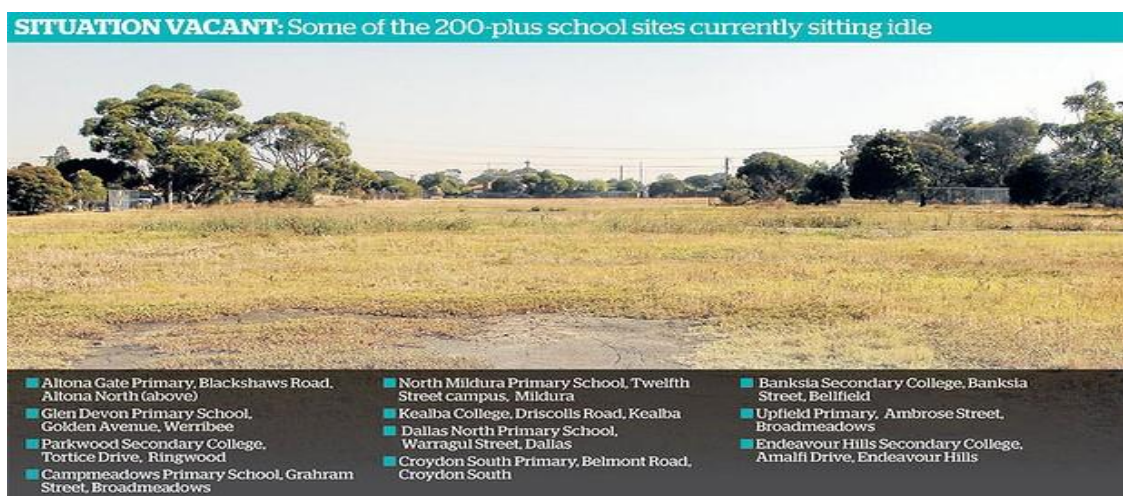


**AUSTRALIAN COUNCIL FOR THE DEFENCE OF GOVERNMENT SCHOOLS
PRESS RELEASE 503#
29 January 2013**

**PUBLIC EDUCATION FOR SALE: BAILLIEU GOVERNMENT
IMPOSING PRIVATE SCHOOLING ON
VICTORIAN PARENTS**

Public School Sites for Sale



Reproduced from The Age, January 27 at <http://www.theage.com.au/victoria/state-school-selloff-to-build-more-private-schools-20130126-2ddsj.html>

The Baillieu Government, with Martin Dixon from the Catholic Education Office at the Ministry of Education helm, is imposing private, fee-paying education on Victorian parents. The choice of a free, secular and universal public education for Victorian children is **UP FOR SALE** to the private sector

- Over two hundred public school sites are for sale for private schools
- ‘Free Education’ is a joke with school fees are rising in all sectors.- the more State Aid for the private sector, the higher the fees for both public and private schools. According to the Australian Scholarships Group it cost will cost parents \$55,417 to educate a public school child; \$371,253 for a private school child; and \$156,696 for a Catholic school child. See *The Herald Sun*, January 24, 2013, p. 7.
- Only private secondary schools are being built in developing areas. The Catholic Education Office is building 13 new secondary schools - one of these on an old State School site. The Baillieu Dixon government is building almost no new State secondary schools!

**VICTORIAN PARENTS MUST OPPOSE USER-PAY AND RELIGIOUS IDEOLOGUES AND
DEMAND THE RIGHT TO A FREE PUBLIC EDUCATION FOR THEIR CHILDREN**

Jewell Topsfield has revealed that *HUNDREDS of old public schools lying vacant around the state could soon be sold off by the Baillieu government to build more private schools...In a move critics fear could exacerbate the drift to the private system, the government wants to offload some of the land to Catholic and independent schools, arguing it will improve schooling choices for students and parents....*

"I'm really concerned that the government's 'choice agenda' is driving government schools in a really negative direction," said Frank Sal, president of the Victorian Association of State Secondary Principals. *"To many this would appear to be another step to further marginalise the government sector."*

The sale of public school land, particularly secondary school sites, also comes after the Catholic Education Office announced plans to build 13 new schools in Melbourne's growth suburbs over the next few years. One of those schools will be built on the site of the old Western Heights state school in Geelong, which was purchased to cater for students in two local Catholic schools: Clonard College for girls and St Joseph's secondary for boys....

Australian Education Union state president Meredith Peace said the policy showed *"a real lack of commitment"* towards public education, while Victorian Principals Association president Gabrielle Leigh said the government should focus on reinvesting in public schools...

Read more: <http://www.theage.com.au/victoria/state-school-selloff-to-build-more-private-schools-20130126-2ddsj.html#ixzz2JAtq8b3J>

Ongoing evidence of the Baillieu/Dixon Government selling out the public to the private sector and forcing Victorian parents into an escalating 'user-pays' system of privatised education.

Poor parents!

As early as November 2011 the Baillieu Government backed a campaign by private schools to maintain their share of federal funding, alleging that *any drop could push up fees and force thousands of families into public schools, costing the state millions of dollars.*

In a submission to a schools funding review headed by businessman David Gonski, the government warned that any plans to cut private school funding in real terms could spark an influx of students into public education, creating a significant burden on taxpayers!

"A reduction in funding for non-government schools may ... result in some parents withdrawing their children from, or delaying their enrolment in, non-government schools." See

<http://www.theage.com.au/national/education/state-backs-private-schools-20111112-1nd51.html>

Thanks to billions of dollars of taxpayer funds flowing into private school coffers, almost 40% of Victorian students now attend private schools, and ongoing taxpayer funding of these schools has led to duplication and government abandonment of public schools; an increase in fees and ongoing increases of fees to parents in cash-strapped public schools; the on-going privatisation of the public estate; and a nation which is segregating and polarising our children. Meanwhile, the nation is falling behind in the international education race because countries like Finland and our Asian neighbours recognise the importance of a public system of education.

State funding of the denominational system did not work in the nineteenth century. In the twenty first century it is an unmitigated disaster. Public School supporters should sack Baillieu and Dixon – at the next election.

THE DOGS RADIO PROGRAM

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