



LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL

PORTFOLIO COMMITTEES

## **BUDGET ESTIMATES 2022-2023 Supplementary Questions**

**Portfolio Committee No. 3 – Education**

**Education and Early Learning**

Hearing: Tuesday 25 October 2022

**Answers due by:** Monday 21 November 2022

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## EDUCATION AND EARLY LEARNING

### Questions from the Hon Mark Latham MLC

**1. Why doesn't NSW publish material like the UK Progress 8 report, measuring the value added results of high schools?**

NSW public high schools have expected growth targets for reading and numeracy. Progress towards these targets is reported in an annual report on each school website, and is accessible for parents and communities.

The Department of Education also reports annually on its system target to increase the proportion of NSW public school students achieving expected growth in reading and numeracy.

Student and school progress from NAPLAN between Years 7 to 9 is reported on the Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority's (ACARA) MySchool website.

**2. For SSP schools with no immuno-compromised students, why do vaccination mandates, masks and QR codes still apply?**

The Department is committed to ensuring all students, including students in Schools for Specific Purposes (SSPs) can fully access and participate in face-to-face learning. Maintaining mask and double dose vaccination requirements for SSPs recognises these settings generally have a higher proportion of students at greater risk of serious illness should they contract COVID-19.

The majority of departmental staff have attested as being double vaccinated therefore, the impact on maintaining compliance in SSP schools remains low. Further information can be found at <https://education.nsw.gov.au/about-us/educational-data/cese/publications/research-reports/review-of-departments-mandatory-vaccination-requirements-august-update>.

While contact tracing was undertaken in 2021, it is no longer part of the Department's confirmed case protocols. Visitors to school sites must continue to follow school sign-in arrangements.

COVID settings, including those for SSPs, are regularly reviewed and updated.

## EDUCATION AND EARLY LEARNING

### Questions from the Hon Mark Buttigieg MLC *(on behalf of the Opposition)*

#### Teachers

- 3. How many permanent FTE teacher vacancies are there in NSW Public schools as of 31 October 2022?**

At 31 October 2022, there were 2,963.4 FTE of teacher vacancies in NSW public schools progressing through recruitment.

- 4. How many new teachers are due to begin in NSW public schools in:**
- (a) 2023**
  - (b) 2024**
  - (c) 2025**
  - (d) 2026**

Expected teacher demand to 2026 has already been published in the NSW Government's submission to the Portfolio Committee 3 Inquiry into Teacher Shortages in NSW.

#### School Counsellors

- 5. How many new school counsellors are expected to be recruited to NSW public schools in:**
- (a) 2023**
  - (b) 2024**
  - (c) 2025**
  - (d) 2026**

The NSW Government has invested significantly in the NSW public school counselling service and has increased the full-time equivalent positions from 790 in 2015 to 1,240 in 2022.

The Department of Education is on track to deliver the additional 100 school counselling service positions provided through the 2019 election commitment. This commitment will provide every NSW public high school with a full-time counselling allocation by June 2023.

Ongoing recruitment action occurs to fill positions that become vacant through natural workforce attrition and newly established positions.

#### Initial Teacher Education

- 6. How many people commenced Initial Teacher Education qualifications in NSW in:**

- (a) 2018
- (b) 2019
- (c) 2020
- (d) 2021
- (e) 2022

Please refer to the answer to LC QON 9610.

- 7. How many people completed Initial Teacher Education qualifications in NSW in:**
- (a) 2018
  - (b) 2019
  - (c) 2020
  - (d) 2021

ITE completion data is published on the Australian Teacher Workforce Dashboard.

### **Childcare**

- 8. What progress has the Government made in rolling-out its universal childcare policy?**

The NSW Government has not committed to providing universal childcare.

The NSW Government has committed \$15.9 billion over 10 years to give every child in NSW the best start in life and set them up for future prosperity. This includes \$5.8 billion over 10 years to introduce Universal pre-Kindergarten in NSW for all children in the year before school by 2030. In addition, the NSW Government's Childcare and Economic Opportunity Fund is a landmark investment of up to \$5 billion over 10 years to increase affordable, accessible and quality early childhood education to meet the needs of modern families. The 2022-23 State Budget also includes investment of \$1.3 billion over four years in the Affordable Preschool program to ensure that all children in NSW have access to affordable, quality early childhood education.

- 9. Why are existing childcare providers being offered only a 2-year extension on their leases?**

The Department of Education recognises the challenges faced by the early childhood education and care sector due to the COVID-19 pandemic, natural disasters and other disruptions, and aims to continue to support providers with the viability of their services. As such, the Department may offer a conditional 2-year extension to all out of school hours care, canteen and uniform operators. This extension is a 2-year optional Deed of Variation on top of existing licence agreements.

The Department is also offering a conditional extension for all Preschools and Long Day Care Centres until 31 December 2024, with not for profit services eligible for a further extension to 31 December 2027.

**10. Are any existing providers being told their rents will now be increased?**

There is no additional increase being added to licence fees above the standard 4% annual rate.

**11. If rents are increased, is the Government concerned that providers will pass on these increases to parents through higher fees?**

Please see response to Supplementary Question 10.

**12. Doesn't an increase in rents go against the Government's promise of 'affordable and accessible' childcare for families?**

Please see response to Supplementary Question 10.

**13. How many non-government run pre-schools are co-located within public schools?**

Please refer to LA QON 8485.

**14. Given the uncertainty around the Government's universal childcare policy, is it true some co-located providers have already shut their doors?**

No.

As noted in response to Supplementary Question 10, the NSW Government has not committed to providing universal childcare.

**15. What is the Government doing to support existing providers and ensure continuation of their services to local families?**

The NSW Government's \$15.9 billion Early Years Commitment will be used to make essential early childhood education and care services more affordable and accessible for parents and carers when and where they need it, and enhance quality in services to ensure the best early childhood education. We will invest in our invaluable early childhood education and care (ECEC) workforce and make early childhood education a career of choice for a whole new generation of teachers and educators.

The NSW Government's Childcare and Economic Opportunity Fund is a landmark investment of up to \$5 billion over 10 years. We are building on our strong and sustained commitment to early childhood education and will make it more affordable, accessible and flexible so it works for families. This commitment is enshrined in the *Childcare and Economic Opportunity Fund Act 2022*, providing certainty of funding to the sector.

The 2022-23 State Budget also includes investment of \$1.3 billion over four years to ensure that all children in NSW have access to affordable, quality early childhood education in the year or two before school and reduce cost of living pressures for families. This investment continues affordability measures for children in community, mobile or Department preschools, and extends the affordability measures to four and five-year-old children in long day care services for the first time.

**16. Why aren't existing, co-located providers being offered longer leases – wouldn't this ensure the universal childcare program is effectively rolled-out for the benefit of working families?**

Please see response to Supplementary Question 9.

**17. What is the Government doing to address staffing shortages across the sector?**

The NSW Government is committed to supporting the development of a skilled and stable early childhood education and care (ECEC) workforce, in collaboration with the Australian Government, the sector and employers.

The NSW Government's Early Years Commitment includes a landmark investment of \$281.6 million over four years to attract, retrain and retain our early childhood education and care workforce.

The NSW Government awarded 439 Early Childhood Teaching Scholarships in the 2022-23 round and opened the Early Childhood Inclusive Education Scholarship Program and Early Childhood VET Scholarships.

**Cooler Classrooms**

**18. Will all Round 2 schools have an answer on their application by the end of 2022, given they have been waiting since 12 April 2019, almost 3 and a half years?**

**(a) If not, why not?**

An acceleration in the rollout of the Cooler Classrooms Program has resulted in an expected saving of \$35 million in the Program's budget.

The Department of Education is using this saving to introduce additional Round 2 projects into the five year program.

**19. Why won't School Infrastructure just give a yes or no answer to all Round 2 schools before the end of the year, so they can seek P&C funding or other funding to install air-conditioning if they are not successful under Cooler Classrooms?**

Please see above answer to Q18.

## **Recruitment Beyond NSW**

### **20. How many acceptances into the program as at October 2022?**

As at 4 November 2022, there have been 31 offer acceptances into the Recruitment Beyond NSW program.

### **21. How many have begun in schools as at October 2022?**

Three teachers have commenced duty in schools as at October 2022.

### **22. What regions are the schools located in?**

Schools are located in:

- Granville
- Maitland
- Broken Hill.

### **23. How many people have dropped out following initially accepting a position?**

None.

### **24. Is the Department on track to recruit the 460 teachers promised by June 2023, outlined in the teacher supply strategy?**

The Department of Education continues to make progress to deliver against the Recruitment Beyond NSW target, noting that more than 400 candidates are already shortlisted. To date, the Recruitment Beyond NSW program has received more than 12,000 expressions of interest.

### **25. Is it correct to say this program is not on track, given the low numbers of teachers it has recruited into schools?**

See answer to Supplementary Question 24.

## **Selective Schools**

### **26. What percentage of students accepted into NSW selective schools were from a disadvantaged background in the following years:**

- (a) 2015
- (b) 2016
- (c) 2017
- (d) 2018
- (e) 2019
- (f) 2020

(g) 2021

(h) 2022

Prior to the introduction of the equity placement model in 2022 for Year 7 selective high schools placement in 2023, limited information was collected on the disadvantage or equity status of students applying for Year 7 entry into selective high schools.

System wide data is available and the current proportion of disadvantaged student groups (equity groups) in all year groups in selective high schools is shown in the table below.

<b>Equity Group</b>	<b>Current proportion placed in selective high schools (2022)</b>
Students from low socio-educational advantage backgrounds	20.8%
Aboriginal students	1.6%
Students from rural and remote locations	3.9%
Gifted learners with disability	5.6%

## **Camden Valley Way Growth Corridor**

### **27. When will the Camden Valley Way Growth Corridor panel first meet?**

The Camden Valley Way Growth Corridor Enrolment Panel met for the first time on 31 October 2022.

### **28. When will students in the Camden Valley Way Growth Corridor be advised which school they have been enrolled in?**

Families who submitted enrolment applications prior to the Camden Valley Way Growth Corridor Enrolment Panel meeting on 31 October 2022, were advised of the school their children will be enrolled in on 2 November 2022.

### **29. Do you have a deadline for when families will be advised?**

The Camden Valley Way Growth Corridor Enrolment Panel advised all parents who made in area applications on 2 November 2022.

All out of area applications were considered by the panel on 7 November 2022 and parents were advised on 9 November 2022.

### **30. Do you have a target turnaround time once an enrolment form is lodged?**

There will be a target turnaround of one week from receipt of an enrolment application.



**31. On what date was the information that was tabled at the committee provided to parents?**

The information was communicated to parents on 19 October 2022.