



LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY
FOR THE AUSTRALIAN CAPITAL TERRITORY

SELECT COMMITTEE ON ESTIMATES 2013-2014

Jeremy Hanson CSC MLA (Chair), Chris Bourke MLA (Deputy Chair),
Mick Gentleman MLA, Brendan Smyth MLA

COMMUNITY AND INDUSTRY REPRESENTATIVE GROUPS SURVEY

SURVEY OF COMMUNITY AND INDUSTRY GROUPS ON THE ACT BUDGET 2013-2014 TO BE PRESENTED BY THE ACT GOVERNMENT ON 4 JUNE 2013

If you wish to respond to this survey, please return it to committees@parliament.act.gov.au by **9.30am Tuesday 11 June 2013**. If there is insufficient room for any of your comments, below, please feel free to append additional comments.

1. Full name of group/organisation:

ACT Gifted and Talented Local Support Group

2. Name of contact person for this survey and their telephone number and email address:

Elizabeth Singer email actgifted@gmail.com

3. Has your organisation/group developed a written analysis of the ACT Budget that it would like to submit to the Committee?

Yes (If yes, please email it to the Committee Secretariat with your completed survey.)

No

4. Please list, in order of priority, your three main areas of concern regarding the ACT Budget 2013-2014:

- a. Funding, to meet the unique needs of gifted students, does not exist as a line item in the Budget. They appear to have been forgotten. There is no funding for;
 - a. a line allowance for a gifted coordinator in every school, to provide knowledge, advice, mentoring, and professional development for the many ACT school teachers that have very little training in the different learning needs of gifted students.
 - b. a website, to allow families of gifted children to research school choices provided by ACT public schools,
 - c. training for members of ACT school Boards in meeting the needs of gifted children
- b. Lack of vision and knowledge by government to create "Early Entry to Kindergarten" grouping strategies students, who have been identified by experts as needing this strategy.

c. Impact of the loss of a possible 96 full-time staff positions from the Education and Training Directorate. Currently there is only 1 position in the Directorate's office for an expert in gifted education. The position is Curriculum Executive Officer, P-12, Gifted and Talented. This position has in recent years, provided advice and support for schools developing programs, arranged professional learning opportunities for teachers and assisted schools in developing ILPs for individual gifted students.

5. What are your views on the ACT Budget in relation to your priority areas?

Gifted students make up at least 10% of our school students. They are a heterogenous group that need identification, appropriate school/class grouping strategies, appropriate differentiation of curriculum and options for acceleration. They need provision in the budget like every other minority group.

It is very distressing for parents to read through a budget that contains funding lines for other major identifiable minority groups of students who have different learning needs in school and none for gifted and talented students. They have been forgotten.

Article 29 (Goals of education) from the Convention on the Rights of the Child states:
Children's education should develop each child's personality, talents and abilities to the fullest.

ACARA, in writing about student diversity states that;

" ACARA is committed to the development of a high-quality curriculum for all Australian students that promotes excellence and equity in education. All students are entitled to rigorous, relevant and engaging learning programs drawn from a challenging curriculum that addresses their individual learning needs...."

Gifted and Talented Students

Students who are gifted and talented have a right to rigorous, relevant and engaging learning activities drawn from a challenging curriculum that addresses their individual learning needs. Teachers can use the Australian Curriculum flexibly to meet the individual learning needs of gifted and talented students.

Teachers can enrich student learning by providing students with opportunities to work with learning area content in more depth or breadth; encompassing specific aspects of the general capabilities learning continua (for example, the higher order cognitive skills of the Critical and creative thinking capability); and/or focusing on cross-curriculum priorities. Teachers can also accelerate student learning by drawing on content from later levels in the Australian Curriculum and/or from local state and territory teaching and learning materials. "

How is the Education and Training Directorate going to provide this entitlement for gifted students in an open and verifiable manner without an appropriate budget allocation?

Further, a school board governs each individual public school in the ACT. Currently there is no training available for the members of these boards with respect to meeting the needs of gifted students.

Parents rely on members of a school board;

“to develop, maintain and review curriculum for the school (Source; ACT Education and Training Directorate “Functions of a School Board”)”

However, continuous inquires into gifted Education by the Australian Senate,2001 and by the Victorian Government, 2012continue to talk about myths and misconceptions in the community and teaching profession about the needs of gifted children.

Training should be provided.

6. Are there any other particular issues with the ACT Budget that you would like to bring to the Committee’s attention?

No

a. If yes, please comment/attach further details:

7. Did you provide a budget submission to the ACT Government?

Yes (go to question 8)

8. Do you think that the ACT Budget has addressed the issues raised in your submission?

No

a. If yes, please comment

9. Does your organisation/group wish to give its views in a Committee public hearing on Friday 14 June 2013, at the Legislative Assembly, London Circuit, Canberra.

Yes

If you indicate yes, and the Committee decides to invite you to appear at the hearing, the Committee Office will contact you by close of business Wednesday 12 June 2013 to confirm arrangements. Please note that the Committee may not be able to hear from all groups/organisations.

Thank you very much for contributing to the inquiry.
