

Question on Notice

No. 845

Asked on 24 May 2006

MR COPELAND asked the Minister for Education and Minister for the Arts (Mr Welford) -

QUESTION:

With reference to cuts by the Government to teacher aide funding for Special Education Units across the State which have resulted in numerous teacher strikes and significant parent and student dissatisfaction-

- (1) What is the rationale behind the Beattie Government's teacher aide "allocation model"?
- (2) How is this model used to allocate teacher aides to Queensland's Special Schools?

ANSWER:

The Queensland Government is committed to supporting students with disabilities and in 2006 has allocated an additional 1900 hours per week of teacher aide time to support students with disabilities in special schools, special education units, special education classes and in regular classroom settings.

This increase has brought the total allocation of teacher aide time for students with disabilities to more than 71 300 hours per week.

(1) Teacher aide allocations are made on the basis of identified need through either the ascertainment process, which is being phased out, or the Education Adjustment Program (EAP) introduced in 2005 as the replacement for ascertainment. The EAP identifies the teaching adjustments that are made in a class/school program to provide an inclusive education for students with a verified diagnosis in autistic spectrum disorder, hearing impairment, intellectual impairment, physical impairment, speech-language impairment, vision impairment or a combination of these.

Teacher aide allocations to support students with disabilities are managed by regional decision making processes informed by the EAP data to ensure that teacher aide time is provided to students in recognition of their specific disability and adjustment needs.

(2) Individual Special Schools are approved to provide specific disability programs (e.g. Physical impairment) for students diagnosed with disabilities in that area. The Special School teacher aide allocation is based on the relative need of students in each special school informed by the individual special school's prior 3 year average teacher aide: student ratio recognising that students with disabilities require differential levels of support on the basis of the type and severity of their disability.