

Getting the balance right: Education savings measures reversed

Thursday, 11 January 2018

- Schools of the Air will remain open in regional Western Australia
- Funding for the Gifted and Talented Program in schools will be maintained
- Intake into the Level 3 classroom teacher program will not be put on hold
- Accommodation at Northam Residential College will remain open

After serious consideration, the McGowan Government has decided to reverse a number of education savings measures in an effort to strike the right balance between responsible financial management and quality education services.

Last month, in order to deliver Budget savings quickly and fix the mess left behind by the Liberals and Nationals, a range of measures were announced to be implemented by the Department of Education from 2019.

All measures were estimated to provide a total of \$64 million in savings across the forward estimates. With the decision to reverse some of those measures, the total saving to the Budget is now estimated to be about \$41 million.

The 'Follow the Dream' program will also continue to receive Department of Education funding.

The McGowan Government is committed to delivering responsible financial management to get the State's finances back on track and will continue to find savings across government.

Comments attributed to Premier Mark McGowan:

"The former Liberal National Government wrecked the finances with their out of control spending and irresponsible budget management.

"Since taking office, we have announced a number of saving and revenue measures to ensure the burden of budget repair is shared across the community.

"Education is pulling its weight, but upon reflection we realise we took it too far when it comes to education services and we now need to get the balance right.

"As Premier, I will always lead a Government that governs in the interests of all Western Australians.

"We won't take our eye off the ball when it comes to the finances, but we won't compromise the quality of education in the process."

Comments attributed to Education and Training Minister Sue Ellery:

"Finding savings in education is extremely difficult and in an effort to help fix the finances, we made a rushed decision that left many people feeling anxious and distressed.

"We've listened to the concerns raised and took time to further analyse the impact of the savings measures announced both from a financial and education perspective.

"These changes announced today strike the right balance and ensure that every child receives a high-quality education, no matter where they live.

"I won't shy away from finding savings and helping contribute to budget repair."

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Education and Training Minister's office - 6552 5700