

NSRA Review Consultation

On the 7 July the Minister Jason Claire said in relation to the meeting between education ministers, teachers and principals, students and other education experts across the country looking at what should be in the next National School Reform Agreement that the Government is committed to work with states and territories to get every school to 100 per cent of their fair funding level and acknowledged that this does not occur anywhere but the ACT. I felt quite heartened when I read this.

However, I looked at your submission template and find that despite the Minister's press release calling on individuals and organisations to have their say there is nowhere to provide comments on this aspect of education.

I draw your attention to today's Guardian article The Gutting of Gonski by Jordyn Beazley and Caitlin Cassidy which reports that real government funding to private schools has increased almost twice as much as funding to public schools in the decade since the landmark Gonski review recommended changes designed to fund Australian schools according to need.

The authors reported that from 2012 to 2021, per student funding to independent and Catholic schools rose by 34% and 31% respectively, while funding to public schools increased by just 17% and in Queensland, the growth in government funding to independent schools per student has been nine times greater than to public schools.

I am sick and tired of an education system that increasingly funds public education as a safety net and one that is failing. The pathway to 100% the Government mentions is just delivering greater inequality and provides no confidence that the destination will ever be reached. All these other reforms will be as nothing if children in public schools are denied the funding necessary to deliver them. Not only are the majority of public school students offered a second class education in the basics but their opportunity to study anything beyond this (i.e., art, music, Languages, swimming etc.) is denied despite the best efforts of many of their teachers. These schools also deliver education to the majority of low SES children and those with disability who cost more to educate and increase the administrative responsibility in public schools.

As well as the great injustice this represents, leaving so many children poorly educated contributes significantly to our country's rising levels of inequality. Our ranking to the bottom quarter of the OECD for access to secondary education and our falling education performance in international rankings is also a great disadvantage to the country's productivity. The majority of parents of children who attend public schools also pay taxes and should reasonably expect that their children will also be educated properly.

I find myself unable to adequately express my disappointment at this ongoing failure which this process looks likely to allow to continue.

Your sincerely

Allison [REDACTED]