

COUNTRY RESIDENTIAL FACILITIES

362. Hon RICK MAZZA to the Minister for Education and Training:

I refer to the plight of some operators of country residential facilities for isolated children where some parents or guardians failed to pass on the Centrelink payment they receive for the provision of board and lodgings to the provider.

- (1) Is the minister aware of the increasing incidences of non-payment of this allowance to residential facility managers?
- (2) Is the minister aware of the impact on residential facility managers and the student when the allowance is not paid by the parent or guardian?
- (3) Has the minister raised the issue with the federal Minister for Education and Training or the federal Minister for Human Services who are responsible for the Centrelink payments?
- (4) If yes to (3), what was the response?
- (5) Is the minister aware that New Zealand manages the same issue through direct payments from the education department to the residential facilities?
- (6) If yes to (5), has the minister flagged this with her federal counterparts as a solution to the problem?

Hon SUE ELLERY replied:

I have signed off on the answer to the question but it is not in my file. I am hoping that the person who is now watching me stand and say this will get me a copy so I can give the member the answer before the end of question time.