$1.7 billion will be spent on equity and special education programs in schools as part of the 2010-2011 State Budget.

This includes:

- $1.150 billion to assist students with special learning needs,
- $210 million to socio-economically disadvantaged school communities,
- $133 million for English as a Second Language (ESL) programs to support English as a Second Language students in government schools and Intensive English Centres through the provision of specialist English as a Second Language teachers,
- more than $107 million in recurrent funding for Rural Education Programs
- over $71 million for Indigenous students.

Special Education Programs

The Department;

- Supports more than 15,000 students with confirmed disabilities in regular schools through the Integration, Funding Support Program with the provision of additional teacher and school learning support officer positions
- Provides for more than 800 itinerant and outreach teachers to support students with confirmed disabilities or behaviour disorders in regular and special schools
- Provides for more than 1,370 teaching positions to support students with learning difficulties through the Learning Assistance Program
- Provides for a school learning support officer in every special class. More than 2,100 school learning support officer positions support special classes in regular and special schools
- Provides special transport for approximately 10,500 students with disabilities (enrolled in government and non-government schools) to travel to and from school each day.

Programs to Support Socio-Economically Disadvantaged Students

Low SES School Communities National Partnership

The NSW Government is working closely with the Commonwealth in achieving the Council of Australian Governments National Education Agreement through National Partnerships.

In NSW, there will be 552 government schools participating in the Low Socio-Economic Status School Communities National Partnership as part of a staggered implementation (4 rounds) between 2009 and 2012. Schools involved in this Partnership will each participate for four years, with the first round of schools in New England and Western NSW regions having commenced in Term 3, 2009. A total of $669.7 million, including Commonwealth and State...
Equity and Special Education Programs in Schools

Priority Schools Programs

Priority Schools Programs comprise the Priority Schools Funding Program (PSFP) and the Priority Action Schools Program (PAS).

The purpose of the Priority Schools Programs is to improve literacy, numeracy and engagement outcomes of socio-economically disadvantaged students as the key to reducing, with a view to eliminating, the achievement gap.

Priority Schools Funding Program (PSFP)

The Priority Schools Funding Program provides additional assistance to school communities to reduce the achievement gap for students in schools with high concentrations of students from low socio-economic status backgrounds.

A survey was conducted in Term 1 2008 to determine the list of Priority Schools to receive resources within the 2009-2012 funding quadrennium. 280 teaching positions and a total of $21.5 million in direct grants is available for distribution to 581 Priority Schools each year until 2012.

The Priority Schools Funding Program supports over 148,000 students in 581 schools (421 primary schools, 90 high schools, 31 central schools and 39 schools for specific purposes).

Priority Action Schools Program (PAS)

Recurrent funding of over $22.7 million has been committed for the continuation of Priority Action Schools Program. This includes an additional allocation of $6.7 million announced in the NSW mini-budget in November 2008.

A total of 101 Priority Schools will receive Priority Action Schools program funding until 2012.

Schools work to improve teaching and learning, developing specialised teaching programs and new approaches to staffing and resource allocation.

Participating schools receive between $120,000 and $360,000 in addition to the resources they receive within the Priority Schools Funding Program.

All Priority Action Schools also receive funding through the Low Socio-Economic Status School Communities National Partnership.

More on PSFP and PAS schools can be found by following the link below; http://www.lowsesschools.nsw.edu.au/

Country Areas Program (CAP)

The Country Areas Program addresses the disadvantage associated with geographic isolation. Individual schools and their communities are encouraged to develop initiatives to address specific issues faced by their students.

The Country Areas Program expends over $7.5 million to support in excess of 26,000 students in 221 public schools and twenty five Catholic schools which service the most geographically isolated areas of NSW.

More information can be found by following the link below: http://www.cap.nsw.edu.au/

Distance Education Program

In 2010/11 $68 million will be provided to support students enrolled in distance education.
Distance Education is provided from sixteen locations in NSW. Full-time students who are isolated or whose special circumstances prevent them from attending school on a regular basis can enrol in distance education. Single subject (Years 9-12) programs are also provided to specific categories of students wishing to study a course not offered in their home school.

Distance Education uses a range of technologies and traditional teaching mediums to engage students in blended learning based on their local context.

**Access Program**

More than $400,000 supports the Access Program to assist the studies of senior students in remote rural schools.

The program links 22 remote rural schools, arranged in five clusters of four to seven schools, using a range of collaborative technologies to allow small cohorts of Years 11 and 12 students to work together in real-time classes.

The program provides senior students with the opportunity to continue their studies to Year 12 at their local school without the need to travel away from the support of their community.

Different subjects are taught from different schools, to a class of students aggregated from all cluster schools.

**Rural Education Scholarships and Allowances**

Rural Education scholarships and allowances to the value of $1 million are provide improved access to education for isolated students.

The Living Away from Home Allowance scheme provides financial assistance to isolated families who find it necessary to board their secondary school-aged children away from home. The Allowance for each eligible student in 2010 is $1,253 with a supplementary allowance for Years 11 and 12 of $294.

**The Boarding Scholarships for Isolated Students scheme (BSIS)** replaces the Agricultural High School Boarder Scholarship and the Access Scholarships for Isolated Students.

These scholarships are awarded on a competitive basis and are available to eligible families who meet strict criteria related to isolation and economic circumstances and are valued at $4,186 each in 2010.

More information can be found by following the link below:


**English as a Second Language**

In 2010/2011, $133 million will be provided for English as a Second Language programs in government schools and Intensive English Centres.

This funding supports:

- The *English as a Second Language New Arrivals Program* which provides newly arrived migrant students with on-arrival intensive English instruction.

- The *English as a Second Language Targeted Support Program* which supports students’ English language development and facilitates their participation in mainstream education activities following the initial support provided under the New Arrivals Program.

In 2010, there are 1,274 specialist English as a Second Language teacher positions (full time equivalent). These include:

- 896 teacher positions in schools
- another 128 teacher positions to provide on-arrival English language tuition to new arrivals

These teachers are helping some 85,000 English as a Second Language students, including over 7,500 new arrivals, to develop their English language and literacy skills.