

AUSTRALIAN COUNCIL FOR THE DEFENCE OF GOVERNMENT

SCHOOLS

PRESS RELEASE 774

Are Private School Parents Voting with their Feet into Public Schools?

The school year has predictable media hype points.

The usual end of school year issues are reflected in the Fairfax Media articles listed below:

- ['Too much being taught'](#) says federal minister Dan Tehan about curriculum....but his other comments stand at odds with Gonski 2.0 and maybe the current NSW review. What price yet another curriculum cultural war early next year?
- ['Two myths fuel the pressure to excel in the ATAR'](#) by Andrew Martin in *Fairfax*. More good reason for a rethink.
- ['Significant sacrifices: private school parents worry about high fees'](#) Fairfax, Dec 5. Does this sound familiar? It's a form of push polling: do the survey, raise the anxiety, increase the pressure. Quite routine. Ho Hum!
- [NSW could pilot 'morning and afternoon schools'](#) Rob Stokes says. SMH Dec 5. Not with conventional schools it couldn't...but a nice stimulus to rethink how we should 'do school'.

The two most interesting articles are those published on 5 December. Given the arrival of baby boom children into both primary and secondary alongside the movement of private school enrolments to public schools, State Governments in NSW and Victoria have an infrastructure problem. At

<https://www.smh.com.au/education/nsw-could-pilot-morning-and-afternoon-schools-rob-stokes-says-20181204-p50k41.html>

Crisis measures attempted in Third World countries, namely morning and afternoon schools, represent NSW Coalition thought bubble. This prompted over one hundred interesting comments online, some of which suggested the opening up of private schools to the public.

But the next article, by Jordan Baker, refers to the a poll listing worries of parents who, confronted with private school fees, are changing schools. It raised not one comment. We are told that a survey by the Australian Parents' Council has found that 'One in four private school parents would have to move their children to different schools if fees increased. The question is, are they sending their children to public schools? The data indicates this is the case. It is found at

<https://www.smh.com.au/education/significant-sacrifices-private-school-parents-worry-about-high-fees-20181204-p50k6r.html>

Chris Bonner of Save our Schools commented: *Does this sound familiar? It's a form of push polling: do the survey, raise the anxiety, increase the pressure. Quite routine. Ho Hum!*

The content of the article itself implies reasons for the shift from the private to the public sector as parents face financial uncertainty in the current economic and political climate. It is worth reading in full, as much for what it says as for what it does not say- namely, that billions of dollars of State Aid later to the point of gross overfunding, the private system fails to educate, not only all Australian children, but even members of the insecure aspirational classes.

Only the public schools can give 'certainty' when it comes to an educational guarantee.

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