



Ministerial Media Statements

[Media Statements](#) ▶ [Statement Details](#)



Hon Peter Collier BA DipEd
MLC

School reforms to deliver equity and efficiency

Tuesday, 20 August 2013

- **Overhaul of WA public school funding to lead education reform**
- **Funding allocated student by student, based on individual needs**
- **Central and regional office positions and education assistant reductions where positions can no longer be justified**

The State Government has announced a major overhaul of public school funding as part of a drive to deliver a fairer system and improve efficiency.

The overhaul means that school funding will be allocated on a child by child basis, based on individual needs, rather than by school types or programs.

Under the new student-centred funding model, schools will receive a base amount for each student, with additional funding to help children with extra needs.

Education Minister Peter Collier said work would begin immediately to establish the new funding model in time for the 2015 school year.

The new model goes hand-in-hand with reforms to improve the efficiency of WA's public education system, which include staff reductions where positions could no longer be justified.

Mr Collier said overall teacher numbers would be maintained in 2014.

However, there would be reductions in central and regional office positions and education assistants to ensure our children received the best value from WA's \$4.4billion education budget - an increase of 6.3 per cent and \$260million for 2013-14.

"This is about building a better education system for our children and ensuring that we have resources where they are most needed - not just where they have always been," the Minister said.

"One out of every four dollars of the State Budget goes to educating our children - our responsibility is to ensure that the money is used effectively.

"WA's public schools are now responsible for the education of more than 276,000 students across the State. The education system is growing rapidly and facing rising costs, largely associated with record student growth.

"We are focused on implementing reform that makes our education system more effective. For example, since 2004-05 the number of education assistants has risen 73 per cent - up from 4,455 to 7,709 - but they haven't always been allocated effectively.

"We now have a historical distortion whereby some education assistants have remained at a school even though circumstances at the school have changed and they are no longer required. For example, there are situations where the number of students requiring education assistance at a school have declined, but the number of education assistants have remained the same.

"All children with a genuine need for an assistant will continue to have access to one."

Mr Collier said education assistants provided solely for students with anaphylaxis were no longer required because an online allergy training and support program was now in place for school staff. Schools would continue to be funded to supply auto-injector pens.

"We are the only State that currently allocates education assistants for young students with anaphylaxis. With the move to online training and support we have recognised that this is now unnecessary," he said.

The Minister said the changes would complement the transition to student-centred funding.

“Under the new model, funding will centre on the student, ensuring those who need extra help, receive it, regardless of what school they attend or the year they are in,” he said.

“Funding will be much better targeted. For example, under the new model, students with low socio-economic backgrounds will be funded based on their individual circumstances, rather than a school being assigned a socio-economic index.”

Mr Collier said the new funding model replaced the system that a recently released University of Melbourne review found to be complex, confusing and well past its use-by date.

The existing system allocates resources through numerous funding lines using complex formula, weightings and loadings which, according to the review, can distort resource levels and enhance disparities in schools.

“As a consequence, our secondary schools are not as efficient as our primary schools. We are left with situations where we have good teachers in front of classes of just six students - that’s neither efficient nor sustainable,” the Minister said.

“We are committed to retaining class sizes within the range agreed as part of industrial agreements and to delivering the best school system possible for our children.

“This Liberal National Government has demonstrated its commitment to investing in education, with spending growing by 54 per cent, from \$2.8billion in 2007-08 to \$4.4billion in the 2013-14 budget.”

Mr Collier said the new model was consistent with the Government’s successful Independent Public Schools initiative.

Fact File

- **New student centred funding model to see a funding per student plus funds allocated for Aboriginal students, students facing social disadvantage, students with English as a second language and students with disability. Funds also available for students in small schools and isolated schools**
- **WA public schools are experiencing a record number of enrolments, with numbers up 3% compared to last year. 276,275 students from kindergarten to year 12 are enrolled in public schools this year**

Minister’s office - 6552 6300