

A Bitter Blow to New South Wales Schools: Gonski 2.0 Passes Senate

P&C Federation is bitterly disappointed that the Australian Senate voted to slash over \$846 million in funding for public schools in New South Wales over the next two years.

The Federal Government's "Gonski 2.0" reforms passed early this morning, 34 votes to 31. This arrangement reneges on the funding promised under the original Gonski deal signed in 2013, under which the majority of funding was to be provided in the years 2018 and 2019.

It is especially astonishing considering public schools in Liberal and National Party Federal electorates in New South Wales will collectively lose over \$372 million in funding in 2018 and 2019.

P&C Federation President Susie Boyd commented "What's called Gonski 2.0 is a dramatic downgrade from what was agreed between our State and the Commonwealth Government in 2013. The 2013 agreement was signed in good faith, and that the government is reneging on this before most of the promised funding was due to be released is a bitter blow for disadvantaged students in the State."

"A deal is a deal. It's outrageous the Government feels it can abandon a deal before it's fully implemented just because it was signed under a different political party.

"It's rather like a company refusing to pay outstanding tax obligations just because it gets a new management team. The ATO wouldn't accept that, and there's no reason for New South Wales to accept that from the Commonwealth Government."

"If the Government can abandon one agreement so cavalierly, what's to stop a different government from abandoning this funding in the future?"

Ms Boyd added "We have always stressed that any Gonski 2.0 arrangement should be implemented once the current Gonski agreement runs its course in 2019. This would have allowed the effectiveness of current funding to be fairly assessed, which could have fed into new funding arrangement for after 2019.

"Instead, the Government has rammed this legislation through the Senate seemingly to dodge their obligations before they were due to fulfil them."

"We now need to know what measures the NSW state government is considering following this blow - as the losses will simply be devastating".

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