

The following information summarises the respective school education policies and announcements of the three major parties announced to date, assessed against key issues of concern to Independent schools.

### Provision of certainty of Australian Government funding for Independent schools beyond 2017

#### Coalition

The Coalition's [Quality Schools, Quality Outcomes](#) policy commits to increasing school funding from \$16 billion in 2016 to \$20 billion in 2020.

The Coalition have committed to a new funding model from 2017. The Coalition will provide an additional \$1.2 billion over three years from 2018.

Coalition statements in the budget context noted that it will develop a new funding distribution model to commence in 2018, following consultation with the states/ territories and the non-government school sector.

#### ALP

Labor's [Your Child. Our Future](#) policy commits to delivering the "Gonski" funding and reforms in accordance with the original six year (2014-19) transition period.

The Parliamentary Budget Office has costed the impact of funding years five and six at \$4.5 billion.

Labor's policy states that they have "provisioned \$37.3 billion for the package over the decade from 2015-16 to 2025-26," which is inclusive of their commitment to fund years five and six of the transition to "Gonski".

#### Greens

The Greens support the continuation of the Gonski funding and reforms over the original six year transition period.

The Greens have [announced](#) \$3.9 billion for years five and six of the National Education Reform Agreement and \$1.5bn for the maintenance of this level of funding into 2020.

The Greens [education principles](#) assert that "growth in federal funding to non-government schools has had an adverse impact on public education". They also state that Federal funding should prioritise public education and they support reforming the funding model to redirect funding from wealthy non-government schools to public schools.

### Support for students with disability

#### Coalition

Through the transition to the students with disability loading, the Australian Government will provide \$5.3 billion for students with disability to 2017.

In the 2016-17 Budget, the Australian Government committed an additional \$118.2 million for schools to support students with disability for the 2016 and 2017 calendar years.

Funding for students with disability post-2017 will be subject to negotiation as part of new funding distribution models.

#### ALP

The Labor commitment to fully implement the SRS funding arrangements will continue schools' transition to their students with disability loading.

Labor states *the Your Child. Our Future* plan will provide \$570 million in additional support for students with disability and additional learning needs by 2019. This includes:

\$368 million in the 2018-19 school years, targeted to student need through the interim disability loading.

\$202 million in additional support for students with disability over the 2017-19 school years.

The ALP have also announced \$30 million in grants to support schools to purchase assistive education technology and undertake minor capital improvements.

*Your Child. Our Future* will also implement the recommendations of the Senate Inquiry into the Education and Attainment of Students with Disability.

#### Greens

The Greens have committed to increase resources for students with disability by \$4.8 billion over the next four years, as top-up funding for the existing SWD loading.

In addition they have committed to a National Plan for Students with Disability.

## Policy on rate of indexation of recurrent school funding

Coalition
For the 2018 to 2020 school years, recurrent funding will be indexed by an education specific indexation rate of 3.56%, with an allowance for changes in enrolments. This measure replaces, for the 2018 to 2020 school years, the former Coalition policy of indexation at the rate of CPI (budget estimates of 2.5%) and reflects, more accurately, increases in the cost of school education.

ALP
The announced commitment to continuing the current SRS funding model for the full six year (2014-19) transition period indicates the continuation of indexation rates as outlined in the current Australian Education Act at 3%, 3.6% & 4.7%.

Greens
The Greens state they will honour the full six years of National Education Reform Agreement (NERA) for all jurisdictions, and that at the completion of year six, funding will be maintained at year six levels, plus indexation as stipulated in the <i>Australian Education Act 2013</i> .

## Funding to Associations of Independent Schools to support government policy and program initiatives in Independent schools

Coalition
Currently no commitment beyond 2017 to continue funding currently delivered under the <i>Students First Support Fund</i> . However, Education Minister Simon Birmingham has recognised the valuable work of Associations of Independent Schools and committed that a Coalition Government will undertake an assessment of the utilisation of this funding and future requirements for consideration in the 2017-18 Budget.

ALP
A Labor Government will provide \$82 million to Independent school associations and Catholic education commissions for the duration of the original six-year Gonski agreements. It will be titled the <i>Teaching and Learning Support Program</i> .

Greens
The Greens state that they will continue to support the existing partnership between state and territory Associations of Independent Schools and the Australian Government in implementing policies and practices to support student outcomes and support government initiatives.

## Support direct funding relationship between Independent schools and the Australian Government

Coalition
No specific election policy, however the Prime Minister stated in March, in the context of planned reforms of Commonwealth/ State financial relations, that no Coalition Federal Government would retreat from funding and continuing to support the non-government school sector.

ALP
Labor state that they will continue the Commonwealth's direct funding relationship with schools, as set out in the National Education Reform Agreement.

Greens
The Greens state that they support and would continue the current direct funding relationship between the Australian Government and Independent schools.

## Increase provision of capital funding to Independent schools

Coalition
No plans to make changes to the Government Capital Grants Program as it stands.

ALP
No plans to make changes to the Government Capital Grants Program as it stands.

Greens
No plans to make changes to the Government Capital Grants Program as it stands.