

AUSTRALIAN COUNCIL FOR THE DEFENCE OF GOVERNMENT SCHOOLS

Press Release 993

Labor Party re-inserts commitment to ‘secular’ education in National Policy

DOGS welcomes the Labor Party’s decision to re-insert the reference to ‘secular’ public education into its national policy document and congratulate the Rationalist Society of Australia on their successful lobbying in this matter.

The Labor Party was considering dropping the concept of ‘secular’ public education in its national policy document at the National Conference to be held on 18 August .

But, on the day, the party amended it proposed paragraph on public education to add the word ‘secular’

Paragraph 76 of the National Platform now reads:

“Public schools are among our nation’s most important institutions and should be fully and fairly funded to deliver excellent secular education that meets the needs of every child.”

The change to the policy document follows public advocacy by the Rationalist Society of Australia and lobbying by individuals and others across the country.

In early June, the RSA reported that the party removed the reference to “universal, free and secular” public education from the draft which it was circulating to rank-and-file members as part of a consultation process.

Earlier this month, the RSA reported that, despite a number of Labor members having called on the party to re-insert a commitment to ‘secular’ public education, a revised version of the draft policy document still left out the reference.

On 16 August in a video viewed by more than 70,000 people on Twitter, RSA president Meredith Doig (pictured) urged Labor members to tell Prime Minister Anthony Albanese and the party to recommit to ‘secular’ public education.

Following the Conference outcome, Dr Doig the President of the Rationalist Society of Australia thanked all those people who had taken action.

“We know that for many Labor parliamentarians and rank-and-file members supporting ‘secular’ public education is part of their DNA. So we’re very pleased to see that the federal Labor Party will not be abandoning the commitment to the ‘secular’ nature of the public school system,” she said.

“Thank you to everyone who responded to our reporting of this issue and who took action. We know that many people across the country made submissions to the party’s initial consultation process and then contacted their local MPs and Mr Albanese to say that they care about secular public education.

“This demonstrates how people who care about secularism can make a difference when they make their voices heard.”

.

**LISTEN TO THE DOGS PROGRAM
855 ON THE AM DIAL: 12.00 NOON SATURDAYS
<http://www.3cr.org.au/dogs>**