

Report reveals funding crisis for public schools

August 16, 2020

New analysis of ACARA data shows the funding gap between public and private schools has widened under the Morrison Government's funding legislation and special deals for private schools.

Private school funding over the past decade to 2018 has grown up to nine times faster in real terms than public school funding, the report *Public Schools Face a Funding Crisis; Private Schools Are in Clover* by Trevor Cobbold from Save our Schools Australia (SOS).

Catholic and Independent schools are far better resourced than public schools in every state even though public schools enrol more than 80 per cent of all disadvantaged students and 95 per cent of all disadvantaged schools are public schools.

"This funding trend is set to continue under current funding arrangements and more special deals for private schools from the Morrison Government," Mr Cobbold said. "It is a recipe for continuing educational, social and economic inequality."

Federation President Angelo Gavrielatos said the SOS analysis was a shameful indictment on the Morrison Government's school funding legislation funding agreements and special deals for private schools.



"The Government is determined to favour the privileged private school sector ahead of delivering funding to the schools in most need that teach the vast majority of students," he said.

"Prime Minister Scott Morrison has delivered a new age of education inequality and this is only set to continue due to the many special deals his government has provided to private schools.

"The Morrison Government's school funding agreements mean that by 2023 all private schools will be at or above the minimum funding benchmark, the Schooling Resource Standard (SRS) while the vast majority of public schools will be below that benchmark, funded at about 90 per cent of the SRS there is currently no path available for public schools to get the funding they need and our students deserve."

Key points from his analysis of 10 years of school funding to 2018 reveals:

- the total recurrent income per student in independent schools was higher than for public schools in 2018. The average total income per student in public schools was \$14,940 compared with \$23,029 per student in private schools and \$16,401 in Catholic schools
- between 2009 and 2018, the increase in total income per student, adjusted for inflation (real income) for private schools was up to nine times higher than for public schools. The real total income for private schools increased by \$2585 (16.9 per cent) per student and by \$2096 (19.7 per cent) in Catholic schools, compared with an increase of only \$241 (2.1 per cent) per student in public schools

- government funding increases have been pivotal in ensuring that private schools have far more resources than public schools. Government funding accounted for 77 per cent of the increase in Catholic school income and 62 per cent of the increase for private schools
- the increase in real Commonwealth funding for private schools was more than twice that for public schools. Catholic school funding increased by \$1502 (26.2 per cent) per student and for private schools by \$1427 (31.5 per cent) compared to \$637 (39.7 per cent) for public schools.