

**AUSTRALIAN COUNCIL FOR THE DEFENCE OF
GOVERNMENT SCHOOLS
PRESS RELEASE 933
PUBLIC SCHOOLS GO BEGGING FOR
REPRESENTATION AT THE FEDERAL ELECTION**

Australian citizens, and most particularly public school supporters, are being short changed and ignored in the current bread and circuses of federal politics. The Liberal Party is avoiding education as an issue and the Labor Party is skirting around the issue, trying to play safe with the religious interest groups.

But Trevor Cobbold from Save Our Schools, on 13th and 19th April has come up with extraordinarily damaging figures: The Morrison Government is massively over-funding both the Queensland Private schools and the NSW Private schools to the tune of more than a billion dollars i.e. two billion dollars altogether. Victorian private schools will be also be overfunded by \$730 million from 2022 to 2028.

Meanwhile public schools are set to be underfunded by billions of dollars. Does this mean that with the Morrison Government in particular, the future of our children will be left to the whims of an overfunded, expanding sectarian system which can discriminate against any child or parent or employee as its doctrine demands while our public schools go begging?

Trevor Cobbold's research is damning. We present it in full:

Morrison Govt to Over-Fund NSW Private Schools by Nearly \$1 Billion

 Trevor Cobbold / April 13, 2022 / Funding

NSW private schools are massively over-funded by the Commonwealth Government. Estimates based on official figures presented to Senate Estimate show that the NSW Catholic education system and nearly 40% of Independent schools will be over-funded by \$865 million by the Commonwealth Government from 2022 to 2028.

The Catholic system will be over-funded by \$366 million and 137 Independent schools by \$499 million. Just 41 Independent schools will be over-funded by \$340 million (see Table below). They account for two-thirds of the total over-

funding of all NSW Independent schools. They include many of the most expensive and exclusive schools in NSW.

The full list of over-funded NSW Independent schools is in Attachments 1 of the SOS Research Paper which can be downloaded below.

St. Augustine's College is the top over-funded school. Its cumulative over-funding for 2022 to 2028 will amount to \$21 million. The school is currently funded at 173% of its Schooling Resource Standard (SRS) by the Commonwealth Government which is over double its entitlement of 80% of its SRS. The NSW Government is responsible for the other 20% of the SRS target, but it has not divulged its current and future funding estimates for individual private schools. However, on average, it is also over-funding private schools at 23% of their SRS..

St. Augustine's College is a highly privileged school. Over 50% of its students are from the highest socio-educationally advantaged (SEA) quartile and nearly 90% are from the top two quartiles. Only one per cent are from the lowest SEA quartile.

Northern Beaches Christian School is also over-funded at more than double its entitlement. It is funded at 169% of its SRS and the total over-funding from 2022 to 2028 will amount to \$16.1 million. Just under 60% of its students are from the top SEA quartile and nearly 90% are from the top two quartiles.

Trinity Grammar is also highly over-funded. It is currently funded at 115% of its SRS by the Commonwealth and will be over-funded by \$16.4 million to 2028. Nearly 70% of its students are from the top SEA quartile and 93% are from the top two quartiles.

Many of Sydney's most exclusive schools will be over-funded by millions. For example, the cumulative over-funding of Newington College will amount to \$13.5 million. Three-quarters of its students are from the top SEA quartile and 95% are from the top two quartiles. Loreto Kirribilli will be over-funded by \$11 million. Over 80% of its students are from the top SEA quartile and 97% are from the top two quartiles. St. Aloysius College will be over-funded by \$10.1 million even though 91% of its students are from the top SEA quartile and 99% are from the top two quartiles. Three-quarters of the students at Monte Sant Angelo Mercy College are from the top SEA quartile and 95% are from the top two quartiles yet it will be over-funded by \$9.9 million.

Five Uniting Church schools will be over-funded by \$26 million. They include several of the most exclusive schools in Sydney – Knox Grammar, MLC School, Pymble Ladies' College and Ravenswood. They charge fees of around \$30,000, about 80% of their students are from the top SEA quartile and 96% or

more are from the top two SEA quartiles. It is disgusting taxpayer welfare for the rich.

Many other schools with over 60% of their students from the top SEA quartile and over 90% from the top two quartiles are over-funded by four to ten million dollars. These included Central Coast Grammar, Pittwater House, St. Andrew's Cathedral School, St. Catherine's School, St. Vincent's College. **Top Over-Funded NSW Independent Schools**

Schools	C/W SRS Share 2022 %	C/W Over-Funding 2022 % points	C/W Over-Funding 2022-2028 \$	Fees 2019 \$	Students in Lowest SEA Quartile %	Students in Top SEA Quartile %	Students in Top 2 SEA Quartiles %
St Augustine's College	173	93	20,969,917	16,718	2	56	87
Trinity Grammar Northern Beaches Christian School	115	35	16,366,494	27,008	1	69	93
Hunter Valley Grammar	120	40	13,696,538	13,251	3	60	87
Newington College	126	46	13,538,762	27,095	1	76	95
William Clarke College	107	37	13,117,448	11,601	3	58	86
Newcastle Grammar	164	84	12,316,000	19,096	1	70	91
Loreto Kirribilli	143	63	11,612,204	22,435	0	81	97
Central Coast Grammar	109	29	11,022,107	16,184	1	65	91
Loreto Normanhurst	143	63	10,064,223	25,941	1	68	92
St Aloysius' College	140	60	10,062,297	19,274	0	91	99
Oxford Falls Grammar	134	54	9,898,166	12,703	1	60	91
Monte Sant Angelo Mercy College	139	59	9,886,988	22,941	1	75	95
Inaburra School	119	39	9,438,357	13,824	2	53	86
Mount St Benedict College	105	25	8,912,396	14,295	1	58	89
Oakhill College	95	15	8,768,692	10,806	3	47	82
St Scholastica's College	103	23	8,632,714	9,107	3	56	87
Brigidine College	128	48	7,936,427	19,248	1	59	90
Pittwater House	143	63	7,601,407	19,759	1	68	93
Stella Maris College	108	28	6,785,169	14,124	2	51	87
St Andrew's Cathedral School	102	22	6,482,652	28,759	1	77	95
Marist Brothers (2)	126	46	6,465,775	17,355	27	30	54
Lindisfarne Anglican School	90	10	6,238,605	6,730	3	49	82
St Paul's Grammar	97	17	6,079,129	15,004	5	49	79
International Grammar	117	37	6,040,164	21,745	1	73	94
Rosebank College	90	10	5,878,118	8,551	5	43	79
St Catherine's School	122	42	5,698,471	31,330	1	73	93
St Vincent's College	111	31	5,611,476	19,998	1	62	92
Illawarra Grammar	105	25	5,576,255	16,154	2	66	90
Uniting Church (5)	97	17	5,233,226	26,762	1	73	94
St Mary Star of the Sea College	90	10	4,688,021	6,627	7	41	74
St Gregory's College	87	7	4,619,319	6,861	10	27	63
Saint Ignatius' College	97	17	4,574,100	29,941	1	74	95
OneSchool Global	87	7	4,204,136	5,841	32	0	15
St Columba Anglican School	87	4	4,131,718	5,330	4	44	78
Oxley College	96	16	4,005,327	15,134	1	64	91

Sources: *See Attachment 2: Data Sources and Methodology*

Note: *The over-funding, fees and student composition of the Uniting Church and Marist Brothers schools are averages for the two systems. See Attachment 1 for the total over-funding of each system.*

The NSW Catholic school system is over-funded at present by the Commonwealth Government at 81% of its SRS. The Commonwealth share of its SRS will increase to 83% next year and then gradually decline to 80% in 2029. This will result in over-funding of about \$366 million for 598 schools.

The over-funding of private schools is due to end by 2029 as the Commonwealth reduces its funding share to 80% of their SRS. However, there is no guarantee this will occur. Several private school organisations are campaigning against losing their over-funding and, indeed, want more. Their greed is unrestrained. In effect, it is a campaign against funding for those most in need.

In its pre-Budget submission, Independent Schools Australia called for increased funding to support choice in education. Their demands include more funding for schools to transition to the Direct Measure of Income (DMI) methodology for calculating the financial need of private schools. This is despite receiving \$455 million over ten years from 2019-2029 under the Choice and Accountability slush fund, \$66 million in various forms of transitional assistance to the DMI approach in 2019 and hundreds of millions in JobKeeper payments in 2020. It also wants more funding for regional boarding schools and an increase in capital grants.

Not to be outdone, the National Catholic Education Commission also wants additional funding for its schools in regional, rural and remote areas and for regional boarding schools. This is despite its huge windfall of \$3.7 billion over ten years from 2019 to 2020 from the introduction of the DMI to assess the financial need of schools, \$727 million in additional funding under the Choice and Accountability Fund and \$157 million in transitional assistance to the DMI in 2019.

We can expect to hear more of these demands in the Federal election campaign.

In contrast to the over-funding of private schools, the chronic under-funding of NSW public schools is set to continue for the rest of the decade. NSW public schools are only funded at 87.4% of their SRS in 2022. They will be funded at less than 91% of their SRS until 2029 because the Commonwealth-NSW bilateral funding agreement allows the NSW Government to defraud public schools.

Formally, the NSW Government is only required to fund public schools to 75% of their SRS instead of 80% by 2027, with the Commonwealth providing the other 20% by 2023. However, the agreement also allows the NSW Government to claim expenditure on depreciation and the NSW Education Standards Authority up to 4% of its target share.

These expenditures are specifically excluded from the definition of the SRS and so allow the NSW Government to reduce its target share to be achieved by 2027 to 71%. Thus, public schools will only ever be funded at 91% of their SRS for at least the next five years and probably later.

This skulduggery robs public schools of billions in funding. The cumulative under-funding of public schools from 2022 to 2028 is estimated by SOS at about \$13 billion.

We are at a critical point in the future of school funding. The Morrison Government is under pressure to provide another special deal for private schools to protect their millions in over-funding. The question is not whether it will deliver to its clients, but how much in the lead up to the Federal election.

Meanwhile, public schools continue to suffer from massive, chronic under-funding. The Federal election is an opportunity for Labor, the Greens and Independents to address the inequity in school funding.

Labor and the Greens must deliver on their promise to ensure that public schools are fully funded at 100% of their SRS. Shadow Minister for Education, Tanya Plibersek, has committed to this goal several times in the last few months, most recently at the NSW Teachers Federation Principals Conference.

The Commonwealth Government must play a greater role in addressing disadvantage in education. A priority should be to increase the funding loadings for disadvantaged students. Another priority is to revise the Commonwealth-State bilateral funding agreement to ensure that the states, including NSW, fulfil their responsibilities in funding public schools.

<https://saveourschools.com.au/funding/morrison-govt-to-over-fund-nsw-private-schools-by-nearly-1-billion/>

Wealthy Qld Private Schools Massively Over-Funded by the Morrison Government

 Trevor Cobbold / April 19, 2022 / Funding

Queensland private schools are massively over-funded by the Commonwealth Government. Queensland Catholic education system and about one-third of Independent schools will be over-funded by \$665 million by the Commonwealth Government from 2022 to 2028.

The Catholic system will be over-funded by \$384 million and 88 Independent schools by \$271 million. Just 30 Independent schools are over-funded by \$199 million. They account for nearly three-quarters of the total over-funding of Independent schools. They include many of the most expensive and exclusive schools in Queensland.

The full list of over-funded Independent schools is in Attachments 1 of the full SOS research paper which can be downloaded below. The estimates are based on official figures presented to Senate Estimates.

Under the current funding arrangements for private schools, the Commonwealth Government is responsible for funding private schools at 80% of their Schooling Resource Standard (SRS). However, many Queensland private schools are funded at well above 80% as shown in the table below.

The Queensland Government is responsible for the other 20% of the SRS target, but it has not divulged its current and future funding estimates for individual private schools and systems. On average, it is also over-funding private schools at 21.2% of their SRS.

Cannon Hill College is the top over-funded school. Its cumulative over-funding by the Commonwealth Government for 2022 to 2028 will amount to \$16.2 million. The school is currently funded at 132% of its Schooling Resource Standard (SRS) by the Commonwealth Government instead of the target 80%.

Cannon Hill College is a highly privileged school. Over three-quarters of its students are from the highest socio-educationally advantaged (SEA) quartile and over 94% are from the top two quartiles. Only one per cent are from the lowest SEA quartile.

Brisbane Grammar is also highly over-funded. It is currently funded at 133% of its SRS by the Commonwealth and will be over-funded by \$12.9 million to 2028. Nearly 90% of its students are from the top SEA quartile and 94% are from the top two quartiles.

Other over-funded wealthy schools include St Margaret's School which is currently funded at 133% of its SRS by the Commonwealth and its cumulative over-funding to 2028 will be \$9.2 million. Brisbane Girls Grammar is funded at 120% of its SRS and will be over-funded by \$8 million to 2028; Hillbrook School is funded at 106% of its SRS and will be over-funded by \$6.1 million and four Presbyterian and Methodist Schools (Brisbane Boys College, Clayfield College, Somerset House and Sunshine Coast Grammar) are funded at 101% of their SRS and will be over-funded by an average of \$5.7 million each. Matthew Flinders College is funded at 106% of its SRS and will be over-funded by \$11.7 million.

Around 70% and more of students in these schools are from the top SEA quartile and 90% are from the top two quartiles. They have virtually no students from the lowest SEA quartile, not surprising given their average fees of around \$30,000 a year.

Top Over-Funded Qld Independent Schools

Schools	C/W SRS Share 2022 %	C/W Over-Funding 2022 % points	C/W Over-Funding 2022-2028 \$	Fees 2019 \$
Cannon Hill College	132	52	16,226,752	13,077
Brisbane Grammar	133	53	12,895,086	26,031
Matthew Flinders College	108	28	11,736,159	14,853
Rockhampton Grammar	98	18	11,023,410	10,361
St Margaret's School	133	53	9,204,664	20,695
Whitsunday Anglican	116	36	9,025,099	8,935
Brisbane Girls Grammar	120	40	7,953,111	25,201
Townsville Grammar	97	17	7,899,167	11,560
All Saints School	91	11	7,785,897	10,915
Somerset College	93	13	7,075,189	16,179
Hillbrook School	106	26	6,113,515	14,161
Presbyterian/Methodist (4)	101	21	5,747,806	18,938
Moreton Bay College	94	13	5,347,333	12,985
Toowoomba Grammar	91	11	5,154,930	14,547
Ormiston College	91	11	5,132,440	10,538
Brisbane Diocese (10)	89	9	4,561,551	11,414
Cathedral School of St Ann & St James	89	9	4,323,956	11,272
Sheldon College	98	18	4,036,538	12,833

Sources: See Attachment 3: Data Sources and Methodology.

Note: The over-funding, fees and student composition of the Presbyterian & Methodist and the Diocese of Brisbane schools are averages for the two systems. See Attachment 2 for details of the two school systems.

The Diocese of Brisbane School System, consisting of 10 schools, is also heavily over-funded. It will be over-funded by \$45.6 million to 2028, an average of \$4.6 million per school. Several of its schools are highly privileged (see Attachment 2). For example, 62% of students at St Andrews Anglican College are from the top SEA quartile and 90% are from the top two quartiles. Similarly, 61% of students at St Paul's School are from the top SEA quartile and 89% are from the top two quartiles with only 2% from the bottom quartile. Both schools have only one per cent of their students from the bottom SEA quartile.

The Queensland Catholic school system is over-funded at present by the Commonwealth Government at 83% of its SRS. The Commonwealth share of its SRS will increase to 84% next year and then gradually decline to 80% in 2029. This will result in over-funding of about \$384 million for 310 schools.

The over-funding of private schools is due to end by 2029 as the Commonwealth reduces its funding share to 80% of their SRS. However, there is no guarantee this will occur. Several private school organisations are campaigning against losing their over-funding and, indeed, want more. Their greed is unrestrained. In effect, it is a campaign against funding for those most in need.

In its pre-Budget submission, Independent Schools Australia called for increased funding to support choice in education. Their demands include more funding for schools to transition to the Direct Measure of Income (DMI) methodology for calculating the financial need of private schools. This is despite receiving \$455 million over ten years from 2019-2029 under the Choice and Accountability slush fund, \$66 million in various forms of transitional assistance to the DMI approach in 2019 and hundreds of millions in JobKeeper payments in 2020. It also wants more funding for regional boarding schools and an increase in capital grants.

Not to be outdone, the National Catholic Education Commission also wants additional funding for its schools in regional, rural and remote areas and for regional boarding schools. This is despite its huge windfall of \$3.7 billion over ten years from 2019 to 2020 from the introduction of the DMI to assess the financial need of schools, \$727 million in additional funding under the Choice and Accountability Fund and \$157 million in transitional assistance to the DMI in 2019.

The Coalition of Metropolitan and Outer Regional Schools (COMAIRSA), which has nine member schools in Queensland is also campaigning against the planned reduction in Commonwealth funding to 80% of their SRS by 2029. It includes several highly privileged schools that are highly over-funded such as St. Margaret's Girls School and All Saints School. All of the Queensland schools affiliated with CMARSA are over-funded and their total over-funding will amount to \$37.6 million over 2022 to 2028 [see Attachment 2].

COMAIRSA wants yet another special deal from the Morrison Government to retain this over-funding. It is opposed to the DMI method of assessing the financial need of schools because many of its members will have less funding than under the previous model. It has called for a "zero disadvantage" clause to be adopted whereby schools do not lose funding due to the DMI model.

We can expect to hear more of these demands in the Federal election campaign.

In contrast to the over-funding of private schools, the chronic under-funding of public schools in Queensland is set to continue for the rest of the decade. Queensland public schools are only funded at 84.5% of their SRS in 2022. They will be funded at less than 91% of their SRS until 2032 because the Commonwealth-Queensland bilateral funding agreement allows the Queensland Government to defraud public schools.

Formally, the Queensland Government is only required to fund public schools to 75% of their SRS instead of 80% by 2032, with the Commonwealth providing the other 20% by 2023. However, the agreement also allows the Queensland Government to claim expenditure on depreciation and school transport up to 4% of its target share. It can also claim expenditure on the Queensland Curriculum and Assessment Authority.

These expenditures are specifically excluded from the definition of the SRS and so allow the Queensland Government to reduce its target share to be achieved by 2032 to less than 71%. Thus, public schools will only ever be funded at less than 91% of their SRS for at least the next ten years.

This skulduggery robs public schools of billions in funding. The cumulative under-funding of public schools from 2022-2029 is estimated by SOS at nearly \$12 billion. Figures are not available to estimate the extent of the under-funding to 2032.

We are at a critical point in the future of school funding. The Morrison Government is under pressure to provide another special deal for private schools to protect their millions in over-funding. The question is not whether it will deliver to its clients, but how much in the lead up to the Federal election.

Meanwhile, public schools continue to suffer from massive chronic under-funding. The Federal election is an opportunity for Labor, the Greens and Independents to address the inequity in school funding.

Labor and the Greens must deliver on their promise to ensure that public schools are fully funded at 100% of their SRS. Shadow Minister for Education, Tanya Plibersek, has committed to this goal several times in the last few months, most recently at the NSW Teachers Federation Principals Conference.

The Commonwealth Government must play a greater role in addressing disadvantage in education. A priority should be to increase the funding loadings for disadvantaged students. Another priority is to revise the Commonwealth-State bilateral funding agreement to ensure that the states, including Queensland, fulfil their responsibilities in funding public schools.

A story based on this research paper was published in the Courier-Mail Online on 14 April and in the print edition on 17 April.

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