



Inquiry into Fiscal Sustainability of the ACT

Answer to question taken on notice

Asked by: Ms Jo Clay MLA

Addressed to: Ms Nicole Moore, Executive Group Manager, System Policy and Reform, Education Directorate

In relation to: Cost/revenue foregone of NSW students

Hearing: 19 May 2026

Proof Transcript p 122

Transcript provided: 27 May 2026

Answer Due: 4 June 2026

THE CHAIR: Okay. Have you done any modelling? You must surely know how many New South Wales residents you have in primary schools, in high schools, in colleges and in CIT. Have you done—

Ms Berry: Not CIT but public schools, yes.

THE CHAIR: Okay. So for CIT, I would need to ask—

Ms Berry: Minister Pettersson.

THE CHAIR: Sure. Have you done modelling on how many students it is and what we are losing? Do you have those figures?

Ms Moore: Yes; we do have those numbers. I do not have them with me today, but we certainly have them.

THE CHAIR: Can you take that on notice?

Ms Moore: We can take that on notice. We have used those numbers to create New South Wales pathway schools—so what the minister was explaining. We have used our enrolment levers to make sure that they are not taking places in our high priority demand schools—making sure that we can still offer the service but in schools where there is a capacity to meet that need.

THE CHAIR: Are you able to provide those figures but also what those figures represent to the ACT budget in terms of lost revenue?

Ms Moore: Sure.

Ms Berry: We will see what we can get together in the period of time. It might be quite a task to do that, because we do not because we do not already collect that information. We will take it on notice and see what we can provide the committee.

Ms Yvette Berry MLA: The answer to the Member's question is as follows:

There were 890 students (excluding preschool students, and students aged 18 years by 31 December in the year prior to the commencement of their college studies) attending public schools that had an NSW address at the time the August 2025 census was conducted. The figure of 890 students does not include 10 NSW resident students enrolled in ACT schools who were excluded from the count on the basis that were aged over 18 years.

NSW had 170 ACT residents enrolled in their public schools as students in 2025.

Under the *Australian Education Act 2013* and Better Fairer Schools Agreement (BFSA), the ACT Government is required to provide a minimum of 80% of the Schooling Resource Standard for public schools, with the Commonwealth Government required to provide 21.25% in 2025 and 22.5% in 2026.

Actual expenditure

Using the average cost per student, the below table provides a breakdown of the estimated cost to the ACT for providing educational services to NSW residents. The average cost includes direct and indirect costs such as teacher salaries, curriculum development, repairs and maintenance and human resources. The use of the average cost in the calculation ensures all costs of delivering educational services to NSW residents are captured.

School Sector	Student Numbers	Average Cost Per Student (\$)¹	Total Cost for NSW Residents (\$m)	Commonwealth Funding through BFSA (\$m)	Net Cost to the ACT (\$m)²
Primary	261	23,932	6.246	0.839	5.407
High	263	25,853	6.799	1.029	5.770
College	366	26,313	9.631	1.432	8.199
TOTAL	890	25,479	22.676	3.300	19.376

Notes:

1. The average cost is based on the 2025-26 average cost of a student attending ACT public schools, p.19 [2025-26 Budget Statements](#).
2. The above does not account for any students enrolled in a special school or a mainstream school student with disability.

Assessed Expenditure

As part of the GST distribution process, the Commonwealth Grants Commission (CGC) makes assessments on a number of expense needs across jurisdictions. Under the education expense category, school enrolments are used by the CGC. This ensures students from other jurisdictions are counted in the jurisdiction where they are enrolled.

It is estimated that the 890 NSW students in ACT schools increase our GST allocation by \$9.4 million, away from NSW. Meanwhile, it is estimated that the 170 ACT students in NSW schools sees the ACT forego a GST allocation of \$1.8 million.

GST revenue is untied funding to States and Territories that is not allocated to any particular expenditure or activity.

OFFICIAL

Approved for circulation to the Select Committee on the Fiscal Sustainability of the ACT

Signature:

By the Minister for Education and Early Childhood, Yvette Berry

Date:

23/06/26