

Committee Secretary
Senate Select Committee on School Funding
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Australia

Submission to the Senate Select Committee on School Funding

I am a retired secondary school principal from the NSW government school sector. I am grandmother of children attending Blaxland HS, Glenbrook PS and Lugarno PS. I care about public education and know that without significant additional funding my grandchildren and their peers all around Australia will not receive the teaching or the resources that will adequately prepare them for their future.

The inequities in education are clear and must be addressed. Every school in Australia, whether non-government or government should be equitably resourced. Individual wealth should not be a determinant of whether a child has ready (in time on time) access to the resources required for a 21st century education. Most children in Australia are educated through the public education system - currently this means that most children in Australia are being disadvantaged in relation to their peers being educated in the independent school system.

All students should be able to access early intervention support if needed (as in the Finnish system) to ensure they meet learning benchmarks by the stage indicated in the National curriculum. This would reduce the gap between the high and low performing students by improving the learning performance of those most disadvantaged by social, cultural or physical disabilities.

Adequate funding is needed for ongoing professional development of all teaching staff. Training and development should be done in accordance with best practice which provides for both expert assistance and time for teachers to learn collegially -

to work together with student data to diagnose learning problems and to develop materials and strategies to improve learning outcomes. Funding must be made available for the ongoing development of all levels of school leadership (middle management and senior management) to focus on instructional design and leadership for learning. Funds too are desperately needed to support schools to separate the work of school administration from the core business of teaching and learning.

The public, comprehensive school sector has for too long languished for want of an adequate funding model which will provide the learning environment all Australian school children deserve. Modern buildings, aesthetically pleasing school grounds (and ongoing maintenance) as well as up to date technology should not be the sole preserve of the wealthy. The more the government puts in to public education the stronger the community and the workforce is as a whole. This is the lesson of the successful education systems worldwide.

This is a great opportunity for Australia and for Australian schools - for all schools to be able to deliver the education that every child in Australia deserves.

Submitted by Dianne Hennessy, Community Member regarding Blaxland HS;
Glenbrook PS; Lugarno PS
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