

Consultation on a modified distribution method for the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) for 2006-07 and 2007-08

Consultation Response Form

The closing date for this consultation is: 30 September 2005

Your comments must reach us by that date.

department for

education and skills

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The information you provide in your response will be subject to the Freedom of Information Act 2000 and Environmental Information Regulations, which allow public access to information held by the Department. This does not necessarily mean that your response can be made available to the public as there are exemptions relating to information provided in confidence and information to which the Data Protection Act 1998 applies. You may request confidentiality by ticking the box provided, but you should note that neither this, nor an automatically-generated e-mail confidentiality statement, will necessarily exclude the public right of access.

Please tick if you want us to keep your response confidential.

Name: G.H. Roberts
Organisation (if applicable): East Sussex County Council
Address: Children's Services Department, County Hall, St.Anne's Crescent, Lewes, East Sussex, BN7 1SG

If your enquiry is related to the policy content of the consultation you can contact:

e-mail: SchoolFunding.Questions@dfes.gsi.gov.uk

If you have a query relating to the consultation process you can contact the Consultation Unit on:
Telephone: 01928 794888; or Fax: 01928 794 311

e-mail: consultation.unit@dfes.gsi.gov.uk

Please tick one of the boxes that best describes you as a respondent

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Local Authority	<input type="checkbox"/> Schools Forum	<input type="checkbox"/> Teacher Union
<input type="checkbox"/> Governor Association	<input type="checkbox"/> Headteacher Association	<input type="checkbox"/> School
<input type="checkbox"/> Headteacher	<input type="checkbox"/> Bursar	<input type="checkbox"/> Governor
<input type="checkbox"/> Teacher	<input type="checkbox"/> Parent	<input type="checkbox"/> Other

If other, please specify:

The consultation document

The consultation document is available at www.teachernet.gov.uk/management/schoolfunding/.

A modified distribution method for the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG)

Question 1: Do you agree that we should use the modified method of distribution of the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) for 2006-07 and 2007-08, with a review of the DSG distribution method in the longer term? (*Paragraphs 4-19 of the consultation document.*)

Strongly agree Agree Neither agree nor disagree
 Disagree Strongly disagree

Comments:

The proposal to use the 2005/06 Schools Budget as the baseline for 2006/07 allocations plus the minimum per pupil increase is supported on the basis that it will provide a degree of stability pending a full review of the allocation methodology. The formulaic approach to distributing the remaining funding is also supported but not the targeting aspect which is commented on under question 2.

Principles for deciding on the distribution criteria

Question 2: Do you agree with the principles set out in paragraph 11 of the consultation document for deciding on the distribution criteria?

Strongly agree Agree Neither agree nor disagree
 Disagree Strongly disagree

Comments:

Criterion (b) is supported on the grounds of equity across authorities and (c) and (d) are agreed as good practice. However, criteria (a) and (e) are not supported as these seek to impose a degree of targeting that does not apply in the current SFSS methodology and should not be reflected in a future 'general' funding system.

If targeting of funding to specific areas is considered necessary it should either be allocated as a specific grant or, in the case of phase wide issues such as workforce reforms, addressed through a differential minimum funding guarantee. Elements of the DSG should not be earmarked for specific purposes which would add to the complexities of the system and be contrary to the stated aims of streamlining the funding system

Question 3: Are there any other principles that you would like to see used to decide the distribution criteria under the modified method of DSG distribution?

Comments:

No

Types of distribution criteria

Question 4: In addition to the distribution criteria set out in paragraphs 12 to 14 of the consultation document, are there any other general or specific criteria that you think should be considered by the government for the distribution of the DSG for 2006-07 and 2007-08?

Comments:

A basic principle since the introduction of the Schools Budget has been that local authorities have discretion over how resources for the overall Schools Budgets are allocated within some fairly broad parameters (minimum funding guarantees and limits on central expenditure). The statement of the government's strong expectation that the formulaic top up would be used for its intended purpose is not supported because it potentially significantly reduces a local authority's ability to target funding on local priorities.

Thank you for taking the time to let us have your views. We do not intend to acknowledge individual responses unless you place an 'X' in the box below.

Please acknowledge this reply

Here at the Department for Education and Skills we carry out our research on many different topics and consultations. As your views are valuable to us, would it be alright if we were to contact you again from time to time either for research or to send through consultation documents?

Yes

No

How to respond and further information

Please send the completed response form to

- Department for Education and Skills
Consultation Unit
Area 1A
Castle View House
East Lane
Runcorn
Cheshire
WA7 2GJ
- Or fax it to 01928 794113
- Or e-mail it to: SchoolFunding.Consultation@dfes.gsi.gov.uk

If you have any questions

Please e-mail any questions to the School Funding Team at Schoolfunding.Questions@dfes.gsi.gov.uk or call Sara Krikorian on 020 7925 6705.

For further information on school funding, including the consultation document on the modified distribution of the DSG, visit www.teachernet.gov.uk/management/schoolfunding/.