

## Western Australian government (public) schools

### Jurisdiction-specific comments

- The finance data includes income and expenditure for Western Australian public school students who are in kindergarten (the schooling two years prior to Year 1), pre-primary and Year 1 to Year 12. Kindergarten students attend part-time and are considered between 0.42 and 0.58 of a full time equivalent (depending on attendance at a 12 or 15 hour program).
- The Western Australian *My School* finance data shows significantly higher levels of income than published by schools in their annual reports, school plans and finance reports to the school councils or school boards. This is because these Western Australian public school-based reports only report actual funds received by the school, and not expenditure (including salaries) managed and paid by the Department of Education on behalf of the school. These school-based reports also include more detailed school expenditure beyond the capital expenditure reported on *My School*.
- The *My School* finance data does not always align with other published information, such as Western Australian State budget papers and the Department of Education's annual report. This is because *My School* finance data is presented on a calendar year basis, rather than a financial year; and the reporting methodology is different in parts, such as the exclusion of depreciation expenses.
- The Western Australian public school system serves the largest area in Australia and, excluding the Northern Territory, has the highest level of remote population distribution. Not only does this mean providing access to education in some of the most remote locations, but the Department's student support services provide services across a vast area.

### Net recurrent income

- The amounts reported as income represent funding received by schools from government, parent and private sources. This includes funds managed centrally by the Western Australian Department of Education to service students in schools. It does not include any amounts held in school bank accounts.
- A very small part of the total income reported against each school is actual cash received by the school. This is because the majority of funding from government is held centrally to pay for school operations and support.

### Net recurrent income - Australian Government and State Government recurrent funding

- For Western Australian public schools, the Australian Government and state government recurrent funding comprises: funds directly available to schools such as the school grant; in addition to funds held centrally to pay for school operations and support including staff salaries, telephones, internet connections, postage, curriculum materials, school maintenance, staff housing and transport subsidies.

- Centrally held funds can be attributed directly to individual schools (e.g. salaries), with the exception of school support costs which are system-wide in nature. These indirect school support costs have been distributed to all public schools by taking into account the purpose of the funding. Indirect costs are distributed on a per school, per staff or per student basis.

For example:

- Costs of running a Regional Education Office were only allocated to schools in that region.
- Costs of running Personnel and Payroll were shared across staff in every school.
- In some cases, a school may act as a co-ordinator for services provided across several schools. Funding associated with these co-ordinated services may be reported against the school that receives the funds, and/or employs the staff, making their income appear higher and others lower.
- Expenditure on employing staff represents approximately 80 per cent of recurrent government income for Western Australian public schools. Since teacher salaries are the largest driver of school income, student/teacher ratios have a significant impact on recurrent income per student. Small or specialist schools, with low student numbers and high student/teacher ratios, have a high recurrent income per student.

#### **Net recurrent income – fees, charges and parent contributions**

- The data for public school generated income from fees, charges and parent contributions is sourced from each Western Australian public school's local finance system.
- For Western Australian public schools, fees, charges and parent contributions includes voluntary contributions, course charges, overseas student fees and parent payments for excursions and camps. Boarding fee revenue for students at agricultural residential colleges is excluded under the *My School* reporting methodology.

#### **Net recurrent income – other private sources**

- Data for income from other private sources generated by schools is also sourced from each Western Australian public school's local finance system.
- For Western Australian public schools, income from other private sources includes bank interest, fundraising, sponsorships, donations from Parents and Citizens' Associations (P&Cs) and revenue from trading activities such as school farms, bookshops and canteens. Where P&Cs pay directly for goods and services, these items have not been reported. Funds received and held by organisations such as the P&C have been excluded except where a cash transfer to the school has occurred. Other 'in kind' donations of goods and services are also excluded.

### **Net recurrent income deductions**

- Funds received by Western Australian public schools from parents and the community specifically for asset purchases are deducted from the school's gross recurrent income. This data is sourced from each Western Australian public school's local finance system.

### **Capital expenditure 2014**

- For Western Australian public schools, capital works expenditure is the total cost of buildings that may have been constructed over several years, but are reported in the year the building was completed. Only buildings completed in 2014 are reported.
- Assets purchased by individual schools (that is, goods above the value of \$5,000 and software valued above \$50,000) have been included as capital expenditure. Library book purchases are also included as these are considered to be part of an asset collection greater than \$5,000. Asset purchases are sourced from each public school's local finance system.
- As Western Australian public schools are not permitted to enter into contracts to borrow money, 'New school loans' are nil for all schools.
- Separately reported are the assets purchased in 2014 by individual schools using funding from parents and the community that was specifically for asset purchases.