

Media Release
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New education funding Bill shows no difference between Liberal and ALP education policies and both ignore Gonski report

Our Children Our Schools (OCOS) is dismayed to find the Victorian ALP government perpetuating Coalition education policy by introducing the Education and Training Reform Amendment (Funding of Non-Government Schools) Bill 2014.

This bill legislates a minimum of 25 per cent of state government funding for public schools to be allocated to the private school sector.

Under the legislation, 25 per cent of any future funding increases for public schools will automatically flow on to private schools; not necessitated by need and in contradiction of the Gonski report which recommended needs based funding.

The Victorian ALP has rejected the needs-based funding model adopted by the previous Federal Labor Government and incorporated in the National Education Reform Agreement signed by the Napthine Government. Under the National Education Reform Agreement, the Victorian Government committed to implementing needs-based funding arrangements.

“The new legislation ensures that state government funding of private schools will be determined not by need in the private school sector but by need in the public school sector. This will funnel much needed money away from the schools and students that need it most,” said OCOS spokesperson Cate Hall.

The wealthiest schools in the state will benefit, such as Geelong Grammar, Scotch College, Melbourne Grammar, Lauriston, Fintona, Korowa, MLC, Camberwell Grammar, Trinity Grammar, and Brighton Grammar.

This Bill is in sharp contrast to NSW where the link between state government funding of private schools and public school costs has been replaced with a needs-based funding system.

The Bill also includes a School Policy and Funding Advisory Council to advise the Minister about regulatory, policy and funding issues affecting both public and private schools. The Council will comprise the Secretary of the Education Department, a representative of the Catholic Education Commission; a representative of Independent Schools Victoria; and a Department of Education employee.

“While private and Catholic lobby groups have a direct line to the Government, the voice of parents and teachers/principals in public schools who make up the majority of stakeholders in the education system aren’t being heard,” said Hall.

It seems there is no difference between the two parties when it comes to funding public education which means that the public education system will continue to be eroded and dismantled.

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About Our Children, Our Schools

Our Children, Our Schools believes every Victorian child should have access to high-quality Foundation-to-Year 12 public education in their local community.

This means that these schools must be proactively planned for and built, well-maintained, staffed and funded appropriately.

OCOS members are community groups campaigning for the same outcomes as OCOS:

- Beaumaris School Community Group (BSCG)
- A new school for Bannockburn District
- High School for Coburg (HSC)
- Doreen and Mernda Secondary School Alliance
- Friends of Elwood College
- Friends of Kyneton Education (FoKE)
- Nunawading Primary School Site Preservation Group Inc
- Oakleigh Ward Local Secondary School (OWLSS)
- High School for Preston
- Point Cook Action Group
- Public Education Group (PGR)
- Reopen Our Schools (Banyule City)
- Richmond High School Choices (RHSC)
- Secondary Education for Seddon, Kingsville and Yarraville (SKY High)
- Restore Strathmore Heights' School Zones
- TwoSchoolsNow (Port Phillip and Southbank)
- Docklands Community Forum
- Fishermans Bend Network
- Northern Mallee School Council Presidents Group
- Save Calder Rise Primary

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