

## Nine in ten public school teachers use own money for student supplies: survey

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More than nine in ten public school teachers use their own money to purchase supplies for their school or students, according to the latest 'State of our Schools' online survey.

Of this number, nearly eight in ten public school teachers buy stationery or classroom equipment, while nearly half of public school teachers buy library resources and textbooks.

In addition, almost nine in ten public school principals say fundraising and voluntary contributions are important to their school budget, with three in ten public schools using fundraising for basic infrastructure maintenance.

The 'State of our Schools' online survey was conducted by Insync Research survey on behalf of the Australian Education Union (AEU) between 20-31 August 2018. 7,804 AEU members responded to the survey, including 697 public school principals, 6120 public school teachers and 987 public school support staff.



AEU Acting Federal President Maurie Mulheron said that these survey results showed that these funding issues would be exacerbated by the Morrison government's \$14 billion public school funding cuts.

"When nine in ten public school teachers report spending their own money to provide their students with classroom basics such as stationery and textbooks, something has clearly gone wrong with how the federal government is funding public schools," Mr Mulheron said.

"The Morrison government cut \$14 billion in public school funding while at the same time it splurged \$4.6 billion on a private school special funding deal. It is scandalous that public school students are being treated this way."

"It should not be up to public school teachers to fund their students' education. Teaching is a stressful enough profession as it is without our members having to worry about their students not even having the basics."

"When public school principals are forced to use parent fundraising for basic building maintenance we need to ask serious questions as to why the Morrison government is redirecting funding to the already advantaged private sector and away from the system with the greatest need," Mr Mulheron said.

"Public schools were victims of savage funding cuts under Gonski 2.0. Nearly nine in ten public schools in Australia will not have enough funding to meet the needs of each student by 2023," Mr Mulheron said.

According to the 2018 State of our School Survey:

- 93 per cent of teachers use their own money to purchase supplies for their school or students
  - 45 per cent spend under \$500/year
  - 25 per cent spend more than \$1000/year)
- Teachers spending their own money:
  - 78 per cent have to buy stationery for their students
  - 76 per cent have to buy classroom equipment for their students
  - 44 per cent have to buy library resources and textbooks for their students
  - 86 per cent of principals say fundraising and voluntary contributions are important to the school budget
  - 32 per cent of schools use fundraising for basic infrastructure maintenance

Mr Mulheron said Labor's promise to invest \$14.1 billion into public schools, if elected, would mean that teachers would no longer need to spend their own money to give their students a world-class education.

"Bill Shorten's \$3.3 billion commitment for public school funding in the first three years is a game-changer for public schools, and has been welcomed by AEU members across the country," Mr Mulheron said.

There is now a clear distinction between what the two major political parties are offering public schools.

"The ALP will provide a funding boost to bring all schools up to the schooling resource standard recognising public schools and the crucial role they play in educating and providing opportunities for the majority of Australia's students."

Mr Mulheron said that by contrast, the Morrison government had turned its back on the 2.5 million children attending public schools.

"Public schools need a fair go for funding, not a Prime Minister who clearly prioritises private schools and denies every child the opportunity to reach their full potential."

"The Morrison government has turned its back on the 2.5 million children attending public schools. Parents in public school communities understand the importance of fully funding public schools, and they vote," Mr Mulheron said.