

## STANDING COMMITTEE ON SOCIAL ISSUES

### Inquiry into transition support for students with additional or complex needs and their families

#### SUPPLEMENTARY QUESTIONS FOR WITNESSES

**Mr Alan Wilson, A/Manager, Disabilities and Educational Support, Victorian Department of Education and Early Childhood Development**

1. What are your views on having a single case manager responsible for a child's educational transition/s? Is a case management approach used in Victoria?

In my opinion, a single case manager can be an effective way to ensure coordinated collection and provision of information and appropriately targeted support for the student, family and school staff.

In Victoria, at transition into prep for students supported under the Early Childhood Intervention Services program, a single case manager is appointed to coordinate support and transition for the child.

For later transitions, Victorian schools operate in a devolved system, with principals having responsibility for the learning and wellbeing needs of students at a school. It is therefore the principal who has the ultimate responsibility for a student's program, and who would be responsible for coordinating services to support student needs. In most instances a particular staff member will be delegated responsibility for coordinating a student's transition. This may be a Primary Welfare Officer, a special needs coordinator, a Student Welfare Coordinator or an assistant principal. Many schools will appoint a transition coordinator at the grade 6 and year 7 levels to oversee transition programs for all students.

2. To what extent are Individual Education Plans utilised in Victorian schools? Do these include transition planning?

A Student Support Group is mandatory for students in the Program for Students with Disabilities, and strongly encouraged for any student with additional needs. A Student Support Group is a co-operative partnership involving parents, school representatives and professionals that ensures coordinated support for each student's educational needs through the development of specific educational goals and a tailored educational program.

The Student Support Group develops an Individual Learning Plan which sets short and long term educational goals, and identifies the supports and adjustments required for a particular student, including supports required during periods of transition.

3. How soon before a child moves from one setting to another does transition planning start in Victorian schools, and how long does it continue after they have moved?

There is no prescribed timeline for transition, although documents related to transition into primary school, such as *A Positive Start to School* and *Sharing Our Journey* stress the importance of early planning and include a planning timeline. For students with disabilities, who have support through Early Childhood Intervention Services, there is often follow up for the first term of school (e.g. attendance at SSGs).

At the secondary level, many secondary schools have well-developed transition arrangements with their feeder primary schools and a range of transition activities are run through the year prior to

students moving into year 7. Year 6-7 orientation days are set for all government schools (Early December), but for many schools, activities begin well before this.

For students on the PSD, the transition process may begin when the mandatory Year 6-7 Review assessments occur - usually during term 1 of the student's final year of Primary School. It is recommended in the program guidelines that the secondary school is invited to the SSGs that occur related to the review.