

Executive Summary

1. The SES funding arrangements will
 - deliver greater equity for parents of non-government school children because their funding entitlement will reflect the socio-economic circumstances of the school community being served.
 - use objective data relating to education, occupation and income rather than school generated data
 - give schools more flexibility to adjust their resourcing levels to cater for a broader clientele and offer more diverse educational programs
 - create an environment where the investment of after-tax savings by parents in their children's education will not be penalised
2. The new resources available under the SES arrangements will redress the inequities of the ERI formula, which has been discredited by successive Government reviews. The funding maintenance provisions will ensure no dislocation for Catholic systems and other independent schools. The principle of funding guarantees has been a feature of past funding reforms.
3. At the conclusion of the 2001-2004 quadrennium, students in non-government schools will still receive less support from the Commonwealth and State Governments than children in government schools.
4. The new accountability provisions recognise the fact that Australia has to benchmark the performance of schools and students at both the national and international levels.
5. The consultative processes underpinning the development of the SES have been extensive and the simulation exercise has enabled the non-government schools to assess the validity of the SES. There is support for the SES model by the overwhelming majority of independent schools in Victoria.
6. Of critical concern to Victorian independent schools is the need for certainty in respect of 2001 budgeting. Equally important is the capacity of both existing and potential parents of non-government school children to budget for school fee commitments in 2001. This will only be achieved as a result of the early passage of the legislation.