

## Report confirms failure of schools planning

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A new report has found that the State Government has short-changed public schools in favour of private schools and election promises.

The Auditor-General's report into school infrastructure released on Thursday has raised serious concerns about the lack of planning by the Berejiklian Government for the provision of public education.

The report reveals that School Infrastructure NSW had advised the Government in early 2020 that "the currently funded infrastructure program would not meet forecast classroom requirements for 2023 and beyond".

It confirmed that at least 180,000 additional students would be enrolled in the public system by 2039.

Federation President Angelo Gavrielatos said the lack of planning and investment in public education in NSW was totally inadequate.

"State and federal governments are funding private schools while failing to plan for and invest in public school infrastructure," Mr Gavrielatos said.



"We are seeing steady growth in enrolments in our schools at the moment, with huge increases projected, and yet the State Government gifted an additional \$500 million for capital works to private schools at the last election."

The audit found that the majority of NSW's new school infrastructure over the past three years had been determined by government promises and election commitments. These building projects went ahead of priority infrastructure that had been identified by School Infrastructure NSW.

The report by NSW Auditor-General Margaret Crawford stated new school projects and upgrades recommended by School Infrastructure NSW had not all met the highest needs of the state's public system.

"Instead of meeting the actual needs of our schools, the Auditor-General has found that School Infrastructure NSW has focussed on delivering existing projects, election commitments and other government announcements," Mr Gavrielatos said

"If the Government was doing its job, it should have been identifying and delivering projects that better meet current and future needs."

The report comes as teachers across the state have taken industrial action over staff shortages combined with the Government's changes to staffing entitlements policy leaving regional schools short of teachers.

Mr Gavrielatos said the Education Department was failing to provide for schools and had failed to recruit sufficient teachers to address the current teacher shortage across the state.

“The Government doesn’t know how many additional teachers will be needed to staff new schools due to the lack of proper workforce planning,” he said.

“The Gallop Inquiry into teaching found an urgent need for a resetting of the profession to better support principals and teachers.

“It found that teachers’ pay has not kept pace relative to other professions and recommended salaries be increased by 10 to 15 per cent in the next wages agreement.”