

Budget 2020 – Schools

Schools Overview

NFAW welcomes the overall increase in school spending. However, given the Budget had a 'jobs' focus it is surprising that schooling and the development of digital skills for both students and staff was not given more attention. School retention rates and skills determine entry to STEM jobs in the future so long-term planning and a national strategy is imperative for all young Australians to take their place in the 21st century workforce. Teachers too need continued professional development in the STEM skills if they are to deliver high quality education for all students. In addition, NFAW notes that program spending through the Department of Education, Skills and Employment in 2020-21 is significantly less than the previous year, which is disappointing.

Schools - The Budget

The budget measures for Schooling fall into two categories: (1) funding provided to states and territories to support school education and (2) additional funding for specific Australian Government education programs and policies.

Funding provided to states and territories to support school education

In 2020-21, the Australian government will provide \$22.5 billion to support education services in the states and territories. This large majority of this funding is provided through the Quality Schools policy.

- In 2020-21, Quality Schools funding will amount to \$21.9 billion. Of this, government schools will receive \$9.1 billion and non-government schools will receive \$12.8 billion. Funding for non-government schools includes funding from the [Choice and Affordability Fund](#), announced in 2018, which provides a further \$1.2 billion to these schools between 2020-2029. Quality Schools funding is set to increase each year to 2023-24.
- Australian Government funding for non-government schools will grow faster (growing 25.6% to \$16.1 billion by 2023-24) than its funding for government schools (growing by 21.6 per cent to \$11 billion by 2023-24). This undermines the needs-based funding principle for school funding.
- An additional \$544.8 million will be provided via various National Partnership payments, including \$61.4 million for the National school chaplaincy program (2020-2021 Budget Paper No. 3, p. 31-32).

Table 2.4: Payments to support state education services

\$million	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24
Quality Schools funding	21,913.8	24,406.7	25,898.8	27,160.2
National Partnership payments				
MoneySmart teaching	1.3	-	-	-
National school chaplaincy program	61.4	61.4	61.4	61.4
Northern Territory Remote Aboriginal investment(a)				
Children and schooling component	30.2	29.3	-	-
School pathways program	1.2	1.2	-	-
Universal access to early childhood education	450.6	317.2	-	-
Total National Partnership payments	544.8	409.1	61.4	61.4
Total	22,458.6	24,815.8	25,960.3	27,221.6
<i>Memorandum item – payments for non-government schools included in payments above</i>				
Quality Schools funding	12,844.4	14,656.8	15,450.1	16,131.7

(a) Includes funding for non-government representative bodies.

Source: 2020-2021 Budget Paper No. 3, p 31, Table 2.4: Payments to support state education services.

Quality Schools funding

\$million	NSW	VIC	QLD	WA	SA	TAS	ACT	NT	Total
2020-21									
Government schools(a)	2,807.6	2,126.2	2,034.3	920.3	616.5	217.1	130.1	217.3	9,069.4
Non-government schools(b)(c)(d)	3,852.7	3,485.2	2,788.7	1,263.4	789.0	290.0	224.8	150.4	12,844.4
Total	6,660.4	5,611.5	4,823.0	2,183.7	1,405.5	507.1	354.9	367.7	21,913.8
2021-22									
Government schools(a)	2,993.3	2,307.0	2,168.7	1,016.6	671.4	226.0	142.6	224.2	9,749.9
Non-government schools(b)(c)(d)	4,464.0	3,803.5	3,118.7	1,486.0	1,043.5	312.3	236.5	192.3	14,656.8
Total	7,457.3	6,110.5	5,287.4	2,502.6	1,714.9	538.3	379.1	416.6	24,406.7
2022-23									
Government schools(a)	3,184.6	2,494.3	2,303.8	1,118.1	728.9	235.5	155.6	227.9	10,448.7
Non-government schools(b)(c)(d)	4,719.3	4,018.2	3,278.7	1,560.1	1,098.9	327.7	245.2	201.9	15,450.1
Total	7,904.0	6,512.6	5,582.4	2,678.2	1,827.8	563.2	400.8	429.8	25,898.8
2023-24									
Government schools(a)	3,348.9	2,652.7	2,419.4	1,196.5	769.6	243.8	166.5	231.1	11,028.5
Non-government schools(b)(c)(d)	4,933.6	4,205.2	3,417.7	1,624.3	1,146.5	341.0	253.7	209.7	16,131.7
Total	8,282.5	6,857.9	5,837.1	2,820.8	1,916.1	584.8	420.2	440.7	27,160.2

(a) Includes funding for the Northern Territory to accelerate evidence-based reforms to improve outcomes for vulnerable students and includes Literacy Support for Tasmanian Students.

(b) Includes capital funding.

(c) Includes prescribed circumstances funding.

(d) Includes funding for non-government school reform support and the Choice and Affordability Fund.

Source: 2020-2021 Budget Paper No. 3, p 32, Quality Schools Funding.

Additional Australian Government funding to support school programs and policies

The 2020-21 budget allocation for the Department of Education, Skills and Employment's Early Learning and Schools Support (Program 1.5) is \$128 million, down 25 per cent from an estimated \$172 million in 2019-20. This reduction in funding is disappointing, given the challenges schools and school children face particularly as a result of the current pandemic.

Program expenses 1.5 Early Learning and Schools Support

	2019-20 Estimated actual \$'000	2020-21 Budget \$'000	2021-22 Forward estimate \$'000	2022-23 Forward estimate \$'000	2023-24 Forward estimate \$'000
Annual administered expenses:					
Ordinary annual services (Appropriation Bill No. 1)					
Australian Early Development Census	4,393	12,196	12,315	4,493	12,508
Boost the Learning for Life Program	21,400	-	-	-	-
Early Learning Languages Australia (ELLA)	5,021	1,470	-	-	-
English Language Learning for Indigenous Children (ELLIC)	2,030	-	1,084	-	-
Flexible Literacy Learning for Remote Primary Schools	1,740	750	-	-	-
Grants and Awards	1,339	1,393	1,402	1,422	1,443
Helping Children with Autism	5,982	6,072	6,115	6,200	6,293
High Achieving Teachers Program and Future Leaders Program	6,000	9,650	15,900	2,250	-
Inspiring all Australians in Digital Literacy and STEM	16,371	-	-	-	-
Mental Health Support for School Communities and Early Childhood Services	4,000	-	-	-	-
National Assessment Reform	2,200	2,200	2,200	2,200	2,200
National Schools Reform	17,233	22,279	25,859	9,841	9,840
National School Resourcing Board	512	1,374	958	968	982
Quality Outcomes	37,961	35,842	34,466	33,809	33,807
Quality Schools Communication	(31)	-	-	-	-
Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM)	625	617	550	550	700
Students Support Package	-	15,345	24,060	41,336	43,264
Teach for Australia	2,145	2,145	-	-	-
Universal Access	1,797	5,080	2,050	-	-
Delivering Respect Matters	363	500	500	-	-
Life Education - Being Healthy, Being Active	3,100	1,200	700	-	-
Attendance Strategies For Early Learning	642	275	-	-	-
Mathematics Massive Open Online Courses	1,046	1,732	2,825	2,824	-
Rural Inspire Initiative	500	1,000	500	-	-
National Phonics Check	2,200	4,300	4,300	-	-
Respectful Interfaith School Education	500	1,000	1,000	500	-
Other services (Appropriation Bill No. 2)					
Literacy Support for Tasmanian Students	2,000	2,000	2,000	2,000	2,000
Local School Community Fund	30,200	-	-	-	-
Special account expenses:					
SOETM - Students with Disabilities	203	-	-	-	-
SOETM - NSRA State Contributions	416	-	-	-	-
Total program expenses	171,888	128,420	138,784	108,393	113,037

Source: 2020-2021 Department of Education, Skills and Employment Budget Statements, p 42.

The 2020-2021 funding includes a package of measures for disadvantaged students. While these are worthy in themselves, they are not part of an overall strategic plan and the government remains dependent on NGOs to deliver for them. It is also important to note that the package to be delivered by the Clontarf Foundation is only for young men. NFAW would argue that young Aboriginal and Torres Strait islander women are also in need of specific attention to enhance their educational opportunities. Overall the money is small to address serious disadvantage not only in remote communities but also across Australia.

- \$39.8 million over four years from 2020-21 for the Clontarf Foundation to expand and extend its existing program, for young Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander men
- \$38.2 million over four years from 2020-21 for The Smith Family to support around 76,000 disadvantaged young Australians
- \$5.8 million over four years from 2020-21 for Good to Great Schools Australia to develop a pilot program to support up to 10 remote and very remote schools to expand their Direct Instruction literacy program to include numeracy and science
- \$3.0 million over four years from 2020-21 to the Islamic Museum of Australia to develop educational resources and online learning platforms to support social cohesion, multiculturalism and community harmony
- \$3.0 million over four years from 2020-21 to the Anti-Defamation Commission to create a Holocaust education platform to support inclusiveness, civility and respect.

Source: Budget Paper 2, pp. 81-82.

The second package of measures is to address the issue of STEM skills for students and teachers. (See the STEM paper for a discussion of Women in STEM in higher education and VET). The measures here are inadequate, not only in quantum but with no national plan. The organisations chosen to deliver the packages are only able to reach a small number of Australians even if they have five years. While the government has acknowledged the need to upskill teachers the resources offered mean it will be only limited numbers. If the issue of STEM skills in schools is to be addressed, it needs a fully funded national plan to which resources are allocated and the government maintains a commitment to such a priority.

The government itself has put aside \$25 million for Covid-related emergencies but there is no indication of how or where this money will be spent.

- \$25.0 million over five years from 2020-21 to establish a fund to enable the Government to respond flexibly and quickly to emerging priorities and educational challenges presented by COVID-19.
- \$9.6 million over five years from 2020-21 to the Australian Academy of Science to deliver curriculum resources and professional learning for Foundation to Year 10 teachers
- \$5.7 million over five years from 2020-21 to expand the *Early Learning STEM Australia* program to Foundation to Year 2 classrooms
- \$4.8 million over five years from 2020-21 to enhance teaching practices through partnering teachers with STEM professionals

- \$4.4 million over five years from 2020-21 to support approximately 120,000 disadvantaged 3 to 5-year olds through The Smith Family’s *Let’s Count* program
- \$2.8 million over five years from 2020-21 to Froebel Australia to build the skills of early learning educators to deliver STEM learning in preschool and childcare settings.

Source: Budget Paper 2, p. 82.

Students Support Package

Payments (\$m)	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24
Department of Education, Skills and Employment	16.6	25.0	42.0	44.0
National Indigenous Australians Agency	1.3	3.8	2.6	-
Total — Payments	17.9	28.8	44.6	44.0

Source: Budget Paper 2, p. 81, Students Support Package.

Gender implications

Why is this an issue for women?

Women make up 71.9 per cent of the workforce in the schooling sector (ABS 2019). Any changes, such as Covid, has a significant impact on their working conditions and their ability to deliver high quality education. The demands of the digital age and new skills directly affects them and their workplace. Hence, they need support to ensure they are properly trained and skilled in the changing demands of education.

Women are still the major care givers in the family, spending 8 hours 33 minutes compared to the 3 hours 55 minutes that men spend caring for children under 14 years of age (ABS 2019). Hence, inadequate and short-term funding has serious consequences for Australian women teachers in relation to accessing professional development and work in the medium term. This directly impacts on their ability to access professional development and respond to changing needs of the school environment.

What are the 2020 Budget impacts on women?

The 2020 Budget has some serious implications for women, not just for those working in the schooling sector but also for women caring for and educating their own children. The lack of a national plan and the short-term nature of funding means women have difficulty planning and accessing what limited professional development is available.

While the enhancement of STEM skills remains an objective of the Budget there is a need for a national strategy to be developed which ensures the majority of the workforce, women , are involved and able to participate fully , not only in the development of such a plan but to bring their expertise from the classroom to enrich and enhance the teaching of STEM skills during the years of schooling. This would provide a solid basis on which to prepare the Australian community for all the challenges of the 21st century.

Recommendations

1. NFAW recommends that the STEM skills of all Australians can only be enhanced by a national policy which is fully funded and supported by the government.
2. NFAW recommends that young women be included in the work of the Clontarf Foundation or some similar Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisation to enhance their educational opportunities.
3. NFAW recommends that all classroom teachers have an opportunity to enhance their knowledge of digital technologies to enhance the quality of their teaching.

References

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