

AUSTRALIAN CURRICULUM — SPECIALIST TEACHERS AND FACILITIES

859. Hon MATT BENSON-LIDHOLM to the minister representing the Minister for Education:

- (1) What aspects of the Australian curriculum for year 7s require specialist teachers or facilities that are currently not present at primary schools but are present in secondary schools?
- (2) Has the Department of Education estimated capital and operating costs associated with delivering the aspects of the Australian curriculum detailed in (1) for year 7s in primary schools; and, if so, what are those estimated costs?
- (3) What other options have been explored by the Department of Education for delivery of the aspects of the Australian curriculum listed in (1) to year 7s in primary school?

Hon PETER COLLIER replied:

I thank the honourable member for some notice of the question.

- (1) Some examples of areas in the Australian curriculum that require specialist teachers or facilities are as follows. The chemical sciences year 7 content requires teachers to have a range of equipment, including specialised glassware and ready access to heating and water that is not always accessible in a primary school setting. Year 7 mathematics content requires specialist understanding of how to develop the foundations of algebraic thinking and skills. Year 7 mathematics content relating to data representation and interpretation requires the use of a range of technology—for example, graphics calculators, which are readily available in secondary schools. Generalist primary teachers will not all be familiar with or competent in incorporating this technology into learning activities. Year 7 generalist teachers do not have the specialist knowledge to teach the skills of document studies in the history curriculum.
- (2) This matter is the subject of a cabinet submission which is now within the cabinet process. Due to the confidential nature of this process, this information cannot be disclosed.
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