

Committee Secretary
Senate Select Committee on School Funding
PO Box 6100
Parliament House
Canberra ACT 2600
Australia

Submission to the Senate Select Committee on School Funding

Dear Senate Inquiry Committee,

I am a parent, a new scheme public high school teacher and concerned member of the community (originally from Sydney, now located in Canberra). I joined teaching to be a supporter of the public education system as I believe in the equal right of all students in Australia to access a high quality, caring and respected education system - regardless of income.

Our public schools teach everyone from all walks of life and many with little or no educational support outside the school. Our schools need to be funded to respond to the need in each school community, with funding allocated per student and their level of need.

I have also worked in the private school system and I would argue that the facilities and asset-rich independent schools should not receive government funding for their students, but operate on the market based principal that they appeal to - that people pay for their personal choices.

The issue of a fair distribution of education funding can be compared to transportation; If the government invests in public transport for all, yet I decide to buy a new BMW and drive it to work, should I be subsidised by the government for my personal choice?

Regarding the public / independent school funding allocation debate - I believe we should provide funding only for the schools which serve everyone (the public system). If people instead choose a school with three halls, Fifa-grade football turf and an underground carpark, let them pay for that themselves.

6 years of Gonski funding would mean more specialist teachers to address diversity in reading acquisition (like the Reading Recovery program), maths skills, English language support for new Australians and Special Education experts. Teachers and Principals serving such a diverse range of learners in their schools - as do enrol in the public system - also need to be well mentored and receive professional development training. These programs all cost money, and when they lose funding, result in lesser educational outcomes for all our students . The cost benefit of investing properly in every student, as a national priority, to create a successful and capable society of diverse and equal Australians is obvious. Where we fail in education, we pay across society (juvenile justice system, welfare dependence and poor health consequences).

Invest in young Australians through our public education system to give everyone a great start to life and many opportunities to thrive and succeed! Our society will then be stronger, fairer and economically robust to face all the challenges of the future.

Submitted by Thea Katauskas regarding Gold Creek School

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