

Adrian Piccoli vows to hold Pyne to Gonski school funding deal

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Josephine Tovey, Dan Harrison

Education funding row

Labor is accusing the government of renegeing on education funding promises made during the election campaign. Nine news.

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The NSW government has warned the Commonwealth it will not support any dismantling of the Gonski school funding model and says any changes to the reforms could mean schools will lose money.

Federal Education Minister Christopher Pyne sparked alarm in the education sector by saying the needs-based funding model legislated by the Gillard government was a shambles and that he planned to create a new funding model. "I will renegotiate all funding agreements with the signatory and non-signatory jurisdictions, as well as the Catholics and the independents, to ensure that they are fair and equitable to everyone within the funding envelope that Labor promised," Mr Pyne told the ABC.



Rejects the "broken" Gonski funding model: Education Minister Adrian Piccoli. *Photo: Adam McLean*

Mr Pyne said he was "committed to the same funding envelope" developed under the Labor government, but the government "can't be expected to implement a new school funding model that is quite incapable of being

implemented ... I'm not going to proceed with a school funding model that is inequitable and utterly incomprehensible".

The NSW Education Minister Adrian Piccoli said his government had a binding agreement with the Commonwealth. "NSW expects the Commonwealth to fulfil its obligations under this agreement," he said. "NSW will not agree to returning to the broken [former] funding model." NSW has already said how it will distribute the first phase of extra funding to public schools next year.

"Any attempt to change the model now may see both government and non-government schools lose funding," Mr Piccoli said.

The executive director of the National Catholic Education Commission, Ross Fox, also rejected the suggestion that an agreement had not been reached, saying Labor's legislation and regulations had determined funding for Catholic schools.

The Victorian and Tasmanian governments have urged the Commonwealth to honour the deals it reached with them. Mr Pyne did not respond to questions about what changes he would seek in the legislation or deals with states but told Sky News he wanted less regulation of how money was spent.

Opposition Leader Bill Shorten accused the Coalition of breaking the promise it made before the election that it was on a "unity ticket" with Labor on school funding and said the Commonwealth had reached a deal with Victoria. "I know it happened because I was there," he said.

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