

## New polling shows private school funding deal could sink Morrison government

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More than seven in ten undecided voters in specific marginal electorates across Australia disapprove of the Morrison government's \$4.6 billion special funding deal for private schools, according to new polling.

The Reachtel poll of 1261 residents was conducted on the evening of 27 September 2018 across the seats of Corangamite, Dunkley, Forde, Capricornia, Flynn, Gilmore, Robertson and Banks.

More than half of undecided voters who were polled were less likely to vote for Prime Minister Scott Morrison and the federal Liberal Party following the PM's decision to splurge billions of dollars on private schools while giving nothing to public schools.

According to the poll, more than eight in ten voters said that education will be important in deciding who they will vote for at the upcoming Federal Election.

Australian Education Union Federal President Correna Haythorpe said that the new Reachtel polling showed that Prime Minister Scott Morrison's decision to gift billions of dollars of extra funding to private schools would have dire consequences for his government's chances in any upcoming federal election.

"The Australian public has not been fooled by the Morrison government's cynical attempt to buy votes at the next election at the expense of students in our public schools," Ms Haythorpe said.

"Our Reachtel poll shows that Prime Minister Scott Morrison's refusal to restore his funding cuts to public schools will have dire consequences for him and his government at the next federal election."

"Eight in ten voters surveyed in our polling consider education a crucial factor in deciding who will get their vote. Seven in ten undecided voters say they are not happy with Mr Morrison's \$4.6 billion private school spending splurge," Ms Haythorpe said.

"Prime Minister Morrison may think he has settled the funding wars but voters are telling us that they don't agree with him," Ms Haythorpe said.

"The Prime Minister has abandoned Australia's 2.5 million public school students. Our polling shows that voters will not forget this at the next federal election" Ms Haythorpe said.

According to the Reachtel poll:



- **73.2 per cent** of undecided voters say they disapprove of the special funding deal for private and independent schools, with **49.3 per cent** saying they strongly disapprove.
- **52.9 per cent** of undecided voters and **38.6 per cent** of all voters say they are less likely to vote for Scott Morrison and the Liberal party as a result of the special funding deal for private and independent schools
- **84 per cent** of all voters say that education is important in deciding who they will vote for at the upcoming Federal Election, with **53.7 per cent** of undecided voters saying education is “very important” in deciding who they will vote for.
- **68.7 per cent** of undecided voters say they are more likely to vote for a political party that increases funding to public schools.
- **72.6 per cent** of all voters and **76.1 per cent** of undecided voters agreed that increasing funding to public schools is something we need to do now.

Ms Haythorpe said that current federal funding arrangements under Prime Minister Morrison will leave nearly nine in ten public schools in Australia without enough funding to meet the needs of each student by 2023.

"It's a shocking situation to have a Prime Minister who is so blatantly in favour of the private sector when the vast majority of students are in public schools," Ms Haythorpe said.

"There are state elections looming in Victoria and New South Wales, as well as a federal election. Public school funding is going to be a critical issue in all of these," Ms Haythorpe said. "Parents in public school communities understand the importance of fully funding public schools, and they vote."

"We are talking to parents across Australia to make sure they know that it is the Morrison government which has abandoned public school students."

"It's clear what needs to happen. The Morrison government must restore the \$14 billion it has cut from public school funding over the next decade," Ms Haythorpe said.