

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

My name is Natasha Bakranich and I am a concerned parent of two primary school aged children in Huntingdale WA. I currently am co-Vice President on the school P&C and as such am able to directly discuss Gonski and school funding issues with school representatives at meetings and help create solutions to these.

Unfortunately, with WA not taking up Gonski funding prior to the Federal election, schools in our state have become vulnerable to significant changes due to budget re-organisation and distribution. Our own school has to make changes which in previous years would have been unnecessary due to the huge funding cut made. I find it unbelievable that students who attend private schools receive so much funding. Isn't that what "private" schooling is about? Having the school follow educational models but seek it's own resources in terms of dollars? People make the choice to send their children to these schools even when public schools are available, so if I choose to buy a huge 4WD does that mean I should get a subsidy because I didn't buy a smaller car? No, it means that I have chosen to have this, so I need to pay for it. Education funds should be fairly allocated as per the Gonski model, our educators hold the future in their hands. When we are older, greyer and less able to make decisions, it will be the children in school now who are taking care of us all - don't we want them to have the best possible education to help them on this path?

As the Commonwealth's National Partnership funding has now stopped, it would have been reasonable to expect to have a new funding model in place. This would have enabled schools to continually improve newly introduced programs, keep

specialist staff and support staff in the schools that need it. It is not realistic to have children with learning or behavioural difficulties in a standard classroom with only a teacher to provide them and their other students assistance. The wellbeing of all students in a class is equally as important and we should be able to have the support of EAs with special needs training available and not have to worry about costs associated with it. The price of education is not something seen in dollars, it is seen in achievement and the well being of the child. Every child should be able to reach their potential and with the Gonski funding this would have certainly been attainable. Many parts of Australia will be receiving Federal funding while others won't - the national curriculum has been implemented to ensure education is standardised, so why not funding? Surely this is as important to individual schools to have the resources (whether it be teachers, EA's, availability of development days) on hand?

Submitted by Natasha Bakranich, Parent regarding Huntingdale Primary School

Friday 14 March 2014