

# AUSTRALIAN COUNCIL FOR THE DEFENCE OF GOVERNMENT SCHOOLS

## PRESS RELEASE 591#

### CHILE STOPS STATE AID TO PRIVATE SCHOOLS

Chilean President Michelle Bachelet has ceased funding private schools to ensure funds go to those who need it most.

All public funding to private schools has been redirected to disadvantaged public schools.

Chilean President Michelle Bachelet [announced a radical set of educational reforms](#) last year that will dismantle the market-based approach in primary and secondary schooling.

Due to the market structure imposed in the 1980s by Chilean dictator Augusto Pinochet, the education system is the most [socioeconomically segregated](#) in the OECD, favouring private, for-profit schools with nearly 52% of enrolled students attending them. The same thing has occurred here in Australia - not imposed by a dictator - but under our very noses.

These Chilean reforms include the end of public funding to private, for-profit schools, to make all primary and secondary education free of charge, and prohibit contested selective practices used in school admission processes. Their education reform bill is an upheaval of the system in order to change the benefits of education from being for an affluent minority to the deserving majority. These reforms are to be paid through new taxes on the wealthy and business.

#### **Why can't Australia do the same?**

Australia is one of the very few countries in the OECD that publicly funds private schools. More than 40% of Australian secondary children now attend [private schools](#) - either so-called independent or religious schools. Australia has one of the most privatised school systems in the [OECD](#).

Prior to 1964 no private schools received any government funding whatsoever in this country. While most OECD countries have a private school system, very few of them receive public funding. The Scandinavian countries, Germany, and the USA (until some states introduced voucher systems) do not fund private schools.

For further information see *The Conversation* 25 March 2015 <http://tinyurl.com/q8mygrz>

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