From 2013, direct Education Maintenance Allowance (EMA) payments to parents will be increased across the board while the School Start Bonus (SSB) will be discontinued.

The government is restructuring the Education Maintenance Allowance (EMA) to better provide education support to families on low incomes. The greatest increases will be for parents of eligible Prep and year 7 students, in recognition of the additional costs associated with entering primary school and secondary school.

Parents of EMA eligible Prep students will receive $200 from 2013, while parents of EMA eligible year 7 students will receive $300. These changes will ensure that disadvantaged students in all year levels up to the age of 16 will receive additional EMA support for purchasing books, stationery, uniforms and other essential items.