

CHANGES TO THE EDUCATION MAINTENANCE ALLOWANCE.

The final payment for the 2014 EMA was made in August 2014. Parents will not be able to apply for the Education Maintenance Allowance in 2015.

From 1 January 2015, the government will provide extra financial support directly to Victoria's neediest schools instead of providing the Education Maintenance Allowance directly to parents.

The money will be allocated to eligible schools through schools' core operational funding mechanism, with the neediest schools receiving the most funding. Not all schools will be receiving funding in 2015.

This change to how the money is distributed was required by the funding agreement with Commonwealth government to make sure Victorian schools receive increased funding that will benefit all students and, in particular, those from schools with concentrated disadvantage. The majority of parents who received the EMA payment already elected to provide the money directly to their school.

If you have any questions about this change, please speak to your school principal.

WHAT SUPPORT IS STILL BEING PROVIDED DIRECTLY TO PARENTS?

The end of the EMA direct payments to parents will not affect any other payment you may be receiving such as the Schoolkids Bonus, which is provided directly to eligible parents (income test applies) to assist with education costs. For more information, see: [SchoolKids Bonus](#)

If you are experiencing financial hardship, you can also speak to your principal about how you can access assistance from the State Schools Relief Committee for clothing and uniforms.

WHY IS THE EMA CHANGING?

The reason for the change stems from the 2013 School Funding Reform Agreement, signed between Victoria and the Commonwealth. The Victorian Government committed an additional \$5.4 billion school funding, which included a change to the way it helps low-income families with education expenses.

In order to secure Commonwealth funding, Victoria was obliged to shift as much education funding as possible into direct payments to schools. If the Victorian Government failed to adhere to this condition, the entire additional funding agreed to by the Commonwealth would have been at risk for Victoria. By redirecting EMA payments from parents direct to schools, Victoria was able to secure this increase in education funding which will benefit all students and, in particular, those from disadvantaged backgrounds.