



11 JUL 2016

Dr Liz Gordon
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Dear Dr Gordon

Thank you for your email via the fyi website of 29 May 2016 to the Ministry of Education requesting information on the Budget 2016 allocation to long-term welfare-dependent families.

Your request has been considered under the Official Information Act 1982 (the Act).

1. *What data matching approach will be used to discover how many students from long term welfare dependent families attend each school, so that the funding can be allocated?*

This initiative is not about targeting funding for particular students, it is about making sure school funding goes to where the needs are greatest. The Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Social Development will undertake a data matching process, using the probabilistic data matching statistical methodology, to identify students who meet the criteria for funding. This will be done in a way that anonymises the information so that neither the Ministry of Education nor schools will know the identities of the students who are generating the additional funding. Schools are expected to identify for themselves which students are at risk of educational under-achievement, and use the additional funding alongside other funding to provide these students with the support they require to learn and achieve.

2. *How is 'long-term welfare-dependent families' defined?*

A student's school will qualify for the additional targeted operational grant funding if either of the following conditions is met:

the student was included as a 'dependant' of a main benefit holder for 75% or more of the first 5 years of the student's life,

OR,

the student was included as a 'dependant' of a main benefit holder for 75% or more of the most recent 5 years of the student's life.

3. *What legal basis allows for data-matching for such a purpose?*

The Privacy Act allows for the use of personal information data by an agency, under Information Privacy Principles section 6, principles 10(f) and 11(h) of the Privacy Act 1993, if the information:

i) is to be used in a form in which the individual concerned is not identified; or

ii) is to be used for statistical or research purposes and will not be published in a form that could reasonably be expected to identify the individual concerned.

The Ministry of Social Development and the Ministry of Education signed a Memorandum of Understanding for a similar data matching exercise which was used for research purposes to test the feasibility of this approach and model likely impacts. Before any further data matching occurs, both the Ministry of Social Development and the Ministry of Education will sign a Memorandum of Understanding which outlines the process to be undertaken and what the data will be used for.

4. *What is the per capita sum that is estimated to be provided for each eligible child per annum?*

The total funding allocated is \$43.2 million. The exact number of long-term welfare-dependent students will be calculated each year but it is expected to be approximately 150,000 children; this works out at approximately \$80 per eligible child per school year.

5. *We gather from the Minister's statement that the \$42.1 million (as it shows later in the Minister's speech) includes: "\$15.3 million for an extra 1,250 students to access in-class support."*

In addition to the above \$43.2 million allocated specifically for an 'Operational Grant Increase to Schools to Support Children Most at Risk of Not Achieving', there is a \$42.1 million increase allocated for Special Education. This includes: \$15.3 million for an extra 1,250 students to access In-class Support; \$1.45 million for Increasing Access to Assistive Technology; \$16.5 million for meeting increasing demand for the Ongoing Resourcing Scheme; and, \$8.9 million for increased access to an Intensive Wraparound Service.

For more information see:

<http://www.education.govt.nz/ministry-of-education/budgets/budget-2016/key-figures-for-budget-2016/>

6. *This leaves a net \$26.8 million for allocation to the long-term welfare-dependent families. Is that figure roughly correct?*

No, as noted above, the full \$43.2 million is available for allocation.

7. *This then indicates an annual sum of around \$6.7 million available for allocation. Is that figure roughly correct?*

No, as noted above, it is approximately \$12.4 million per school year.

8. *This appears to translate to an annual sum per long-term welfare-dependent student of just under \$45. Is that figure roughly correct?*

No, as noted above, it is approximately \$80 per student, per year.

9. *What is the total estimated cost to the Ministry of Education in developing, testing, implementing and administering this scheme over the four years of its life?*

No additional funding has been allocated for the development, testing, implementation and administration of this scheme. Any costs will be met within existing Ministry resourcing.

Thank you again for your email. You have the right to ask an Ombudsman to review this response. You can do this by writing to info@ombudsman.parliament.nz or Office of the Ombudsman, PO Box 10152, Wellington 6143.

Yours sincerely



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