

To: EDUCATION (RESOURCES) SUB-COMMITTEE	Subject : EDUCATION MAINTENANCE ALLOWANCE 2004-2005, PERFORMANCE REVIEW
From: DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION	
Date: Ref: MM/AS	

Purpose of Report

This report reviews the performance of the Education Maintenance Allowance scheme for the period August to November 2004.

Recommendations

The education (resources) sub-committee is recommended to:

- (a) note the performance of the Education Maintenance Allowance scheme
- (b) request the submission of further performance reports to future meetings of the sub-committee.

Michael O'Neill

Members wishing further information about this report should contact

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NORTH LANARKSHIRE COUNCIL : DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Report by the Director of Education

1. Background.

- 1.1 The phased national rollout of Education Maintenance Allowance (EMA) commenced in August 2004. In session 2004-2005 only those students born between 1 March 1988 and 28 February 1989 and who are in S4 or S5 are eligible to apply for an EMA.
- 1.2 EMA is assessed on gross household income, on the following basis.

Table 1 – Income Bands & Weekly Payments

Gross Household Income	Amount of weekly payment
0 to £19,630	£30
£19,631 to £24,030	£20
£24,031 to £30,000	£10
Over £30,000	0

- 1.3 Students may also be entitled to receive 1 or 2 bonus payments of £150, dependant on when their eligibility for EMA support began. Bonuses will be paid provided that the student meets the terms set down in their Learning Agreement relating to progress, attainment and attendance.
- 1.4 To date, 945 applications have been received. This is 15 applications greater than the total number of Higher School Bursary applications received in Session 2003-2004. This increase was anticipated due to the increased income level at which EMA is paid.
- 1.5 1 application has been refused because the student was not resident in the United Kingdom for 3 years preceding the application, as laid down in the Scottish Executive's guidelines. A further 226 students are not eligible for support until January 2005 because they do not meet the age requirement. 16 applications have been cancelled because the students have left school or have indicated that they no longer wish to be considered for support.
- 1.6 Of the remaining 702 applications, 630 letters of award have been processed, as detailed below in Table 2.

Table 2 – Awards Processed

Award	No award	£30 per week	£20 per week	£10 per week
No of students	7	457	64	102

- 1.7 A further 72 applications are yet to be processed because the students have not yet provided all of the necessary documentation.

2. Payments 2004-2005

- 2.1 To date, a total of £142,760 has been paid to eligible EMA applicants.
- 2.2 Based on the current number of eligible applications the estimated expenditure on EMA in the current financial year is £618,540. This also assumes that all students attain the 100% attendance requirement in each school week.

Table 3 shows a breakdown of projected expenditure at each weekly payment level and for full-year and 2-term applications.

Table 3 – Projected Expenditure

Payment period	£30 per week	£20 per week	£10 per week
Full-year (30 weeks)	524 = £471,600	72 = £43,200	115 = £34,500
2-term (12 weeks)	165 = £59,400	23 = £5,520	36 = £4,320
Total	£531,000	£48,720	£38,820

3. Attendance

- 3.1 In accordance with Scottish Executive guidelines, students must attain 100% attendance in any week in order to receive payment for that week. Absences due to illness will be taken into account in calculating attendance provided that the student submits a medical certificate or self-certification form to the school within 14 days of the absence. Self-certification forms will only be accepted for 5 days absence over the course of the academic session.
- 3.2 Schools have responsibility for monitoring the attendance of EMA students. Provided the school is satisfied that the students have attained 100% each week, payment of the award for that week will be authorised by the school using an EMA module within the “Click + Go” registration system.

4. Recommendations

The education (resources) sub-committee is recommended to:

- (1) note the performance of the Education Maintenance Allowance scheme
- (2) request the submission of further performance review reports to future meetings of the sub-committee.