management requirements.
- Schools that nominate projects from the functional areas in the guidelines are guaranteed funds to meet design and compliance fees to assist with the early preparation of proposals. This will allow schools to start the planning and project approval processes early to assist in achieving project delivery as soon as possible after total project funding is approved.
- In some instances it may be appropriate for a school community to coordinate this minor capital works grant funding with other funding sources to deliver a more significant capital works need. SCDF grants must be expended by June 2007.
- All schools will be encouraged to apply for these funds with assistance and advice provided through the project team and regional facilities staff.
- To make an electronic submission, the Principal will be provided with a link to the on line submission form. The school location code will serve as the password to allow access to the submission.
- It is imperative that SCDF project submissions are received from schools by the date stated in the project timelines. **If this does not occur, funding will be reassigned.**

1.6 Compliance with Legal, Regulatory and Policy Requirements

All projects undertaken with the support of the SCDF must comply with relevant legal, regulatory and policy requirements as described in the paragraphs below.

1.6.1 State Purchasing Policy and Education Queensland Purchasing Policies

All projects must be undertaken in accordance with both the State and EQ Purchasing Policies. (Refer to <http://iwww.qed.qld.gov.au/finance/acquisition/procedures-manual.html> for further information) These policies govern a number of aspects of the development of projects, notably:

- Value for money;
- Pre-qualification (PQC System)
- Appropriate risk assessment provisions (Refer <http://iwww.qed.qld.gov.au/facilities/mng-proj/html/risk.html> for further information)
- Procurement delegation;
- Methods of tendering;
- Calling and receipt of tenders;
- Evaluating tenders and awarding the contract;
- Post-tender administration;
- Expenditure delegation;
- All purchases of IT goods and services; and
- Project review.

Approval of the Chief Building Surveyor, Department of Public Works, or from a suitably qualified private certifier must be sought for Building Applications.

1.6.2 Legal and Regulatory Requirements

All projects are required to comply with all relevant legal and regulatory requirements. The exact requirements that must be met will vary with the individual characteristics of each project. Some common requirements to be aware of include (but are not limited to):

- ❑ Meeting minimum design standards;
- ❑ Obtaining site approval;
- ❑ Obtaining *Building Act* compliance;
- ❑ Obtaining Native Title approval;
- ❑ Payment of the Portable Long Service Leave Levy (Payable on all building construction projects in Queensland costing \$80 000 or more.)
- ❑ Ensuring adequate insurance (including worker's compensation, public liability, building and contents);
- ❑ Workplace Health and Safety Requirements (Refer <http://www.qed.qld.gov.au/strategic/eppr/health/index.html> for further information)
- ❑ Compliance with the *Queensland Building Service Authority Act 1991*;
- ❑ Compliance with the Prescribed Payments System; and
- ❑ Meeting requirements for building accessibility, including disability access.

1.7 Joint Funding and Use of Facilities

Applicants may combine funding from a variety of sources (including other State and Commonwealth Government Funding) in order to develop a project. Projects may be undertaken in conjunction with other organisations and use of the resultant facilities may be shared. Since the intent of the Fund is to enhance DEA facilities, projects involving any off-site works are to be avoided.

Where projects are either developed or facilities used jointly, applicants need to consider how the interests of the involved parties will be managed. It is recommended that joint management plans for the development of facilities be completed.

Joint Use Agreement ('JUA') or Joint Development Agreement ('JDA') should be completed for facilities on school land where it is intended that one or more parties share the use of the facility on an ongoing basis. Alternatively, where it is intended that a facility on school land will be leased to other parties on a short or long term basis, standard EQ lease documents must be used.

Where a JUA/JDA is required to achieve the outcomes for the project, these arrangements must, essentially, be in place or at least agreed in principle, before a SCDF submission is made. To be considered, evidence must be provided that joint agreement has been reached, at the time of submission.

1.8 Timelines

Timelines for the Implementation of the School Community Development Fund 2006/07

11-13 September - Guidelines and application packages available to school communities on the DEA intranet – letters sent to schools notifying of level of grant funding available – media announcement advising school communities of grant opportunities

Please note that the closing date for applications have now been extended from 23 October to 3 November. Subsequently from this extension, the dates in the timeline have also changed and can be viewed below.

3 November	- Applications close
6 November	- Regions to have compiled submissions from schools and begin follow up on submission issues with schools
15 November	- Applications assessed by regional panels
17 November	- State panel assessment process completed
30 November	- Notification of approval of grants sent to schools
15 December	- Grants forwarded to schools
June 2007	- Program complete

The regional assessment stage is essential to ensure there is coordination with other Capital Works and planned maintenance processes and projects.

Funds can be sent to schools by the end of this year. This approach is aimed at giving schools as much time as possible to further plan, procure and deliver their projects.

1.9 Further Information

The Guidelines are available in electronic form on the EQ Intranet – it is not available on the Internet. Schools will receive notification that will detail the level of funding available to the school, a project delivery submission template and comprehensive guidelines on the operation of the scheme. If you are completing a submission and require additional information, please contact your Regional Facilities Manager or Facilities Account Manager at your Regional Office or the School Community Development Fund Project Team on (07) 324 74022.

Frequently Asked Questions:-

Question:	Answer:
What projects are eligible?	Eligible projects are listed in these guidelines together with those that are not eligible. If you are still in doubt, contact your Regional Facilities staff or SCDF Team members.
How can funding be accessed?	Following a successful submission, funds will be forwarded to schools through the GAPS process in December.
What formula was used to establish my schools notional allocation?	Refer to Section 1.3 of the guidelines
Can our school combine funding from other sources with the SCDF grant to achieve a larger project?	Yes. Provided the project is eligible under the SCDF guidelines and provided that the SCDF component is fully acquitted by June 2007.
Can I use the SCDF to fund a project that has already commenced?	This will depend on how far advanced the project is. Suggest you discuss with your Regional Facilities Team.
Do schools have to use Public Works Dept for building act compliance assessment?	No – Schools can use either Public Works Dept or a private certifier for Building Act assessment.
Can the school apply for funds towards Outside School Hours Care facilities?	No – Outside School Hours Care facilities are not eligible. Schools and P&C Associations should contact the Dept of Communities for appropriate funding.
Can we build a facility off school grounds?	As the SCDF is intended for DEA use only, off site projects are not considered eligible.
Do schools need to include a contingency in their application?	Yes – Schools should allow at least 5% contingency in their application and consider that quoted amounts may increase by the time the project is actually commenced.
Can grants allocations be increased if costs go up?	No – There is no contingency for this. Schools will need to arrange additional funding through other sources.
How long does the school have to complete the project?	Schools must have completed all projects by the conclusion of the 2006-07 financial year. Principals will be required to provide acquittal details through SMS

<p>Can I have more time to complete my on line survey?</p>	<p>Our objective is to have grants into schools before the conclusion of the 2006 school year and timelines were designed to allow a reasonable period for schools to complete their submissions by utilisation of a brief and uncomplicated process. It is important to remember that the SCDF submission process is much simpler than earlier facilities grants schemes. Estimates are all that is required with your submission, not specific quotations. There is no requirement to engage Q Build to complete your project.</p>
<p>Will there be a further round of funding from the School Community Development Fund?</p>	<p>No. The \$50 million for the SCDF is a one off allocation to schools to assist with minor capital works projects. The SCDF is the first stage of the \$900 million State Schools of Tomorrow.</p>
<p>How can I produce a hard copy of the on line submission form to show my P&C at our next meeting?</p>	<p>A PDF document is available should you require a hard copy of the on line submission.</p>
<p>Should the expected total project cost on the school's application include GST?</p>	<p>No – The total project cost should be quoted as GST exclusive. GST costs are the responsibility of the school; however it is redeemable by the school through its BAS.</p>