

SPECIAL NEEDS ASSISTANTS IN SCHOOLS — FUNDING

423. Mr J.N. Hyde to the Minister for Education

- (1) What is the increase or decrease in funding for Special Needs Assistants in:
 - (a) primary schools; and
 - (b) secondary schools,between 1999-2000 and 2008-2009?
- (2) Will the programme for Special Needs Assistants be subject to the Liberal Government's 3 per cent efficiency dividend?
 - (a) If yes, how can Special Needs Assistants be less costly without cutting care time for children with disabilities?
- (3) Will the Minister demand an increase in funding for the Special Needs Assistants programme in Western Australian Government schools in the coming State Budget?
 - (a) If yes, what increase is the Minister seeking from Treasury?
 - (b) If no, will there be less demand for the services of Special Needs Assistants?
- (4) Is the Minister's Department currently meeting all the demand for the services of Special Needs Assistants in Western Australian schools; and
 - (a) if not, why not?

Dr E. CONSTABLE replied:

- (1) (a)- (b) Data on Special Needs Assistants is not collected in terms of primary and secondary schools and is recorded in terms of school year and not financial year. There has been an overall increase in the number of Special Needs Assistants as follows:

School Year	No. of Special Needs Assistants
1999	1155
2000	1385

School Year	No. of Special Needs Assistants
2008	2673
2009 (to date)	2988
- (2) No.
 - (a) Not applicable
- (3) Education Assistant (Special Needs) FTE will continue to be provided on the basis of need.
 - (a)-(b) Not applicable
- (4) All students eligible within the eight indicated disability groups receive funding on the basis of demonstrated educational need.
 - (a) Not applicable