

ESTIMATES 2009-2010

Question on Notice

Minister for Education and Training

Table of Contents

<u>QoN</u>	<u>Description</u>	<u>Page</u>
	Table of Contents	1
117	Education and Training Le Couteur	4
	Sustainability	4
118	Education and Training Hunter	7
	Special education in public schools	7
119	Education and Training Hunter	8
	Harrison High School	8
148	Education and Training Hunter	9
	Fees of overseas students	9
152	Education and Training Seselja	10
	Expenditure	10
153	Education and Training Seselja	12
	Litigation costs	12
154	Education and Training Seselja	13
	Compensation payments	13
155	Education and Training Seselja	14
	Legal expenses	14
156	Education and Training Seselja	15
	Promotional activities	15
157	Education and Training Seselja	17
	Advertising	17
158	Education and Training Seselja	18
	Media	18
159	Education and Training Seselja	20
	Focus groups	20
160	Education and Training Seselja	21
	Maintenance	21
161	Education and Training Seselja	22
	Interstate and overseas travel	22
162	Education and Training Seselja	24
	Hospitality	24
163	Education and Training Seselja	25
	Territory taxes and fees	25
164	Education and Training Seselja	26
	Department revenue	26
165	Education and Training Seselja	28
	Consulting services	28
166	Education and Training Bresnan	29
	Number of students in public education	29

Literacy and numeracy.....	30
168 Education and Training Bresnan.....	32
Smaller class sizes initiative	32
169 Education and Training Bresnan.....	34
Educational outcomes	34
170 Education and Training Bresnan.....	35
Parents as tutors	35
171 Education and Training Bresnan.....	37
ESL teaching.....	37
172 Education and Training Bresnan.....	38
Birrigai	38
357 Education and Training Seselja	39
Expenditure – advertising	39
358 Education and Training Seselja	40
Expenditure – hospitality	40
359 Education and Training Seselja	41
Expenditure – rent.....	41
360 Education and Training Seselja	42
Expenditure – training.....	42
361 Education and Training Seselja	44
Expenditure – travel.....	44
362 Education and Training Seselja	47
Expenditure – web design	47
363 Education and Training Seselja	48
Expenditure – CIT – Advertising.....	48
364 Education and Training Seselja	49
Expenditure – CIT – hospitality.....	49
365 Education and Training Seselja	50
Expenditure – CIT – rent	50
366 Education and Training Seselja	51
Expenditure – CIT – training	51
367 Education and Training Seselja	52
Expenditure – CIT – travel.....	52
368 Education and Training Seselja	53
Expenditure – CIT – web design.....	53
445 Education and Training Dunne	54
QTON – Building the Education Revolution.....	54
446 Education and Training Smyth	55
QTON – Use of school premises	55
447 Education and Training Smyth	56
QTON – School movement survey.....	56
448 Education and Training Dunne	64
QTON – CCCares Program	64
449 Education and Training Smyth	65
QTON – Allocation of staffing points	65
450 Education and Training Le Couteur.....	66
QTON – Birrigai user charges	66
451 Education and Training Le Couteur.....	67
QTON – Student Support Fund	67
452 Education and Training Smyth	68

QTON – Special needs children.....	68
453 Education and Training Seselja	70
QTON – Department employment levels	70
454 Education and Training Bresnan.....	71
QTON – Gudan Gulwan	71
455 Education and Training Doszpot	72
QTON – Teacher retention	72
456 Education and Training Dunne	73
QTON – Canberra College performing arts centre.....	73
457 Education and Training Smyth	74
QTON – Counselling in primary schools	74
458 Education and Training Smyth	75
QTON – Birrigai entry road.....	75
459 Education and Training Bresnan.....	76
QTON – Alternate programs.....	76
520 Education and Training Hunter.....	78
QTON – AVO.....	78
521 Education and Training Smyth	83
QTON – CCTV.....	83
522 Education and Training Smyth	84
QTON – Critical incident statistics.....	84
523 Education and Training Smyth	85
QTON – Bullying trends.....	85
524 Education and Training Smyth	86
QTON – Capital works rollovers.....	86
525 Education and Training Hunter.....	88
QTON – Restorative justice programs.....	88
526 Education and Training Smyth	89
QTON – Disability buses.....	89
527 Education and Training Seselja	90
QTON – Productivity places program	90
528 Education and Training Smyth	91
QTON – Productivity offsets	91
529 Education and Training Seselja	92
QTON – media and marketing.....	92
530 Education and Training Le Couteur.....	93
QTON – Cost recovery for educational programs	93
597 Education and Training Smyth	94
QTON – school security	94
598 Education and Training Smyth	95
QTON – student outcomes.....	95
599 Education and Training Doszpot	96
QTON – truancy	96
604 Education and Training Doszpot	97
QTON – school closure savings	97
608 Education and Training Smyth	98
QTON – survey and market research.....	98

Sustainability

Caroline Le Couteur: To ask the Minister for Education

In relation to: sustainability reporting

1. How much energy is it estimated your Agency used for office functions in 2008-09 per FTE and /or per square metre of office space?
2. How does this compare with the Commonwealth benchmark/target of 7,500 megajoules /person / per year?
3. How will you contribute to meeting the Government's target of zero net emissions? What steps do you have in place to reduce Departmental energy use?
4. How much is your Agency spending on energy efficiency measures?
5. Is your Agency eligible for the ACT Government energy efficiency loan fund?
 - a. If not, why not?
 - b. If yes, have you applied, or will you?
6. How much waste is it estimated your agency generated per FTE in 2008-09?
7. What systems do you have in place for recycling of waste?
8. How much water is it estimated that your Agency used in 2008-09? How much water will you use in 2009-10?
9. Do you use any benchmarks to assess your environment performance? If yes, please detail.
10. What financial savings have you made to date from improvements in your environmental resource efficiency?
11. Do you have a target for future reductions – across energy, water, waste?
12. Does your agency have a Sustainability Action Plan or a Resource Management Plan?
13. What other initiatives / measures are you undertaking to become carbon neutral as required under Action 2 of Weathering the Change?
14. Can you please provide all these answers in terms of office use and other, recognising that some Agencies have specific service delivery needs that are not comparable to others– ie schools, hospitals, public facilities

MR BARR : The answers to Ms Le Couteur questions are:–

- (1) The disaggregated energy use data is not yet available for 2008-09 financial year. In 2008-09 the Department of Education and Training was co-located within Macarthur House with other Department's until 12 June 2009 and with other agencies within 220 Northbourne Avenue, Braddon. This information will be available with the completion of the Annual Report for 2008-09.
- (2) Please refer to my response to question (1).
- (3) The Department is currently working in partnership with the Department of Environment, Climate Change, Energy and Water (DECCEW) to develop strategies for decreasing emissions and achieving the Government's desired zero emission target. The Department is actively reducing energy consumption through lighting control - including 7pm to 7am automatic switch-off, rigorous monitoring of heating control in the buildings, design of all new schools to achieve a high green star rating, and implementation of the Australian Sustainable School Initiative (AuSSI) program incorporating initiatives into capital upgrades works implemented in schools.
- (4) The cost to incorporate Environmentally Sustainable Design (ESD) initiatives into new school projects is estimated to be 5-6 percent of the project budget. The Government has also funded a number of projects to improve the energy efficiency of schools. Projects to the value of \$4 million will be completed as part of the School Infrastructure Refurbishment program over 5 years. Up to \$1 million each year is allocated from the capital upgrades program for energy efficient initiatives, \$1.6 million over 4 years to help government and non-government schools become carbon neutral, and \$2 million has been provided for installation of solar power generation systems on the roofs of public schools.
- (5) The Department is eligible for the ACT Government energy efficiency loan fund but has not applied for it to date.
- (6) The Department does not have any overall data on the quantity of waste generated.
- (7) All Department offices use recycle bins. At the school level, some schools are implementing the Waste Wise Schools program which is part of the AuSSI initiative.
- (8) The total water usage in schools in 2006-07 was 711 019 kilolitres, in 2007-08 it was 433 378 kilolitres and at the end of the 3rd quarter in 2008-09 it was 181 206 kilolitres. Based on this water usage trend the total water usage in 2008-09 is likely to be less than 250 000 kilolitres. Water usage in 2009-10 is unknown.

The quantity of water consumed by central office is not known as the building is shared between other departments and will be difficult to separate the data.

- (9) No benchmark has been agreed for use across the Department.
- (10) Savings are very difficult to calculate given the large number of schools and the variables both within and between schools over a number of years. For example the change in student enrolments at each school from year to year will impact on energy consumption as will the range of capital works undertaken in any year.
- (11) *Weathering the Change – The ACT Climate Change Strategy 2007-2025, Action 11*, states: ‘The ACT Government will assist schools become carbon neutral by 2017.’
- (12) Central office is developing, with the assistance of DECCEW, a Sustainability Action Plan.
- (13) In addition to initiatives noted in answer to question (4), all new schools are being designed to achieve a high green star rating. The AuSSI program will be implemented at all schools. Over the next two years energy audits will be carried out at all public schools.
- (14) Yes, to the extent possible.

Special education in public schools

Meredith Hunter MLA: To ask the Minister for Education and Training

1. What specifically will the extra \$1 million in funding for Special Education in Public Schools be used for?

MR BARR : The answer to Ms Hunter's question is:—

1. There was no allocation of \$1 million in the 2009-10 Budget for special education in public schools.

Harrison High School

Meredith Hunter MLA: To ask the Minister for Education and Training

Regarding Harrison High School –

1. We note that there is \$6m to commence building the Harrison High School in the coming financial year and \$26m and \$11.5m in the following years. How are the works being staged and when will students occupy the school?

MR BARR : The answer to the Member's question is as follows:–

1. The Harrison Secondary School will be fully documented and construction will be carried out in one stage of works. The school is due to open for students at the beginning of the school year in 2012.

Fees of overseas students

Meredith Hunter MLA: To ask the Minister for Education and Training -

Regarding fees for the education of children of overseas students -

1. How much revenue does the ACT Government receive per year for children of overseas students in –
 - a. primary school,
 - b. high school, and
 - c. colleges
2. How much is charged for each –
 - a. Primary Student
 - b. High school student
 - c. College Student
3. How are these fees determined?

MR BARR : The answer to the Member's question is as follows:–

1. The ACT Department of Education and Training captures enrolment and revenue data for the whole international student cohort and does not currently capture enrolment and revenue data by parent occupation. Therefore the revenue from tuition fees for children of overseas students cannot be disaggregated.
2. The current tuition fees charged for each sector are as follows:

a. Primary school	\$9 000 pa
b. High school	\$12 000 pa
c. College	\$13 500 pa

The above rates have been in place since 2005.
3. The tuition fees for international private fee paying students are determined by the ACT Department of Education and Training and are calculated on the cost of educating a child in the ACT as published in the Department's Annual Report.

Expenditure

Zed Seselja: To ask the Minister for Education and Training

In relation to: Expenditure in the Department of Education and Training

1. For the financial year to date, detail the expenditure in the Department of Education and Training on reports commissioned that have been outsourced or contracted out.
2. What was the purpose of the reports in (1)?
3. Who or what organisations prepared the reports in (1)?
4. What was the cost of the reports in (1)?
5. Have the reports in (1) been tabled or presented to the Assembly?
6. What has been the outcome of the reports in (1)?

MR BARR: the answer to Mr Seselja's question is as follows:-

1. Expenditure for outsourced or contracted reports for the financial year to date is \$101 813.
- 2.-6. Answers in the table Attachment A.

Attachment A

Report	Purpose	Prepared by	Cost	Tabled in Assembly	Outcome of the reports
Future Operations of Australian Apprenticeship Support Centres in the ACT	Provide expert advice and recommendations to the Department on options for undertaking Australian Apprenticeships Support Services in the ACT.	Economic Futures Australia	\$30 250	No	The report recommended: - the Department negotiate acceptable funding with DEEWR - subject to agreement on satisfactory funding, the Department take on responsibility for Australian Apprenticeships Support Services in 2010. Following conclusion and provision of the report, DEEWR withdrew its offer to hand this role over to the states and territories.
Occupation Replacement Demand Model – Skills in Demand List	Skills in Demand Research	Centre for Labour Market Research, University of Canberra	\$53 800	No	Due for completion June 2009.
2008 School Movement Qualitative Research Report	Provide additional detail on reasons why parents move their children from one school to another in ACT.	Social Research Centre	\$17 763	No	The report is one of a number of inputs to departmental planning and policy advice.
Schools Standards Authority	Report on the consultation process	M[o]z Consulting	\$14 014	No	The report is currently being considered.

Litigation costs

Zed Seselja : To ask the Minister for Education and Training

In relation to : Litigation Costs for Department of Education and Training

1. For the financial year to date, detail the expenditure in Department of Education and Training on litigation costs that were incurred by Department of Education and Training.
2. Have any reports on these costs been tabled or presented to the Assembly?
3. If so, what has been the outcome of those reports?

MR BARR - the answer to Mr Seselja's question is:

1. For the 2008/09 financial year to date the Department of Education and Training has spent \$73 357 on litigation costs being costs payable to claimants and plaintiffs.
2. The Department of Education and Training is not aware of any reports on these costs being tabled or presented to the Assembly.
3. Not applicable.

Compensation payments

Zed Seselja : To ask the Minister for Education and Training

In relation to : Compensation payments for the Department of Education and Training:

1. For the financial year to date, how much was paid in compensation and what did these payments relate to, for the Department of Education and Training
2. How much was paid in compensation payments resulting from legal claims against the Department of Education and Training?

MR BARR - the answer to Mr Seselja's question is:

1. The Department of Education and Training has paid \$119 852 in 2008/09 for damages either agreed by the parties or by order of the court. This is for a range of cases and the details of these are not available due to the confidentiality of individual cases.
2. See the answer to question 1.

Legal expenses

Zed Seselja : To ask the Minister for Education and Training

In relation to : Legal Expenses

1. For the financial year to date, detail the expenditure in the Department of Education and Training on legal expenses by the Department of Education and Training that have been outsourced or contracted out.
2. What has been the expenditure under the standard classification of legal expenses in the financial year to date for this activity?
3. How much has been allocated in the next financial year for this activity?

MR BARR - the answer to Mr Seselja's question is:

4. For the 2008/09 financial year to date the Department of Education and Training has paid \$10 261 on legal expenses being payment of disbursements or legal costs incurred in handling a claim.
5. In addition to these expenses, the Department receives legal services from the ACT Government Solicitors Office. The value of the ACT Government Solicitors Office services is reported to Departments at the end of each financial year.
6. This figure is currently unavailable as the Departmental budget is currently being finalised.

Promotional activities

Zed Seselja : To ask the Minister for Education and Training

In relation to : Promotional activities

1. In reference to promotional activities of the Department of Education and Training:

- (a) What promotional activities, publications, advertising in any media have been undertaken by the Department of Education and Training, the Minister's office, or any other office or agency on behalf of the Department of Education and Training or the Minister's office in the financial year to date?
- (b) What was the total amount spent on such activities and was it costed to the Department of Education and Training, the Minister's office or another Minister's office or another department?
- (c) Detail the promotional activities, publications and advertising undertaken by the Department of Education and Training, the Minister's office or those undertaken by the Minister's office or another department on behalf of the Minister or the Department of Education and Training?
- (d) What were the promotional activities, publications and advertising meant to achieve, did they achieve their purpose and how was that measured?
- (e) How much has been allocated both within the Minister's office and the Department of Education and Training for those activities in the financial year to date?

MR BARR: The answer to the Member's question is as follows: -

1. (a) The Department of Education and Training has undertaken the following promotional and marketing activities in the financial year to date:
 - Royal Canberra Show stand and promotional materials
 - Public Education Week bookmarks, posters and equipment hire
 - Starting School – A Guide for Parents brochure (reprint)
 - five early childhood school pamphlets
 - two postcards to promote enrolment in high schools and colleges
 - Keeping Children Safe in Cyberspace pamphlet (reprint)
 - Code of Conduct in schools pamphlet (reprint)
 - Tuggeranong P-10 community consultation pamphlet
 - Kingsford Smith School pamphlet
 - ACT public school enrolment advertisements placed in *The Canberra Times* and *Chronicle*
 - Capital Chemists Scholarships advertisement placed in *The Canberra Times*
 - Community notices placed in the whole-of-government Community Noticeboard on a regular basis.

(b) The year-to-date spend for the Department's Media and Communications marketing annual budget 2008-09 is \$88 195.26.

(c) See answer to question 1 (a).

(d) Promotional activities, publications and advertising are important elements of the Department of Education and Training's community communication strategy. Their purpose is to inform the ACT community about key public education initiatives and programs in the ACT.

The Department assesses the impact of these initiative via a range of informal measures, such as attendance at events promoted, key stakeholder and community feedback, and follow up media interest. Stakeholder and community participation and feedback, and media coverage tend to be highly positive.

(e) The Department's 2008-09 annual budget allocation for media and communications activities is \$100 000.

Advertising

Zed Seselja : To ask the Minister for Education and Training

In relation to : Advertising

1. Detail how much has been spent in the financial year to date on advertising, promotion, the dissemination of policy information or other information which included the Minister's photograph and/ a message from the Minister.

MR BARR : The answer to the Member's question is as follows :

The Department's Media and Communications unit has spent

- \$13 642.51 in the financial year to date on print advertising in *The Canberra Times* and *The Chronicle* which included a message from the Minister for Education and Training
- \$16 724.73 on community information brochures and pamphlets on new ACT public schools, starting school and cybersafety which included either a Minister's message and photograph or Minister's message.

Media

Zed Seselja : To ask the Minister for Education and Training

In relation to : Media

1. For the financial year to date, detail the expenditure in the Department of Education and Training on media by:
 - a. the Minister for Education and Training
 - b. the Department of Education and Training that have been outsourced or contracted out?
2. Please provide an individual breakdown for print media, television, radio and other media such as brochures including direct mail by:
 - a. the Minister's Office;
 - b. the Department of Education and Training;
 - c. another department or Minister's office on behalf of the Minister for Education and Training or the Department of Education and Training.
3. Did the Minister or the Minister's office approve the publication in each case?
4. How much has been allocated for these activities in the financial year to date by
 - a. the Minister's office
 - b. the Department of Education and Training

MR BARR: The answer to the Member's question is as follows: -

1. (a) Nil
(b) Nil

1. (a) Nil.

- (b) Expenditure year to date for the Department of Education and Training on:
 - print media advertising - \$18 088.16 (excluding public notices and recruitment advertising)
 - television advertising- \$0
 - radio advertising - \$0
 - other media such as brochures including direct mail - \$21 628.48
 - promotions \$48 478.62 (including displays, promotional materials, marketing professional development for teachers, equipment hire for public education week).

- (c) Nil.

3. The Minister for Education and Training is advised in advance of all publications in support of the promotion of public education. Where the Minister's photo or a message is included in a publication, it is approved by the Minister's office.

4. (a) Nil.
- (b) The Department has expended \$88 195.26 in the financial year to date. The Department's full financial year allocation for media and communications is \$100 000.

Focus groups

Zed Seselja : To ask the Minister for Education and Training

In relation to : Focus Groups

1. How many focus groups were conducted through the area of the Department of Education and Training in the financial year to date?
2. When were they held and what was the nature of each focus group?
3. If focus group participants were paid to attend the focus group, how much were they paid?
4. Where can members get the details and findings of these publicly funded focus groups?

MR BARR - the answer to Mr Seselja's question is:

1. Five.
2. Details about the dates held and the nature of the focus groups conducted by the Department of Education and Training are as follows:

Name of focus group	Date(s) held	Nature of the focus group
Teachers Agreement (EBA) Focus Groups	20, 24 & 25 November 2008 and 1& 8 December 2008.	Seek feedback from key teacher categories on workforce issues for EBA
Part-time work focus group	13 May 2009	Seek feedback on part time working arrangements in schools
Review of the School Improvement Framework	August 2008	Provide input into the review of the School Improvement Framework
Review of system satisfaction survey	14, 19 and 26 August 2008	Seeking feedback on school satisfaction surveys with teachers and parents
School movement and school choice focus groups and in-depth interviews	26 and 26 November 2008	Seeking feedback from parents of students who moved schools

3. Participants in the school movement and school choice focus groups were paid \$20-50. There was no payment made to the members of the other focus groups.
4. The findings of the focus groups contributed to a range of policy and program work within the Department. The teachers' enterprise agreement negotiations are underway; the findings of the part-time work focus group are being finalised and will inform Departmental policy and procedure; the School Improvement Framework was released on 19 June 2009 and is available on the Department's website; the revised system satisfaction survey has been implemented; and the school movement and school choice report was released to the Assembly Estimates Committee in answer to question taken on notice at Select Committee on Estimates 2009-10.

Maintenance

Zed Seselja : To ask the Minister for Education and Training

In relation to : Maintenance of the Minister's Office

1. What was the cost of maintaining your ministerial offices in the financial year to date? What is the forecast for the financial year ending 30 June 2010?

Mr Barr: The answer to the Member's question is as follows:–

The day to day running costs for my office includes stationery, copy paper, complimentaries, repair and maintenance of plant and equipment, newspapers, telecommunications and general miscellaneous items. The cost for the period 01 July to 26 May 2009 is \$15 285. The estimated cost for the 2009-10 financial year is \$12 000. This figure does not include general costs such as heating and lighting.

Interstate and overseas travel

Zed Seselja : To ask the Minister for Education and Training

In relation to : Interstate and Overseas Travel

1. List the interstate trips taken by you as Minister for the Department of Education and Training in the financial year to date, including but not limited to
 - a. Detail the purpose of each interstate trip taken by you as Minister for the Education and Training.
 - b. Detail the duration of each trip taking by you as Minister for Education and Training.
 - c. Detail the costs you incurred in each interstate trip.
 - d. Detail outcomes achieved from each interstate trip.
2. List all Ministerial staff who accompanied you on all interstate trips taken by you in the financial year to date.
3. Detail the costs incurred by the Ministerial staff on each interstate trip in the financial year to date/
4. List all Departmental Training staff who accompanied you on all interstate trips taken by you in the financial year to date.
 - a. Detail the costs incurred by Departmental staff accompanying you on each interstate trip.
5. List any non-Governmental citizens who accompanied you on any interstate trips who Government paid partial or full travel and accommodation costs for.
6. List the overseas trips taken by you as Minister for Education and Training in the financial year to date, including but not limited to
 - a. Detail the purpose of each overseas trip taken by you as Minister for Education and Training.
 - b. Detail the duration of each trip taking by you as Minister for Education and Training.
 - c. Detail the costs you incurred in each overseas trip.
 - d. Detail outcomes achieved from each overseas trip.
7. List all Ministerial staff who accompanied you on all overseas trips taken by you as Speaker in the financial year to date.
8. Detail the costs incurred by the Ministerial staff on each overseas trip in the financial year to date.
9. List all Departmental staff who accompanied you on all your overseas trips taken by you as Speaker in the financial year to date.
10. List an non-Government citizens who accompanied you on any overseas trips who Government paid partial or full travel and accommodation costs for.

11. Detail any overseas trips undertaken by any of your Ministerial staff that you were not present on where that staff member was travelling on your behalf.
 - a. Detail the purpose of such trips and costs incurred by the Ministerial staff on any such trips.
 - b. Detail the duration of each such trip.

MR BARR: The answer to the Member's question is as follows:—

- 1-11 The Chief Minister tabled the 2008 Ministerial Travel Report in the Legislative Assembly on 24 February 2009.

Hospitality

Zed Seselja : To ask the Minister for Education and Training

In relation to : Hospitality

1. How much did you spend on official Hospitality outside of the ACT Legislative Assembly during the financial year to date?
2. How many taxpayer funded functions did you host in the ACT Legislative Assembly during the financial year to date?
3. List the ACT Legislative Assembly functions you hosted and how much each function cost?

Mr Barr: The answer to the Member's question is as follows:–

The below answers include costs relating to all my portfolios.

1. Total expenditure on Official Hospitality outside the ACT Legislative Assembly this financial year to date is \$635.
2. Two taxpayer funded functions were hosted within the ACT Legislative Assembly this financial year to date.
3. The list below refers to functions hosted within the Assembly and the cost.
 - Limelight \$458
 - Pre school society function \$155

Territory taxes and fees

Zed Seselja : To ask the Minister for Education and Training

In relation to : Territory taxes and fees

1. Detail how much the department estimates it pay in territory taxes and fees in the financial year to date and how much will be paid in the financial year ending 30 June 2010?

MR BARR: The answer to the Member's question is as follows:–

1. Excluding general payments such as water, sewerage and electricity, the Department does not pay any material amounts to the Territory for taxes and fees.

Department revenue

Zed Seselja : To ask the Minister for Education and Training

In relation to : Departmental revenue

1. Explain the difference in estimates of departmental revenue between the period ending June 30 2009 and the financial year to date?
2. What are the sources of that revenue in both cases?
3. What are the reasons for the difference between estimated revenue and actual revenue?

MR BARR: The answer to the Member's question is as follows:–

1. At the end of April 2009, the Department had received total revenue of \$400.5 million against a full year estimated outcome of \$475.5 million.

Of the total revenue, Government Payment for Outputs (GPO) for the actual to date and the full year estimated outcome budget was \$371.3 million and \$440.3 million respectively.

Excluding the GPO appropriation provides the self generated revenue received of \$29.2 million at the end of April against a full year estimated outcome of \$35.2 million. The difference in the revenue received to date and the full year estimated outcome is primarily due to the fact it is a comparison of a part year result with a full year budget.

At the end of April 2009 total revenue was in line with the pro-rata budget. It is expected the total actual revenue for the year ending 30 June 2009 will be materially in line with the estimated outcome.

2. The sources of revenue are detailed in the table below.

Revenue	Source
Government Payment for Outputs	ACT Government Appropriation
User Charges – Non ACT Government	Sources outside the ACT Government such as international student fees, active leisure centre and funding for national agreements (Jervis Bay and French Australia School)
User Charges – ACT Government	Revenue received from other ACT Government agencies
Interest	Revenue received from banks primarily from school bank accounts
Other Revenue	Primarily relates to revenue generated by schools and includes direct Commonwealth grants received by the Department and schools
Resources Received Free of Charge	Services provided free of charge by the ACT Government Solicitor's Office

3. The difference between the estimated revenue and actual revenue, as mentioned above, is primarily due to the comparison of a part year result with a full year budget.

Consulting services

Zed Seselja : To ask the Minister for Education and Training

In relation to : Consulting Services

1. For the financial year to date, detail the expenditure in the Department of Education and Training on consulting services?
2. How much was spent on consulting services in the financial year to date?
3. Detail the individual contracts i.e who they were awarded to, at what cost, for what reason, and how they were awarded (i.e by tender, with certificate of exemption etc)?
4. How much is estimated to be spent on consulting services in the financial year to date?

MR BARR - the answer to Mr Seselja's question is:-

1. The table in 3 below provides details of the consultancy services engaged by the Department of Education and Training to the end of April 2009. Consultants are a form of external service contracted to provide high level expert advice of a managerial nature. A consultancy will reflect the independent views of the service provider and produce an intellectual output that will assist with agency decision making.
2. The amount spent on consulting services and related expenditure in the financial year to date is \$151 365.
3. The table below provides details of the consultant engaged, the method of and reason for engaging the consultant and the cost of the consultancy.

YTD April 2009	Name of Consultant	Reason for consulting	How awarded ? (Tender/ Certificate of exemption etc.
\$43 141	Mercer Human Resources	Project planning, review of HR program	Single select tender
\$14 200	Workplace Research Associates	Conduct and analyse staff survey and produce independent report	Single select tender
\$44 149	Allen Consultants	School Based Management Review	Open tender
\$43 000	Service Initiatives	Special Education Review	Single select tender
\$6 875	University of New England	To examine the use of Aboriginal English or Torres Strait Creole on learning outcomes for Indigenous children in preschools and preschool programs.	Three written quotes sought.
Total: \$151 365			

4. See response to Question 2.

Number of students in public education

Amanda Bresnan MLA: To ask the Minister for Education and Training

Regarding the number of students in public education -

What is the proportion of all school students in the ACT who attend ACT Government schools for this year and the three previous years

MR BARR: The answer to the Member's question is as follows:—

The ACT school census was conducted on Wednesday 18 February 2009. The census covered public, Catholic and independent schools for preschool to year 12.

This is the first time preschool enrolments in non-government schools have been included in the ACT school census, providing a more complete picture of school education in the ACT.

Due to the inclusion of preschool enrolments at non-government schools in 2009, direct comparisons with previous years' data should not be made.

The proportion of ACT students enrolled in public schools since 2006 is shown below:

	2006	2007	2008	2009
% in public schools	61.1	60.7	60.1	59.5 ¹
Number of students	38832	38540	38230	38280

¹ Break in series. 2009 data includes non-government pre-school data.

Literacy and numeracy

Amanda Bresnan MLA: To ask the Minister for Education and Training

Regarding **literacy and numeracy**

1. What is the model of literacy and numeracy support which will be pursued by the proposed Literacy and numeracy field officers, and please advise the committee of the analysis and the pedagogy that will inform that work.
2. Where do ACT students rank in term of literacy and numeracy performance in Australia, and where does Australia rank in the world
3. In regards to the gap in performance between indigenous and non indigenous students, what is the gap in the ACT and what is the gap in the other States and Territory
4. Where are the actions reflecting “the importance of partnerships between the home and the school” in the new Literacy and Numeracy Strategy, and who has the responsibility for them
5. Where are the links between school and community identified in the new Literacy and Numeracy Strategy, any actions relating to the development of those links, and the people with responsibility for that development
6. Why are dedicated literacy and numeracy resources being targeted, under the national partnership with the Commonwealth, to low SES school communities
7. Does the ACT government anticipate lower educational outcomes, lower literacy and numeracy scores, from students from lower SES backgrounds than the average Canberra students

MR BARR: The answer to the Member’s question is as follows:–

1. The Literacy and Numeracy Field Officers will work with school executive teams to analyse data to determine the needs within schools and offer a whole school approach to literacy and numeracy. Pedagogy will be driven by student needs and the use of system endorsed programs such as *Count Me In Too* and *First Steps* within a Quality Teaching model. Field Officers will work in a coaching and mentoring role to support teachers to build their capacity to teach literacy and numeracy.
2. In the 2008 National Assessment Program Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN) ACT students in years 3, 5, 7 and 9 ranked first across Australia in Reading and Numeracy, in relation to the percentage of students above the national minimum standard and the mean scale scores (and taking into account the confidence intervals). In writing, ACT students in years 3, 5, 7 and 9 ranked first in relation to the percentage of students above the national minimum standard. In relation to mean scores for writing, ACT was ranked second to Victoria.

In the latest international study, the 2006 Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA), in reading literacy the ACT outperformed all other Australian states. Statistically ACT would have been ranked third with Hong Kong and behind Korea and Finland. In

mathematical literacy the score for the ACT was similar to Chinese Taipei, the highest performing country.

3. This information can be found in the *2008 National Report on Schooling*, available on the MCEETYA website. Care needs to be taken when comparing the gap between Indigenous students across states as the different population sizes and the associated confidence intervals vary widely.
4. The Department's *Literacy and Numeracy Strategy for 2009-2013* identifies three focus areas for action – school leadership, quality teaching and improved student learning. Under the first focus area, school leaders are expected to build positive cultures in their school communities to promote high expectations of all students and of all teachers for literacy and numeracy development. School leaders will promote home and school partnerships through:
 - connecting parents and carers with the school
 - timely and effective communication on student learning and literacy and numeracy practices
 - providing parent education programs.School principals, Literacy and Numeracy Field Officers and School Coordinators, and School Directors all share responsibility for the development of these partnerships.
5. See answer to (4).
6. One of the nationally agreed outcomes for the National Partnership for Low Socio-economical Status School Communities is to ensure children and young people are meeting basic literacy and numeracy standards and improving on those levels. A key strategy within the ACT's implementation plan for this National Partnership, agreed to by the Australian Government, is the allocation of Literacy and Numeracy Field Officers to the schools involved in this Partnership to support them to achieve this outcome.
7. No. The average socio-economic background for the ACT is generally higher than other states, and within all literacy domains assessed, ACT students from all socio-economic backgrounds had higher levels of achievement than any other jurisdiction.

Smaller class sizes initiative

Amanda Bresnan MLA: To ask the Minister for Education and Training

Regarding the **smaller class sizes initiative**

1. Can the Minister provide the Committee with references to research which indicates that students who are falling behind actually improve their outcomes by reduced sizes
2. Will there be any requirement of Principals to ensure the extra points that are associated with the reduced class size initiative are used to reduce the average class size in their schools?
3. Would it be fair to describe this initiative as an extra teaching points initiative?
4. In early childhood schools where there are maybe 5 students is year group, how will the extra points related to smaller class sizes be used

MR BARR - the answer to Ms Bresnan's questions are:-

1. The Government's emphasis on lowering class sizes is premised on research which states the single most important school-based factor affecting a child's education is the teacher in the classroom. To this end all students (including those falling behind) have, through lowered class sizes, increased opportunities to engage with their teacher.

Overseas research undertaken to investigate the impact of class sizes on student outcomes has found positive results. One such study was the Student Teacher Achievement Ratio (STAR) project, which was a large-scale, longitudinal class-size study conducted by the Tennessee State Department of Education (USA).

Major reviews of the STAR project have confirmed the positive results.

Professor Alan Krueger, Professor of Economics at Princeton University, has analysed the STAR project data and found student outcomes in the smaller classes increased significantly in the first year that students attend small classes, and that students make further improvements in subsequent years. Professor Krueger has also reviewed the research evidence on class sizes and concluded that lower class size is systemically related to better student performance.

Harvey Goldstein and Peter Blatchford from the Institute of Education at the University of London also analysed the STAR project data. They also concluded that smaller classes have a positive impact on student outcomes.

2. Principals will be responsible for allocating their staffing resources so their school contributes to the achievement of this ACT Government policy. They will also continue to be responsible for maintaining the Government policy relating to maximum class sizes of 21 in K-3. School Directors will support and monitor the implementation of these policies with school principals.
3. No. This model provides schools with additional teachers.

4. Early childhood schools will receive additional staffing points on the basis of the same methodology used for other schools.

Educational outcomes

Amanda Bresnan MLA: To ask the Minister for Education and Training

Regarding **educational outcomes**

1. Can the Minister provide the committee with research material which makes it clear that Teacher quality is the most significant factor in increasing educational outcomes.
2. Can the Minister advise where a student's home environment fits in the spectrum of significant factors that influence educational outcomes

MR BARR: The answer to the Member's questions is as follows:–

1. The attached report *Teachers Make a Difference – What is the research evidence?* identifies that of the factors the Department of Education and Training has control over, teacher quality is by far the most significant factor in educational achievement.²
2. The same report provides information on how the home environment fits within the spectrum of factors that influence educational outcomes.

I have also provided for the committee a copy of the bibliography that identifies the research underpinning the ACT's Quality Teaching initiative.³

² The Minister attached this report for the Committee but due to file size is not included in this document, it can be found at www.acer.edu.au/documents/Hattie_TeachersMakeADifference.pdf

³ The Minister attached this document for the Committee but due to file size is not included in this document, a copy can be obtained by contacting Curriculum Support, ACT Department of Education and Training on 6205 9204.

Parents as tutors

Amanda Bresnan MLA: To ask the Minister for Education and Training

Regarding **parents as tutors**

1. What is the total resourcing for the re-vamped Parents as Tutors program. Can the Department provide documents that how the program works, how with families relationships are developed and supported .
2. What other programs does the department fund that support the links between families and schools.

MR BARR: The answer to the Member's question is as follows:—

1. In the 2008-09 financial year, the Department provided a total of \$299 000 for the Parents as Tutors program. This included funding for two School Leader C positions and administration costs of \$65 000. For the 2009-10 financial year, the Department will provide a total of \$461 000 to the program, which includes funding for three School Leader C positions and administration costs of \$65 000.

The *Parents as Tutors* program has been revised and updated, and is now called the *U-CAN Read* program. The *U-Can Read* website at <http://www.canberra.edu.au/centres/ncclr/ucanread> outlines how the program works and how family relationships are developed and supported.

2. Other programs the Department funds that support the links between families and schools include:

Families and Schools Together (FAST)

Three social workers under the Families and Schools Together (FAST) team are employed to support families of ACT public high school students who may be showing signs of disengaging from their learning.

Youth Education Support (YES) Workers

The role of the two YES workers is to re-engage young people in education and facilitate their participation in school. YES workers focus on those young people who have not attended school for at least one term or are not enrolled in a school.

Post School Options Officer

In collaboration with other government and non-government agencies, the Post School Options Officer supports students with a disability and their families in making the transition between school and employment or further training.

School Counselling and Welfare Services

All school counselling and welfare services (school counsellors, youth support workers, pastoral care coordinators) support to some degree links between families and schools.

Koori Preschool Program

The Koori Preschool Program provides an early childhood education program for Aboriginal children and Torres Strait Islander children aged 3-5 years. Children under the age of three are able to attend when a parent or adult accompanies them. There are five Koori Preschools located across the ACT.

Indigenous Education Officers

Six Indigenous Education Officers work across high schools to support schools and contributing primary schools. The focus is to improve attendance and establish a connection and build relationships between schools and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families and communities.

Indigenous Education Workers

Indigenous Education Workers provide in-class support for Indigenous students and connect the families of Indigenous students with the school.

Integrated Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Family Support Services

The Department is working with the Department of Disability, Housing and Community Services and ACT Health to provide a more focused and integrated 'wrap around' service delivery model to support Indigenous young people and their families who have been identified as being in the 'high risk' category.

ESL teaching

Amanda Bresnan MLA: To ask the Minister for Education and Training

Regarding **ESL teaching**

1. When teaching points are allocated to a school on the basis of assessed language proficiency rate (LPR) of students, how is the Department assured that the teaching points are delivered to those particular students commensurate with their LPR

MR BARR: The answer to the Member's question is as follows:—

1. The ACT Department of Education and Training's guidelines for English as a Second Language (ESL) stipulate how ESL staffing points are to be used. The use of these points are verified by the school principal.

Birrigai

Amanda Bresnan MLA: To ask the Minister for Education and Training

Regarding **Birrigai**

1. Can the Minister provide the committee with a list of comparative prices charged to public school students by outdoor education facilities similarly run by the education departments of other jurisdictions in Australia

MR BARR: The answer to the Member's question is as follows:—

1. There are no directly comparable facilities in other jurisdictions. For example, the NSW Department of Education has environmental centres, but many of these centres do not have the range or standard of facilities Birrigai offers.

An examination of interstate facilities and their costs will be completed as part of the Tidbinbilla Business Plan in 2009.

The site is used by ACT public and non-government schools from preschool to year 12, schools in other jurisdictions, overseas students and members of the community. In 2008, ACT public school students accounted for approximately 60% of school student visits.

Expenditure – advertising

Zed Seselja : To ask the Minister for Education and Training

In relation to : Expenditure in the Department of Education and Training

1. How much has been budgeted for 2009-10 for advertising and marketing?
2. For 2009-10, provide details - including costs, length of contract, name of contractor, services provided, how they will be awarded (tender etc.) - of any planned advertising and marketing contracts.

MR BARR: The answer to Mr Seselja's question is: -

1. This cannot be answered until the 2009-10 Budget has passed the Assembly.
2. Nil.

Expenditure – hospitality

Zed Seselja : To ask the Minister for Education and Training

In relation to : Expenditure in the Department of Education and Training

1. How much has been budgeted for 2009-10 for hospitality?

MR BARR : The answer to Mr Seselja's question is:-

1. The Department does not have a separate budget for hospitality. Expenditure will be incurred based on requirements and approved during the year.

Expenditure – rent

Zed Seselja : To ask the Minister for Education and Training

In relation to : Expenditure in the Department of Education and Training

1. How much has been budgeted for rent in the 2009-10 budget?
2. For 2009-10, provide details - including costs, length of contract, property size and location – of any proposed rental properties.

MR BARR - the answer to Mr Seselja's question is:-

1. This cannot be answered until the 2009-10 Budget has been passed by the Legislative Assembly.
2. For 2009-10 there are no new rental properties proposed.

Expenditure – training

Zed Seselja : To ask the Minister for Education and Training

In relation to : Training Expenditure in the Department of Education and Training

1. How much has been budgeted for 2009-10 for staff training?
2. Detail any training courses that are already planned for 2009-10.
3. For each training course in (2), what are the objectives of the course?
4. For each training course in (2), what is the cost of each course?
5. For each course in (2), detail all staff – from both the Minister’s office and the department – who will participate.

MR BARR : The answer to Mr Seselja’s question is:

1. Funding for teachers’ and principals’ professional learning is provided through the Teachers’ Professional Learning Fund (TPLF) and the Principals’ Professional Learning Fund (PPLF). Funding amounts are set in the teachers’ Enterprise Bargaining Agreement and are provided on a financial year, but are deployed on a calendar year cycle. The Department of Education and Training is currently negotiating a new industrial agreement with the Australian Education Union. The new agreement could impact on funding available for professional learning in 2009-10.

For calendar year 2009, the TPLF has provided \$500 000 to schools to spend on professional learning, \$617 000 for professional learning targeting strategic initiatives and \$400 000 for teacher scholarships for study at tertiary institutions plus \$100 000 for individual scholarships. (Additional amounts due to previous unspent funds.)

The PPLF for 2009 was made up of one percent of principals’ salaries, plus unspent funds from the 2007-08 PPLF. This is expected to be approximately \$200 000.

In addition, schools also provide funds for teacher professional learning from their school based management funds. The amount allocated varies from school to school.

Training costs for school administration staff are funded through each school’s school based management allocation. In addition, all Department of Education and Training directorates are allocated an administration budget from which they may fund training for their staff.

2. Details of all planned training courses are published on the Professional Learning and Events Calendar.
3. Course objectives are provided on the Professional Learning and Events Calendar.

4. Costs for course participants are available on the Professional Learning and Events Calendar.
5. Individual staff from schools and central office enrol in training courses to suit their learning needs. A complete list of staff planning to undertake Department funded professional learning for 2009-10 is not available as course applications are often submitted up to the course start date. Additional courses are also offered as the year progresses.

There are no plans for staff from my office to attend training sessions provided by the Department of Education and Training.

Expenditure – travel

Zed Seselja : To ask the Minister for Education and Training

In relation to : Travel Expenditure in the Department of Education and Training

1. How much has been budgeted for 2009-10 for:
 - a. Interstate travel
 - b. Overseas travel
2. Detail any trips that are already planned for 2009-10.
3. For each trip in (2), what are the objectives of the trip?
4. For each trip in (2), detail all staff – from both the Minister’s office and the department – who will participate in the trip.

MR BARR: The answer to the Member’s question is as follows:–

1. (a) This cannot be answered until the 2009-10 Budget has passed the Assembly.
- (b) As above.
2. Interstate trips
The Chief Executive and I plan to travel interstate to attend meetings of the Ministerial Council for Tertiary Education and Employment (MCTEE), and the Ministerial Council for Education, Early Childhood Development and Youth Affairs (MCEECDYA).

The Department of Education and Training has planned interstate trips for the Chief Executive to attend meetings of the National Senior Officials Committee (NSOC) and the Australian Education Systems Officials Committee (AESOC).

Schools and directorates make plans at the school and directorate level about interstate travel for their staff. Resources required to provide details of trips planned for 2009-10 for school and directorate staff are not currently justified.

Overseas trips

I have not planned any overseas trips for 2009-10. Details of overseas trips planned by Department of Education and Training for 2009-10 are included in Table 1 below.

Table 1

Trip to	Objectives	Participants
UK, Italy and USA	Inform the Department of Education and Training about future directions in early childhood education to ensure ACT policy is consistent with world’s best practice.	Director, Indigenous Education and Early Learning
Singapore	Department of Education and Training presentation at and participation in the	A/g Director, Curriculum Support

Trip to	Objectives	Participants
	International Principals' conference.	and Professional Learning Manager - Leadership Strategy Two principals
Hong Kong, Shenzhen and Vietnam	Support the Department of Education and Training's commitment to sustaining international student enrolments for 2009-2010, supporting agent relationships and monitoring agent activities offshore.	Manager, International Education
China	Support the Department of Education and Training's commitment to sustaining international student enrolments for 2009-2010, supporting agent relationships and monitoring agent activities offshore.	Assistant Manager, International Education Unit
School excursion to New Caledonia	Students to experience life in a French speaking culture and further develop students' abilities in reading and writing French.	Three teachers
School excursion to Japan	Students to improve language skills, explore cultural differences and experience Japanese lifestyle.	Three teachers
School excursion to Vanuatu	Students to explore marine ecosystems in order to fulfil curriculum requirements.	Three teachers
School excursion to China	To enable language students to practise skills in a real context, experience living in a different culture through homestay and explore cultural destinations.	Two teachers
School excursion to Japan	To give students an opportunity to use and enhance Japanese language skills in a wide variety of situations including homestay, school visits and various tourist destinations.	Three teachers
School excursion to Vanuatu	To explore the culture and customs of the Nee Van people both historic and present day including a study of marine ecology and conservation.	Two teachers
School excursion to Italy	To provide students with the opportunity to visit ancient world heritage sites, Renaissance art and explore Italian culture, society and history.	Four teachers
School excursion to China	To improve students' cultural understanding of the Chinese people, history and society while using language skills in everyday situations.	Two teachers

Trip to	Objectives	Participants
School excursion to Japan	To offer students a culturally enriching experience, broaden their worldview and enhance language skills in context.	Two teachers

3. The objectives of the interstate travel planned by the Department of Education and Training for 2009-10 are to attend meetings, undertake professional learning courses, attend conferences and attend school excursions.

The objectives for the overseas trips planned by the Department of Education and Training for 2009-10 are listed in Table 1 (see Question 2).

4. Interstate trips

The names of staff members who will accompany the Chief Executive and I to national meetings planned for 2009-10 are not known until closer to each meeting.

Resources required to provide the details of who will participate in trips planned by the Department for 2009-10 for school and central office staff are not currently justified.

Overseas trips

The Department of Education and Training staff participating in overseas trips planned for 2009-10 are listed in Table 1 (see Question 2).

Expenditure – web design

Zed Seselja : To ask the Minister for Education and Training

In relation to : Expenditure in the Department of Education and Training

1. How much has been budgeted for 2009-10 for web design and web hosting?
2. How much was spent on these services in 2008-09?
3. For 2008-09, provide details - including costs, length of contract, name of contractor, services provided, how they were awarded (tender etc.) - of any web design and web hosting contract.
4. For 2009-10, provide details - including costs, length of contract, name of contractor, services provided, how they will be awarded (tender etc.) - of any planned web design and web hosting contract.

MR BARR : The answer to the Member's question is as follows:–

1. This cannot be answered until the 2009/10 Budget has been passed by the Legislative Assembly.
2. \$279,798
3. Nil
4. This cannot be answered until the 2009/10 Budget has been passed by the Legislative Assembly.

Expenditure – CIT – Advertising

Zed Seselja : To ask the Minister for Education and Training

In relation to : Expenditure in CIT

1. How much has been budgeted for 2009-10 for advertising and marketing?
2. For 2009-10, provide details - including costs, length of contract, name of contractor, services provided, how they will be awarded (tender etc.) - of any planned advertising and marketing contracts.

MR BARR : The answer to the Member's question is as follows:–

1. \$300,000.
2. Nil.

Expenditure – CIT – hospitality

Zed Seselja : To ask the Minister for Education and Training

In relation to : Expenditure in CIT

1. How much has been budgeted for 2009-10 for hospitality?

MR BARR : The answer to the Member's question is as follows:–

No specific amount has been budgeted for hospitality. The CIT executive members and centre directors expend funds on hospitality from their area budgets according to CIT's *Official Hospitality, Meetings, Institute Ceremonies and Gifts Policy*.

365 Education and Training Seselja

Expenditure – CIT – rent

Zed Seselja : To ask the Minister for Education and Training

In relation to : Expenditure in CIT

1. How much has been budgeted for rent in the 2009-10 budget?
2. For 2009-10, provide details - including costs, length of contract, property size and location – of any proposed rental properties.

MR BARR : The answer to the Member's question is as follows:–

1. Nil.

2. Nil.

Expenditure – CIT – training

Zed Seselja : To ask the Minister for Education and Training

In relation to : Training Expenditure CIT

1. How much has been budgeted for 2009-10 for staff training?
2. Detail any training courses that are already planned for 2009-10.
3. For each training course in (2), what are the objectives of the course?
4. For each training course in (2), what is the cost of each course?
5. For each course in (2), detail all staff – from both the Minister’s office and the department – who will participate.

MR BARR : The answer to the Member’s question is as follows:–

1. \$875,000
2. A variety of training programs are planned for both teaching and administrative staff.
3. Training program objectives are in line with the CIT Strategic Plan goal of expanding organisational capability.
4. This cannot be answered until the 2009/10 budget has been passed by the Legislative Assembly.
5. CIT staff, in line with organisational training needs, will participate in the training.

Expenditure – CIT – travel

Zed Seselja : To ask the Minister for Education and Training

In relation to : Travel Expenditure in CIT

1. How much has been budgeted for 2009-10 for:
 - a. Interstate travel
 - b. Overseas travel
2. Detail any trips that are already planned for 2009-10.
3. For each trip in (2), what are the objectives of the trip?
4. For each trip in (2), detail all staff – from both the Minister’s office and the department – who will participate in the trip.

MR BARR : The answer to the Member’s question is as follows:–

1. No specific amount has been budgeted for travel. The CIT executive members and centre directors expend funds on travel from their area budgets according to CIT’s *Travel Policy*.
2. Not available.
3. Not available.
4. Not available.

Expenditure – CIT – web design

Zed Seselja : To ask the Minister for Education and Training

In relation to : Expenditure in CIT

1. How much has been budgeted for 2009-10 for web design and web hosting?
2. How much was spent on these services in 2008-09?
3. For 2008-09, provide details - including costs, length of contract, name of contractor, services provided, how they were awarded (tender etc.) - of any web design and web hosting contract.
4. For 2009-10, provide details - including costs, length of contract, name of contractor, services provided, how they will be awarded (tender etc.) - of any planned web design and web hosting contract.

MR BARR : The answer to the Member's question is as follows:–

5. This cannot be answered until the 2009/10 Budget has been passed by the Legislative Assembly.
6. \$279,798
7. Nil
8. This cannot be answered until the 2009/10 Budget has been passed by the Legislative Assembly.

QTON – Building the Education Revolution

MRS DUNNE: To ask the Minister for Education and Training

In relation to: Building the Education Revolution

1. Can you provide the guidelines for each of the three programs?
2. Is the 1.5% administration cost included in the budget allocation?

MR BARR: The answer to the Member's question is as follows:–

1. A copy of the Building the Education Revolution Guidelines is attached.⁴
2. The 1.5% funding allowance for administration costs for the Building the Education Revolution initiative is over and above the individual funding allocations provided to each school project.

⁴ A copy was provided to the Committee, however due to size, was not included in this document, it is available at www.buildingtheeducationrevolution.gov.au

QTON – Use of school premises

MR SMYTH: To ask the Minister for Education and Training

In relation to: Use of school premises

Is there a record of advice provided by the Chief Minister's Department regarding the request for the Australian Labour Party to use school premises to film an advertisement?

MR BARR: The answer to the Member's question is as follows:–

No. Liaison with the Chief Minister's Department (CMD) was by telephone. The Department also considered the generic advice *Guidance on Caretaker Conventions* provided to all agencies by CMD on 11 August 2009 and the *Guidance on Obligations of Public Employees during the Pre-Election Period* provided to agencies by CMD on 24 July 2008.

These documents can be accessed at:

www.cmd.act.gov.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0004/2884/ACT_ctkr08.pdf and
www.cmd.act.gov.au/_data/assets/word_doc/0008/2798/2008_election_advice.doc respectively.

QTON – School movement survey

MR SMYTH: To ask the Minister for Education and Training

In relation to: School movement survey

Could you provide to the committee a copy of the executive report of the focus groups looking into the school movement survey?

MR BARR: The answer to the Member's question is as follows:–

A copy of the report is attached.



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SCHOOL MOVEMENT AND SCHOOL CHOICE IN ACT QUALITATIVE RESEARCH REPORT

FINAL REPORT

FEBRUARY 2009

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Contents

Background and Objectives

Over the last two years the ACT Department of Education and Training (DET) has conducted a series of quantitative School Movement Surveys, which investigated reasons for school movement and school choice in the ACT. The surveys have identified several broad areas of concern which the Department wished to investigate further. Amongst the main reasons for moving schools were 'quality of education' and 'peer relationships' and the Department wished to gain a better understanding of these responses.

The Department requested that qualitative research be conducted to investigate these two responses in more detail. The main objectives of the qualitative research were thus:

- to fully explore the reasons for moving schools amongst parents who gave 'quality of education' and 'peer relationships' as their reason in the quantitative survey;
- to gain an understanding of the factors parents considered when selecting a new school
- to obtain parents' views on what schools could or should do to address any problems experienced.

The Department was interested in the movement between the public and non-government sectors in the ACT and to better understand what drives parental choices to leave one sector for another.

The research methodology needed to be qualitative to allow for the full exploration of the reasons for school movement. The available sample listing was generated from the quantitative School Movement Survey conducted by The Social Research Centre on behalf of the Department via telephone in September 2008. This survey also collected contact information and obtained permission to re-contact in the event of future research on this topic. The final sample of people who had given the 'quality of education' and 'peer relationship' reasons, and who lived in an appropriate geographical area was limited to approximately 110 records. We were finally able to conduct:

- 3 focus groups with people whose children were moved for **'quality of education'** reasons, including 2 full groups and 1 mini-group.

Whilst we aimed to have one group dedicated to each of the three directions of move across school sectors, the group who had moved from non-government to public school consisted of only two parents. This was because it was extremely difficult to find parents within our sample who qualified in terms of movement type, reason for moving, and willingness to participate. This group has been described as a mini-group. So the focus groups conducted were as follows:

- 1 group - public to public
 - 1 group - public to non-government
 - 1 mini-group - non-government to public
- 10 individual interviews with people who had moved their children for **'peer relationship'** reasons. Four of these interviews were conducted face-to-face and six were conducted by telephone. They were also conducted according to the direction of the move:
 - 6 depth interviews - public to non-government
 - 4 depth interviews - public to public

The parents who participated in this research had children of various ages including primary, high school and college students.

The focus groups and face to face interviews were held at the Department's facilities at the Centre for Teaching & Learning in Stirling, ACT and the participants were reimbursed \$50 to help with their travel and childcare expenses. The focus groups lasted up to 1½ hours while face to face interviews lasted up to 45 minutes. The interviews conducted by telephone lasted between 30 and 40 minutes and these participants were sent \$30 as a reimbursement. All sessions were moderated by a researcher from the Social Research Centre in Melbourne.

A Discussion Guide was developed and agreed with the Department. The sessions were recorded for analysis purposes.

This Report

This report presents the findings of the focus groups and interviews and aims to bring together and summarise the main findings relating to the research objectives.

It should be noted that the research findings relating to movement **out of the non-government system** are quite limited due to the fact that we were unable to find many parents within our sample who qualified. Thus most of the reasons for movement are pertaining to perceived weaknesses in the public school sector. Many of the findings reflect negatively on the public school sector so it should be borne in mind that these are the views of a small number of the least satisfied parents and by no means would they be a reflection of all parents. For this reason, care should be taken when making generalisations based on these findings.

Findings

The qualitative research conducted (namely 2 focus groups, 1 mini-group and 10 individual in-depth interviews) has revealed a number of reasons for school movement within the parameters of 'quality of education' and 'peer relationships'.

Reasons for moving school - 'Quality of Education'

'Quality of education' meant parents were dissatisfied with and concerned about the social environment their child was spending their school day in as well as the physical environment.

Their reasons were never simple, one-dimensional, or the result of a single incident. The move was invariably the final outcome of a series of events over 6 to 12 months or longer, during which the parents' opinions about the school had strengthened and the child had become increasingly unhappy. In summary, the range of reasons included:

- Disruptive behaviour of students in the classroom, not managed by teachers
- Anti-social and violent behaviour in the playground
- Prevalence of drug and alcohol use at their school
- Dissatisfaction with open-plan style classrooms
- Overworked and unhappy teachers who had high level of absenteeism and turnover, as well as dissatisfaction with replacement teachers
- Dissatisfaction with how the school is dealing with problems, a perceived inability to cope
- Parent dissatisfaction with their own interaction with school management (eg. not getting replies when reporting a problem in writing, not being advised if their child was not attending school, not having particular requests for certain teachers or certain classmates met)
- Broadly they perceived the school to be lacking the capacity to, or interest in, catering to their child's individual needs and they were not instilling positive personal values
- The child also wanted to leave the school, and their unhappiness was affecting their behaviour at home, and thus affecting the entire family.

Reasons for moving school - 'Peer Relationships'

Most of the 'peer relationships' reasons were actually 'bullying' and a generally intimidating, violent and stressful environment. The bullying could take various forms, including actual or threatened physical violence, harassment and intimidation and was very upsetting to both the children and their parents. The behaviour reported by parents was usually ongoing over a quite long period of time (eg. 1-2 years) after which the parents finally gave up and allowed the child to move to another school.

The parents were dissatisfied with the school's response to the bullying and violence. They perceived the school counsellors to not be very useful because they were hardly ever available at the time they were needed. Plus they were not found to be particularly responsive or helpful, wanting to focus on the victim and how they could better cope with being bullied rather than stopping the bullying or dealing with the perpetrators. The parents saw the school's management and teachers as paying lip service to the problem rather than finding ways to prevent it and create a better social environment.

What parents are looking for in schools

The key attributes these parents were looking for in a new school were:

- a more safe, nurturing and caring environment, with better communication between themselves and the school
- a school that would allow their children to be themselves, and to be more resistant to negative peer pressure, an environment where they could develop as individuals
- higher standard of discipline, they wanted there to be genuine consequences for disruptive or anti-social behaviour, both in the classroom and in the playground
- a classroom with fewer disruptive children who consumed all of the teacher's attention
- a school that would instil positive personal values on their child
- a school their children were going to be happy in.

The public and non-government school sectors

Most of these parents had been very strong advocates for the public school system in the past but felt it had failed their children. The cost of non-government schools is obviously going to remain a key factor for many parents who simply try to find a better government school but others felt they had to move their children into a non-government school.

In terms of advantages of the non-government school system over the public school system, and affecting their choices, a number of issues were raised about non-government schools

- they were able to attract better behaved and better performing students, as well as better teachers, the 'cream of the crop'
- they were perceived to be far more disciplined and deal more effectively with disruptive students
- they were more interested in, and capable of, providing nurturing and guidance to children as well as better equipped to instil positive personal values and provide moral guidance. This was particularly associated with the Catholic school system
- they were perceived to have less of a problem with drug and alcohol use.

What parents want schools to do

Parents perceived the problems to be both entrenched and widespread and see no alternative but to remove their child. They do want schools to change but have very few ideas on what schools should do to address the wider 'social environment' problems. The main suggestions focus on better standards of behaviour, both inside and outside the classroom, and tougher standards of discipline.

Parents whose child had been bullied came up with a number of more specific suggestions to better deal with bullying and general violence in the school:

- they want the school to not tolerate bullying, for there to be serious repercussions for perpetrators
- they want schools to have more counselling resources that are available for more of the time
- they want the school and the counsellor to place less emphasis on teaching a child to cope with being bullied and more on addressing bullying behaviour
- they want more supervision in playgrounds during lunchtime, and other support for children at risk of being bullied such as separate supervised play areas for different age groups, somewhere they can feel safe and relax
- they would like to see school-wide strategies for the prevention of bullying. Most parents had little awareness of what the school was currently doing, if anything, to address the problem.

The process of choosing a new school

The most typical process for researching and deciding on a new school involve the following steps:

- Usually there would be a relatively small number of schools that are already known from earlier research and from living in the area
- Parents would talk to anyone they knew who had children at those schools and gather opinions and experiences from as many people as possible
- Notably, formal communications produced by and about schools were not relied upon at all because they all made the same claims
- The 'word of mouth' usually produced just one or two viable options, which were then called to check there was a place and visited
- Discussions were held with the principal and a decision usually reached very quickly, particularly if the school made a good impression during the visit and if the child was eager to change
- Parents reported no difficulties at all with the process of moving to a new school, in fact they felt supported by the new principal who often seemed eager to help and accept the child into the school. These moves sometimes took place in the middle of a year or even in the middle of a term so this meant they received some 'special' attention. The teacher usually made some effort to help the child settle in and reported how they were going to the parents.

QTON – CCCares Program

MRS DUNNE: To ask the Minister for Education and Training

In relation to: CCCares program

1. How many students and children of students are involved in the program?
2. What early intervention programs accompany the CCCares program?

MR BARR: The answer to the Member's question is as follows:–

1. There are 95 enrolled students with 70 children of students currently involved in the CCCares Program.
2. The following programs are provided by CCCares:
 - A daily day care program for children of parents participating in the CCCares program. The day care program includes fine and gross motor activities, pre-reading and pre-writing activities for the older children and the *sing ingrown* program which provides learning experiences involving music and singing.
 - On-site health support. Staff from ACT Health visit CCCares twice a week. They provide mothers with ante-natal care and children with health checks and vaccinations appropriate to their age.
 - Classes for parents in nutrition, parenting, providing a stimulating learning environment and budgeting.
 - The fresh fruit and vegetables program which provides children with fresh fruit and vegetables.
 - The *Adopt a Grandparent* program and other activities supported by partnerships with volunteer groups which assist children to learn about relationships and to build relationships with others.

QTON – Allocation of staffing points

MR SMYTH: To ask the Minister for Education and Training

In relation to: Allocation of staffing points

1. Could you provide a document that shows how many total points are required to reduce average class sizes to 21 and 19?
2. Could you provide a document which details the allocation of staffing points per school?

MR BARR: The answer to the Member's question is as follows:–

1. Total staffing points required to implement the Government's average class sizes policy is 1400 (or 70 additional teachers).

The methodology for determining the staffing points required to reduce average class sizes to 21 and 19 involved the following.

- a) Current average class sizes were determined by taking the total number of mainstream students and dividing this by the number of mainstream classes. The model did not take into account the allocation of teachers to small specific purpose teaching groups such as Learner Assistance or English as a Second Language (ESL).
- b) The shortfall between the current system average class size and that of the Government's policy was then identified, and the number of teachers required to address the shortfall determined.
- c) As one teacher equals 20 staffing points, this resulted in an allocation of additional staffing points to be distributed across schools within each sector.

On the basis of this methodology, the table below shows the additional staffing points required to reduce average class sizes across the three sectors.

	K-6	7-10	11-12
2009 mainstream students	18 061	9267	5735
Average class size in 2009	22	24	20
Extra teachers	10	50	10
Extra staffing points	200	1000	200
Adjusted class size	21	21	19

Source: MAZE extract of Departmental records, 2009 Semester 1

2. Projected staffing allocations are provided to school principals by the end of August each year for the following year. From this year, these projected staffing allocations will incorporate the additional staffing points on the basis of the methodology described above.

QTON – Birrigai user charges

MS LE COUTEUR: To ask the Minister for Education and Training

In relation to: Birrigai user charges

1. Are there comparable facilities in other jurisdictions?
2. How much do they charge?
3. Who uses the facility?

MR BARR: The answer to the Member's question is as follows:–

1. There are no directly comparable facilities in other jurisdictions. For example, the NSW Department of Education has environmental centres, but many of these centres do not have the range or standard of facilities Birrigai offers.
2. An examination of interstate facilities and their costs will be completed as part of the Tidbinbilla Business Plan in 2009.
3. The site is used by ACT public and non-government schools from preschool to year 12, schools in other jurisdictions, overseas students and members of the community. In 2008, ACT public school students accounted for approximately 60% of school student visits.

QTON – Student Support Fund

MS LE COUTEUR: To ask the Minister for Education and Training

In relation to: Student Support Fund

1. Is the Student Support Fund fully utilised each year?
2. Is it possible to find out how much of the Student Support Fund goes to Birrigai via the school?

MR BARR: The answer to the Member's question is as follows:–

1. The Student Support Fund allocation is \$0.5m per year. It is allocated entirely to schools as part of their School Based Management funding. Principals advise parents of the availability of support through this funding where circumstances may limit students' opportunities to participate in school activities. Historically, the Student Support Fund has been fully utilised.
2. Schools do not report on the use of the Student Support Fund for specific excursions. Schools may support students' attendance at Birrigai provided the activity complies with the requirements of the *Education Act 2004* and the Financial Contributions from Parents statement. In recent years, school acquittals of the Student Support Fund indicate that 25 – 30% of expended funds contribute to students' attendance at camps and excursions.

QTON – Special needs children

MR SMYTH: To ask the Minister for Education and Training

In relation to: Special needs children birth to preschool years

1. Could you tell me what percentage of our children, from birth to preschool, are considered special needs or children with an early learning difficulty that are in Department of Education and Training programs?
2. What is the participation rate in all the various programs?

MR BARR: The answer to the Member's question is as follows:–

1. The Department of Education and Training does not maintain data relating to children with special needs who access services as a percentage of the total birth to preschool aged population.
2. The following table provides data on the number of children attending ACT public preschools and the number of children with special needs accessing the range of programs available for those aged birth to school entry.

Total number of children in local preschool programs as at February 2009 school census. This figure includes those enrolled in 3 year old programs. 87% of 4 year old children are enrolled in ACT public preschools.	3792
Children with a developmental delay or a disability participating in early intervention programs during the six months July-December 2008. This is a throughput measure that reflects the number of children who attended an early intervention program at any time during the period. The annual figure for 2008-09 will be reported in the annual report of the Department of Education and Training.	332
Children in programs for three-year-olds located at Charnwood, Lyons and Narrabundah as at February 2009 school census.	45
Children with special needs in local preschool programs receiving support as at 22 May 2009.	65
Children enrolled in the Koori Preschool Program as at February 2009 school census. Note that some children may also access mainstream preschool. For example, some children enrolled in the Koori Preschool Program may also access a mainstream ACT public preschool.	66
Children from birth to preschool receiving hearing support as at 22 May 2009.	20

Children from birth to preschool receiving vision support as at 22 May 2009.	3
Children attending Early Childhood Centre programs run by a special school as at 22 May 2009.	97
Total number of children aged birth to school entry accessing special needs programs as at 22 May 2009.	628

QTON – Department employment levels

MR SESELJA: To ask the Minister for Education and Training

In relation to: Department employment levels

1. Can you provide a breakdown of the number of staff employed in the Department – teaching and non-teaching?
2. How do the staffing numbers compare over the last four years?

MR BARR: The answer to the Member's question is as follows:–

1. The estimated staffing figure of 4 470 for 2008-09 in Budget Paper 4, (page 354), is based on the full-time equivalent (FTE) staff level of paid staff in the last pay period in April 2009.

This estimated staffing level of 4 470 comprises 3 048 teaching staff (classroom teachers and school leaders) and 1 077 administrative staff. In addition, an estimate of 345 for casual staff is included to cover the need for schools to replace absent staff, both teaching and administration.

2. The staffing levels for the previous four years, as shown in the Department's annual reports, are:

	June 2005 (FTE)	June 2006 (Head Count)	June 2007 (Head Count)	June 2008 (Head Count)
Teaching	3 117	3 253	3 161	3 202
Administration	1 210	1 383	1 216	1 133
Casual	317	982	970	918
Total	4 644	5 618	5 347	5 253

QTON – Gugan Gulwan

MS BRESNAN: To ask the Minister for Education and Training

In relation to: Gugan Gulwan

What discussion has the Department had with community services about finding alternate sources of funding for the Gugan Gulwan program?

MR BARR: The answer to the Member's question is as follows:–

The Department's Director for Indigenous Education and Early Learning met with the Director, Gugan Gulwan Youth Aboriginal Corporation in April 2009 to discuss funding for the literacy and numeracy program.

The Manager of the Department's Indigenous Education Unit has had informal discussions with staff at the Gugan Gulwan Youth Centre over the last six months to discuss the nature of the program they offer.

QTON – Teacher retention

MR DOSZPOT: To ask the Minister for Education and Training

In relation to: Teacher retention

1. Do we know why the ACT teacher retention rate is better than other jurisdictions?
2. What is the policy on relocation expenses for teachers?

MR BARR: The answer to the Member's question is as follows:–

1. There are two factors that influence the ACT teacher retention rate in comparison to other jurisdictions. Firstly, the average age of teachers is currently 42 years. This average age is lower than the average teacher age of most jurisdictions and reduces workforce separations through retirement in the ACT.

The other factor is the range of strategies that the ACT has to specifically target teacher support and retention. The focus of these strategies is the critical early years of teaching and building teacher capacity throughout their career.

These strategies include:

- a comprehensive program of New Educator Support provided to educators in their first three years of teaching which includes the provision of:
 - system and school based induction and orientation
 - 15 release days for beginning teachers to enable access to a range of professional support opportunities
 - a targeted New Educator Support Program of professional learning workshops
 - access to ongoing professional learning opportunities, including targeted scholarships
 - leadership development initiatives for leaders and aspiring leaders
 - attractive work life balance opportunities including part-time work opportunities.
2. Teachers who are offered permanent appointment from interstate are eligible for assistance with relocation expenses. The amount payable varies from \$2400 to \$5000 depending on the zone from which they are relocating and the number of dependents.

Relocation assistance can cover removal costs, meals in transit, vehicle transportation, fuel costs, rental bond, rent and miscellaneous costs.

Overseas applicants who are offered permanent employment are eligible for relocation assistance to cover costs incurred following arrival in Australia.

QTON – Canberra College performing arts centre

MRS DUNNE: To ask the Minister for Education and Training

In relation to: Canberra College performing arts centre

How many seats will be provided?

MR BARR: The answer to the Member's question is as follows:–

Exact seating numbers will not be known until the final design is completed.

QTON – Counselling in primary schools

MR SMYTH: To ask the Minister for Education and Training

In relation to: Primary school children mental health issues

How much counselling is going on in primary schools?

MR BARR: The answer to the Member's question is as follows:–

Of the 45 full time equivalent (FTE) school counsellors, 34 school counsellors work across all ACT public primary schools. School counsellor time is allocated on the basis of enrolment numbers. In times of special pressure, senior counsellors are available to assist schools as necessary.

QTON – Birrigai entry road

MR SMYTH: To ask the Minister for Education and Training

In relation to: Birrigai entry road

Is there consideration of a new entrance for Birrigai?

MR BARR: The answer to the Member's question is as follows:–

The Department of Education and Training has no plan to create a new public entrance to the Birrigai site.

Territory and Municipal Services have engaged a consultancy to develop a *Strategic Business Plan* for the Tidbinbilla Precinct, which includes Birrigai. The draft plan identifies the separate entrances to the Park and Birrigai as an issue and suggests a direct connection between the two be considered. The business plan will be considered by the Tidbinbilla Advisory Board on 4 June 2009, after which recommendations may be forthcoming.

QTON – Alternate programs

MS BRESNAN: To ask the Minister for Education and Training

In relation to: Alternate programs

Could you provide a list of all the alternate programs (including funding) the Department uses to engage with students who find mainstream education settings are not for them?

MR BARR: The answer to the Member's question is as follows:–

The following table lists the alternate programs available for students in the ACT public school system. The funding listed shows anticipated salary costs of staff employed in the programs, for the 2008-2009 financial year.

Program Name	Aim	2008-2009 salary costs (including leave provision and superannuation)
Student Management Consultants	Student Management Consultants work to build teacher and system capacity to support learning outcomes for students with challenging behaviours.	\$1 414 855
Complex Needs Team	The Complex Needs Team consists of four student management consultants and one social worker, who specifically work with young people with high and complex needs.	\$398 466
Youth Education Support	Two youth workers liaise with schools and facilitate connections to a broader support network. They work to re-engage young people in education, and support their participation in school and community life.	\$157 400
Counselling and Welfare	45 full time equivalent school counsellors (psychologists) provide assessment and counselling for students and advice to teachers and parents to support student engagement in learning.	\$4 504 046
Families and Schools Together Team	Three social workers work in the program to re-engage high school students in their learning by providing support to families	\$294 597
School Youth Health Nurse program	Four nurses are employed in this program. This is a pilot project to promote positive health outcomes for young people and their families.	\$413 363

Youth Support Workers in High schools	All high schools have a youth support worker who works with students and school staff to promote educational engagement in school via program development and connecting young people to community resources.	\$1 168 495
Achievement Centres – years 7-10	Three Achievement Centres support year 7 and year 8 students who are beginning to disengage with their learning by targeting literacy, numeracy and social skills.	\$1 257 006
Connect10 Program – years 9-10	There are three Connect10 settings that support students in years 9 and 10 through an individualised program. The aim is to re-engage students with education and support students to transition to future schooling, training or work.	\$926 739
Pastoral Care Coordination	17 pastoral care coordinators are employed in high schools. The pastoral care teacher coordinates whole-school pastoral care programs that take a personalised approach to supporting student well-being. They also have a role in supporting staff to promote and increase student attendance and engagement with learning and ultimately their connection to school.	\$1 932 880

QTON – AVO

MS HUNTER: To ask the Minister for Education and Training

In relation to : AVO protection order processes

Can you:

1. Provide information about the number of parents and students taking out AVOs?
2. Provide information about the Department's processes to manage AVOs?

MR BARR: The answer to the Member's question is as follows:–

1. I am advised by the Magistrates' Court that the number of protection orders taken out by students against another student at the same school is as follows:

2008-09

62

The Magistrates' Court advise the data on orders taken out by parents is not available as orders only name the involved students. These figures include government and non-government schools.

3. The Department manages individuals holding protection orders in accordance with the *Safe Schools Policy*⁵ and the *School Legal Information Manual, Court Processes and Procedures, Protection Orders* procedure (attached).

⁵ A copy was provided to the Committee, however due to size, was not included in this document, it is available at www.det.act.gov.au/policies/policies.htm



Education and Training

School Legal Information Manual

Module: Court Processes and Procedures

Topic: Protection Orders

The School Legal Information Manual (SLIM) is intended as a general guide for staff to assist them in carrying out their duties. It should not be relied on as legal advice. It is the responsibility of staff to consider whether their circumstances require additional advice from principals, who may then contact Governance & Legal Liaison at det.legal.liaison@act.gov.au or x58229.

What does “protection orders” mean?

The *Domestic Violence and Protection Orders Act 2001* (the “Act”) provides for domestic violence orders, general personal protection orders and workplace protection orders.

These are orders of a court that prevent a person from engaging in certain harassing or violent conduct. The Act imposes severe penalties for a breach of a protection order.

An interim order may be made to operate in the period between an initial application and the final hearing of the matter.

Schools should be aware that there are confidentiality provisions relating to protection orders.

Glossary

Personal Protection Order

A personal protection order aims to protect an individual from harassing or violent conduct and focuses on preventing harm to an individual and/or his or her property.

Workplace Protection Order

A workplace protection order aims to protect a workplace, its employees and, if a school, its students from harm and violent or harassing behaviour.

What law applies?

ACT Law

Domestic Violence and Protection Orders Act 2001

<http://www.legislation.act.gov.au/a/2001-89/default.asp>

What does our Department say?

Critical Incidents Guidelines

[https://index.det.act.gov.au/information/pdf/FS6 critical incidents.pdf](https://index.det.act.gov.au/information/pdf/FS6%20critical%20incidents.pdf)

Emergency Management

<https://index.det.act.gov.au/information/emergency.html>

Playground Supervision of Students policy

http://www.det.act.gov.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0010/19495/playsupa.pdf

Unwelcome Visitors in Schools Handbook

https://index.det.act.gov.au/admin/slim_unwelcomevisitors.html

Frequently Asked Questions

FAQ 1: What is a personal protection order?

A personal protection order aims to protect an individual from harassing or violent conduct and focuses on preventing harm to an individual and/or his or her property.

FAQ 2: What should schools do in relation to personal protection orders?

On occasions schools will be advised of protection orders involving a student or students, between students and between parents. Advice on specific situations should be sought from the relevant Director Schools and/or from Legal Liaison.

However, some general points are set out below:

The school is not a party to the order and has no responsibilities under a Protection Order to ensure that it is complied with. It is up to both parties to comply with the order. Given the secrecy provisions of the Act, a school may not necessarily know that orders are in place between students.

However, if a school is made aware of an order, a school would have the same responsibilities as usual to ensure that its students comply with the law. If a school believes an order is being contravened the school should draw this to the attention of the student. It is up to the parties to take action to report this or to seek a change in the order.

A school would need to facilitate an order for example placing one student in a different class.

FAQ 3: What is a workplace protection order?

These are different from personal protection orders in that a workplace protection order aims to protect a workplace, its employees and, if a school, its students from harm and violent or harassing behaviour. A workplace protection order can also prohibit the respondent from approaching within a certain distance of a workplace.

A Court can make an order where satisfied that the respondent has engaged in personal violence (as defined in the Act) in relation to the workplace.

The Department would not normally seek a workplace protection order against a current student of a school. In any case, specific provisions in the Act apply to such a situation.

FAQ 4: What should principals do when considering the need for a workplace protection order?

🔵 If the circumstances involve immediate danger to staff or students, the police should be called and relevant departmental procedures in emergency situations implemented.

In general, principals should consider utilising the provisions in the Unwelcome Visitors in Schools Handbook as first steps.

In some circumstances it may be appropriate to ask police to deal with the matter.

If principals believe a workplace protection order is necessary they should:

Contact their Director Schools to gain their approval to proceed. The relevant Director Schools should sign a document authorising the principal to apply for a workplace protection order (see authorisation template below).

Contact the Manager, Legal Liaison, for advice about the processes involved. (This can occur as a general enquiry also prior to step 1).

The principal and relevant staff will then be required to provide information, witness statements and affidavits as necessary and may need to attend court to give evidence.

The principal may also need to attend a conference before the Registrar of the Court as part of a process to resolve the matter before a final hearing occurs.

 Authorisation for application of workplace protection order

The following authorisation should be:

printed on departmental letterhead

signed by the relevant Director Schools and

forwarded to Manager, Legal Liaison, Governance and Legal Liaison, Level 6,
220 Northbourne Avenue.

[[Departmental letterhead]]

AUTHORISATION

I, [[insert name of Director]], Director, Schools [[insert Northern, Central or Southern]] Canberra, ACT Department of Education and Training, hereby authorise [[insert name of Principal]], Principal, [[insert name of school]], to apply for a workplace protection order against [[insert name of person]].

[[Signature]]

[[Name of Director]]

Director

Schools [[Region]]

[[Day]] [[Month]] [[Year]]

FAQ 5: What do applications for a workplace protection order involve?
To seek a workplace protection order an application is made to the Court, which may include affidavits, witness statements and attendance to give evidence.

The ACT Government Solicitor provides assistance to the Department where applications for workplace orders are sought.

Where can I get more information?

Unwelcome Visitors in Schools Handbook

https://index.det.act.gov.au/admin/slim_unwelcomevisitors.html

Manager, Governance and Legal Liaison at x59339 or by email to det.legal.liaison@act.gov.au.

QTON – CCTV

MR SMYTH: To ask the Minister for Education and Training

In relation to: Closed circuit TV

In 2008, which schools made a request for installation of closed circuit TVs?

MR BARR: The answer to the Member's question is as follows:–

Two requests were made in 2008 for closed circuit TV equipment. They were from the Alfred Deakin High School Board and a parent of a child attending Canberra High School.

QTON – Critical incident statistics

MR SMYTH: To ask the Minister for Education and Training

In relation to: Critical incidents statistics

1. What is the number of critical incidents at schools in 2008 and 2009?
2. Are there any criminal charges being put forward by the AFP or DPP as a result of activities at schools?

MR BARR: The answer to the Member's question is as follows:–

1. There were 51 critical incidents reported at schools in 2008 and seven critical incidents reported at schools in the first quarter of 2009.
2. The Department of Education and Training is not aware of any criminal charges being put forward by the AFP or DPP as a result of activities at schools.

QTON – Bullying trends

MR SMYTH: To ask the Minister for Education and Training

In relation to: Bullying trends

Can you update the committee on the effectiveness of the guidelines that are in place? In particular, has there been a trend down in the number of incidents of bullying in ACT public schools since the advent of your guidelines.

MR BARR: The answer to the Member's question is as follows:–

Schools report instances of bullying that pose an immediate threat to the safety of students and staff as critical incidents, as required by the *Providing Safe Schools P-12 Policy*.

Yes, between July 2007 and March 2009 there has generally been a downward trend in the number of critical incidents. In the July to September quarter in 2008 there were eight critical incidents compared to 27 in the same period in 2007. In the October to December quarter in 2008 there were 13 critical incidents compared to 18 in the same period in 2007.

QTON – Capital works rollovers

MR SMYTH: To ask the Minister for Education and Training

In relation to: Capital works rollovers

What are the reasons for each rollover item listed on page 374 of the 2009-10 ACT Budget Papers.

MR BARR: The answer to the Member's question is as follows:–

Please see table below:

Capital Works 2008-09	Rollover Amount \$'000	Reason for Rollover
Rollover - Schools Infrastructure Refurbishment	15 200	The more complex upgrade projects that occur in schools often require a significant component of the works to be undertaken during school holidays. Larger projects such as Lyneham Performing Arts, gymnasiums and older school upgrades require extensive design lead time reflecting an underspend in the early years with most of the project expenditure occurring later in the project timeframes. Early childhood schools construction experienced delays due to design issues and changing project scopes.
Rollover - West Belconnen School (Kingsford Smith)	201	This will allow the Department to attend to any defects and minor issues that arise during the first year of operation of the new school. The project was completed on time and under budget. The School opened as planned for the 2009 year with an enrolment of over 800 students.
Rollover - Health and Safety Improvements	200	Contractor availability to tender for works. In particular the installation of soft fall material under playground equipment. The project is on schedule for completion in the 2009-10 financial year.
Rollover - School Renewal Fund	600	Timing of appointment of project managers for the package of works. The project is on schedule for completion in the 2009-10 financial year.
Rollover - Building Service Improvements	300	The works associated with the heating, ventilation and cooling systems were held up due to the shortage of skilled designers to prepare the design documentation. The project is on schedule for completion in the 2009-10 financial year.
Rollover - Specialist	300	Timing of appointment of a project manager for the works.

Teaching Area Improvements		The project is on schedule for completion in the 2009-10 financial year.
Rollover - Student Amenity and Infrastructure	480	Timing of appointment of project managers for the package of works. The preparation of the design documentation of the administration area upgrade at one primary school also extended expected timeframes. The project is on schedule for completion in the 2009-10 financial year.
Rollover - Calwell High Performing Arts Centre	300	Timing of project approvals. The project is on schedule for completion in the 2009-10 financial year.

Rollover - Erindale Leisure Centre Redevelopment	700	The design documentation phase took longer to than expected to be completed. The project is on schedule for completion in the 2009-10 financial year.
Rollover - New Gungahlin College	29 198	1. The decision to integrate a public library with the college library required repositioning of the college within the precinct and extended timeframes of the functional design brief and design documentation. 2. Design work was suspended at the preliminary sketch plan stage until complexities on the design were resolved. 3 On schedule for completion of construction in December 2010 so the college can open as planned in 2011.
Rollover - New Tuggeranong P-10 School	1 200	Late appointment of the project manager in 2008. This was due to changes to the timing of demolition work. On schedule for completion of construction in December 2010 so the P-8 component of the school can open as planned in 2011.
Rollover - Older School Refurbishments	1 200	The design documentation phase took longer than expected. Some of the works were undertaken during school holidays. The project is on schedule for completion in the 2009-10 financial year.
Rollover - Harrison High School	270	Work on preliminary sketch plans was suspended for three weeks to ensure plans were within budget. The school is on schedule for completion of construction in December 2011 so the high school can open as planned in 2012.

Rollover - Older Preschool Refurbishments	200	Restricted access to the preschool sites so as to minimise the disruption to normal school sessions meant that a large portion of the work had to occur during school holidays. The project is on schedule for completion in the 2009-10 financial year.
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QTON – Restorative justice programs

MS HUNTER: To ask the Minister for Education and Training

In relation to: Restorative justice programs

How many schools are implementing restorative justice programs and practices?

MR BARR: The answer to the Member's question is as follows:–

1. The Department of Education and Training has a strong emphasis on embedding restorative practices as a whole school approach. Restorative practice is a positive approach to the development of school culture, strong relationships and appropriate behaviours. Determining the number of schools using the complete range of restorative practices is not possible as schools tend to blend their own practices with some of the restorative ones. Approximately 80% of ACT public schools have had some level of training and participation in restorative practice.

QTON – Disability buses

MR SMYTH: To ask the Minister for Education and Training

In relation to: Six disability buses

After the 2000 Paralympics, the Government purchased six disability buses that were available after the Olympic Games.

1. Are they still in service?
2. Have they been replaced?

MR BARR: The answer to the Member's question is as follows:–

1. All buses provided to the Department of Education and Training are still in service.
2. None of the buses have been replaced.

QTON – Productivity places program

MR SESELJA: asked the Minister for Education and Training

In relation to: Productivity Places Program

1. What flexibility does the Productivity Places Program have to provide Commonwealth funded training opportunities as part of the agreement between the states and territories?

MR BARR: The answer to the Member's question is as follows:–

1. The National Partnership for the Productivity Places Program includes training places for job seekers as well as existing workers. Job seeker training is fully funded by the Australian Government. Existing worker qualifications are jointly funded with 50% from the Australian Government, 40% from the ACT Government and 10% funding from Industry.

QTON – Productivity offsets

MR SMYTH: To ask the Minister for Education and Training

In relation to: Productivity offsets

What productivity offsets were achieved in the current teachers' enterprise bargaining agreement (EBA)?

MR BARR: The answer to the Member's question is as follows:–

The *ACT Department of Education and Training Teaching Staff Union Collective Agreement 2007-2009* (the agreement) increased face-to-face teaching hours for secondary classroom teachers from 18 hours per week to an average of 19 hours per week.

The increase provided productivity offsets of 60 teaching positions (25 in colleges and 35 in high schools) across the 25 secondary schools which amounted to \$17.6 million over four years from 2006-07 to 2009-10.

QTON – media and marketing

MR SESELJA: To ask the Minister for Education and Training

In relation to: Media and marketing annual budget

What is the year to date spend?

MR BARR: The answer to the Member's question is as follows:–

The year-to-date spend (end April 2009) for the Department's Media and Communications marketing annual budget 2008-09 is \$88 195.26.

QTON – Cost recovery for educational programs

MS LE COUTEUR: To ask the Minister for Education and Training

In relation to: Cost recovery for educational programs

Are there educational programs or facilities offered by the Department other than the Birrigai program, that are offered on a cost recovery basis?

MR BARR: The answer to the Member's question is as follows:-

Birrigai is not cost recovery. In 2007 50% and in 2008 53% of costs were met by income from the bookings/hire of facilities.

The ACT Department of Education and Training offers voluntary professional learning opportunities on a cost recovery basis.

The chief facility for the professional learning is the Centre for Teaching and Learning at Stirling. This facility operates on a cost recovery basis and charges an administrative fee to recuperate overhead costs and also charges for room hire for some professional learning programs. I am annually provided with the proposed Fees and Charges Schedule for the Centre to operate, which I sign off each financial year.

Other programs such as the Instrumental Music Program, the Green Machine and individual school excursion activities operate on a partial cost recovery basis.

QTON – school security

MR SMYTH: To ask the Minister for Education and Training

In relation to: School security

1. Could you provide three year Department trends and jurisdiction comparison for school vandalism?
2. What was the cost to the Department of school vandalism for 2008?
3. Could you provide a copy of departmental security policies?
4. Are copies of previous security audit reports available to the committee?

MR BARR: The answer to the Member's question is as follows:–

1. There has been a significant reduction of 28% in school vandalism costs over the past three years. Comparative vandalism cost data is not available from other Australian jurisdictions.
2. The total cost to the Department in 2008 was \$0.72m.
3. A copy of the Department's School Security Policy is at *Attachment A*.
4. Copies of previous school security audit reports are not available as they contain security in-confidence information which could compromise security at specific sites.

The Department defines vandalism for financial recording purposes as all costs associated with security breaches at a school, excluding asset replacement costs.

QTON – student outcomes

MR SMYTH: To ask the Minister for Education and Training

In relation to : Student outcomes

Could you provide the committee with a list of the range of factors that influence Student outcomes.

MR BARR: The answer to Mr Smyth's question is as follows:–

A range of academics have indicated the factors that influence students' educational outcomes.

The most significant factor being teacher quality.

Other factors include the school curriculum, school size, class size, building infrastructure, principal, peer effects, students' attitude to learning and the expectation and encouragement from parents and caregivers.

QTON – truancy

MR DOSZPOT: To ask the Minister for Education and Training

In relation to: Truancy

1. At what point is a parent informed and warned about repeated serial truancy?
2. What are the truancy statistics for primary, secondary and colleges?

MR BARR: The answer to the Member's question is as follows:–

1. Schools are required under the *Education Act 2004* to maintain an accurate register of enrolments and attendance. When a pattern of unexplained absence for a student is identified the school contacts the parents or carers to arrange meetings, discuss options and will advise parents/carers of their concerns and remind them of their responsibilities.

After 14 days of unexplained absences, the school will arrange a face to face meeting with the parents or carers to discuss the issue of non-attendance. If these follow up procedures are unsuccessful, the Schools Director is notified and further contact is made. If parents do not have a reasonable excuse for the non-attendance of their child/children they are liable under the *Education Act 2004*.

2. The Department does not maintain a central register of statistics on truancy.

QTON – school closure savings

MR DOSZPOT: To ask the Minister for Education and Training

In relation to: School closures savings

1. Can you tell us what total cost savings have been achieved out of school closures?
2. What were the cost savings for each individual school?

MR BARR: The answer to the Member's question is as follows:–

4. The total savings achieved and removed from the Department of Education and Training's budget, in relation to school closures, in 2008-09 were \$7 million. However, in line with the Towards 2020 program commitment to significantly increase funding to public schools, the Government has provided an additional \$22 million in recurrent initiatives in the 2008-09 financial year and has also committed to \$107 million in new capital projects.
5. The savings by school are detailed in table 1.

Table 1

School	2008-09 \$
Kambah High	1 192 531
Ginninderra District High	1 395 755
Cook Primary	321 491
Flynn Primary	525 818
Hall Primary	548 323
Higgins Primary	347 430
Holt Primary	340 452
Melrose Primary	436 720
Mt Neighbour Primary	388 275
Rivett Primary	480 830
Village Creek Primary	753 433
Tharwa Primary	348 892
Weston Primary	629 631
Preschools	270 898
Amalgamations	738 722
Less	
Kingsford Smith School ¹	(1 198 201)
Closure Costs ²	(480 000)
Total	7 041 000

Notes

1. Relates to funding provided for the new Kingsford Smith School.
2. Relates to costs associated with closing the schools such as on site security and transfer and disposal of assets.

QTON – survey and market research

MR BARR: The answer to the Member's question is as follows:–

The Department undertakes a range of survey and market research activities across both the schools and vocational education and training (VET) sectors.

Topic	Frequency
School Movement	Biannual, plus one-off focus groups with parents in 2008
Post Year 12 Destinations	Annual
Year 10/11 Transitions	Annual
System Satisfaction: parents	Annual, plus one-off focus groups on surveys with teachers and parents in 2008 and 2009
System Satisfaction: students	
System Satisfaction: staff	
Non-Government Client Satisfaction	Annual
Preschool Parent Satisfaction	Annual
Early Intervention Satisfaction	Annual
Special Education Satisfaction	Annual
Client Satisfaction Survey (Employers)	Annual
Client Satisfaction Survey (Australian Apprentices)	Annual
Client Satisfaction Survey (Registered Training Organisations)	Annual
School Improvement Framework review	One off focus groups with teachers and parents in 2008