

AUSTRALIAN COUNCIL FOR THE DEFENCE OF GOVERNMENT SCHOOLS

PRESS RELEASE 640#

PRIVATISATION OF EDUCATION HAS FAILED AUSTRALIA'S CHILDREN :

The Answer to Funding Problems is *not* Gonski But NO STATE AID to Private, Sectarian Schools

The only thing that is agreed upon in Australia is that the education of our children has fallen behind that of other Western countries. The Coalition blames teachers and the Labor Party promises more and more taxpayer funds to keep an economically unviable denominational system afloat.

But the blame should be placed, fair and square upon the privatisation policies and the greed and mismanagement of the private, sectarian sector. The simple truth is: privatisation has failed – dismally.

The farce, the refusal to admit this failure continues. In the latest education funding auction, politicians are promising a 'complete Gonski' or an 'incomplete' or 'No Gonski.' The Coalition claims we have a 'spending' problem while the Labor Party at least admits that we have a 'revenue problem.'

Even in the latest Labor Party promises, there is a question of whether it is Gonski that is 'sector blind' or 'sector neutral.' No funding policy can be either 'sector blind' or 'sector neutral' while taxpayer funds are channelled away from public into private, sectarian education.

See ['Labor commits to fully funding Gonski'](#) SMH Jan 29 and note how Gillard, having dragged her heels, positioned Gonski as a supposed election winner in 2013? Is Shorten just offering a repeat performance in order to mine the public school vote?

Also see Trevor Cobbold's comment [://www.saveourschools.com.au/funding/labors-gonski-promise-puts-the-heat-on-turnbull](http://www.saveourschools.com.au/funding/labors-gonski-promise-puts-the-heat-on-turnbull). Bonner comments at <http://johnmenadue.com/blog/?p=5534> on John Menadue's blog.

Bonner understands that the Coalition has no understanding of the value of public education while the Labor Party is not to be trusted:

Labor's announcement included separate funding for students with a disability, even though no one seems to know how many students have a disability and where they go to school. Years ago Gonski recommended that we find out. Disability funding has created a few headlines recently and both sides of politics want to be seen to be responding.

Shorten also mentioned that the distribution of future funding would be "sector neutral". Whatever that means, it sounds new – but was more likely a misuse of words. Gonski's distribution was to be sector-blind, in effect funding on need without school sector being a consideration. Sector neutral suggest making sure everyone gets a slice of the funding pie, regardless of need.

DOGS claim that Public education has a Revenue problem caused by Duplication of facilities at public expense by the private sectarian sector.

Gonski, like Karmel before him, talked about the implementation of a 'Needs' policy.

They were, and they are, still dreaming. The private sectarian sector have never been about educating ALL the children – only about the select few. And the only 'Need' that interests them is one with a dollar sign attached. If we continue to provide public money for sectarian education, then Australia will continue to fund institutionalised inequality, and national decline. From 1900-1955 we led the world.

The only way forward is to call a spade a spade and return to the No State Aid for private sectarian schools of the period 1880-1969.

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