

# Rural and Remote Education

Quality learning for every community

## Current State

- Government funding for community preschools has not been well targeted to children who need it most.
- Funding to schools has not been transparent, nor responsive to changing school and student needs.
- Ways of providing equity funding to schools have been complex, short-term and not based on individual student needs.
- Schools in some communities work in isolation from other schools.
- The Department's state-wide 'one size fits all' approach to all policies and processes restricts locally developed solutions.

## Future State

- A more equitable, needs-based funding model for community preschools.
- Rural and remote schools receive increased funding delivered through a fairer and more transparent Resource Allocation Model (RAM).
- Rural and remote schools receive equity funding through the RAM that reflects the number and percentage of Aboriginal students in the school and the socio-economic background of parents.
- Rural and remote schools are supported to establish education networks that bring together resources across a number of schools to meet local needs.
- Principals are given more authority under *Local Schools, Local Decisions*.

### 2014

### 2015

### 2016

### 2017

New needs-based community preschool funding model commences.

Implementation of the Resource Allocation Model (RAM) commences.

New community preschool funding model fully implemented.

All schools receive their full budget allocation through the RAM.

*Local Schools, Local Decisions* provides greater authority to principals and supports locally developed solutions.

Rural and remote schools supported to develop an education strategy that meets their community's needs.

Education networks established in rural and remote areas.

# Rural and Remote Education

## FAQ: Quality learning for every community

### Q1 What is the new community preschool funding model?

Information about the new community preschool funding model can be found at [www.dec.nsw.gov.au/what-we-offer/regulation-and-accreditation/early-childhood-education-care/funding/community-preschool-funding](http://www.dec.nsw.gov.au/what-we-offer/regulation-and-accreditation/early-childhood-education-care/funding/community-preschool-funding)

### Q2 What is the new Resource Allocation Model (RAM) for schools?

Information about the RAM can be found at [www.dec.nsw.gov.au/about-the-department/our-reforms/local-schools-local-decisions/reform-agenda/resource-allocation-model](http://www.dec.nsw.gov.au/about-the-department/our-reforms/local-schools-local-decisions/reform-agenda/resource-allocation-model)

### Q3 What is an education network?

An education network is a group of schools working together and jointly sharing and managing their resources to deliver quality learning to their students. These networks will be designed by local school communities to meet their specific needs and need not be limited by geographical boundaries. The decision to form a network will be made by school principals and their local communities, in consultation with Directors Public Schools NSW and the Directors Educational Services.

### Q4 How will a network's budget and staffing be managed?

Each network will meet the unique educational needs of their community. Decisions about where teachers are located, whether teaching will be face-to-face or online, and where executive members of staff will be placed will be made by school principals in consultation with their local communities. Class sizes will be maintained in accordance with the staffing agreement, and the total staffing of the network will be determined by student numbers for each of the schools in the network, as is the case with all schools across NSW. Networks will have a management agreement that summarises how

resources will be shared, where teachers and school executive are located and how decisions are made.

### Q5 Who will decide on the focus of each network and the schools involved?

School principals and their local communities will have the opportunity to work closely with their Directors Public Schools NSW and the Directors Educational Services to establish each education network. School principals, in collaboration with their school communities, will make decisions about the focus of their network.

### Q6 What help will be available to schools to set up an education network?

Over the next four years, over \$1 million is available to support schools with the initial establishment and coordination of their education network through one-off grants. Schools will also have access to a range of expert resources and advice to assist them with the formation and structure of their education network. This will include expertise from Educational Services teams, state office directorates and other schools. As schools and their communities plan and establish networks, Directors Public Schools NSW will work with schools to identify and access the expertise they need.

### Q7 What is an Educational Services team and how will they work?

An Educational Services team is made up of expert, non school-based staff with recent school-based experience to provide direct support and services to schools and education networks. Each Educational Services team is led by a Director Educational Services. These teams have been created as part of the new model of support to NSW public schools.

Educational Services teams will provide professional learning, expert advice and support to schools in areas such as: quality teaching and professional practice; pathways for senior students; vocational education and training (VET); students with additional needs; learning and support; student

engagement and wellbeing; and Aboriginal education. These teams will also be able to draw on the expertise of state office staff and coordinate work with other government and non-government organisations.

## **Q8** Will establishing an education network force schools to close?

No. Schools will not be forced to close as part of setting up an education network. Should a community decide it wishes to amalgamate and/or close one of their schools, a submission to, and the approval of, the Minister are required. Any closure of a public school is subject to the procedures outlined in the *NSW Education Act 1990, No 8, Section 28, Closure of Government Schools*.