

Dear Senators

I believe that Australia's parliamentarians bear a heavy responsibility to ensure that all Australian children continue to have access to a 'fair go' and the principle of equality of opportunity. A high quality Education system is a fundamental requirement for our nation to thrive in the highly competitive global environment.

It is for this reason that I believe all state schools should receive the full six years of Better Schools funding as agreed to by the Commonwealth and State Government of Victoria. It is in the final two years of this agreement that the full benefit of Better Schools Funding flows through to schools like Kambrya College.

I make this assertion as I firmly believe that investment in education gets results. I base this belief in the experience at my own school, Kambrya College and the huge improvements that we have achieved over the past five years.

Back in 2008, the literacy and numeracy outcomes of our students were unacceptably low – as were our VCE scores. In 2009–2010, Kambrya College was provided with National Partnerships funding from the Commonwealth to improve in these areas. The National Partnership funding was a God-send!

The funds allowed us to appoint two new Leading Teachers in the fields of literacy and numeracy. These experts were able to set up resource rooms and coach selected teachers to further develop their teaching practice. These initiatives, funded by the National Partnerships program, produced rich rewards for Kambrya College.

Our VCE median study score has improved by a massive six points – and continues to improve. Our NAPLAN data shows that the College is now improving student performance in literacy and numeracy at a rate higher than the national/state average.

It has also assisted us in building a school that we are very proud of, with student absenteeism down by 50% and student suspensions declining by 60%. Our college has improved the life chances of our students by ensuring they leave school with meaningful qualifications and enabling them to maximise their potential.

As an educational leader I believe it is essential that we implement in full the Better Schools funding. These funds will allow us to:

- Implement well-resourced Literacy and Numeracy programs for all students in Years 7 and 8
- Implement well-resourced intervention programs for students with very low Literacy and Numeracy skills
- Implement well-resourced intensive English Language programs for students for whom English is a second language
- Implement well-resourced accelerated learning programs for high achieving students
- Professional Development for staff in each of the above areas

Kambrya College has shown that investment in education gets results. It is essential for the Australian government to proceed with the full six year agreement regarding Better Schools funding in order for the wonderful work initiated through the National Partnerships funding to continue.

Yours Sincerely

Michael Muscat
Principal
Kambrya College

19 February 2014