

## Public School Parents Give The Education Budget a D

Whilst acknowledging the largesse of funding provided to education in the 2019-2020 NSW Budget, and the enormous amount of work that has been done and is being done in this sector, public school parents should not be rejoicing and believing that this is generous. It's WHAT IS DUE to the parents and students of NSW – key words in the papers include 'backlog of maintenance' and 'new students'.

Of course, there is an injection of funds – given the massive enrolment increases, the alternative is to start teaching children in the parks as there are no classes left!

P&C Associations across the state are currently discussing ways to raise additional funds to supplement the government in areas of infrastructure that are not on the government's priority list. This includes paying for adequate halls or 21<sup>st</sup> century learning spaces, and even covering the treatment of asbestos-contaminated grounds.

Furthermore, despite NSW Treasurer Dominic Perrottet's boast that "*no state has been more committed to implementing the Gonski principles than New South Wales*", the NSW Government continues to underfund public education.

The "Gonski principles" involve calculating a school's 'Schooling Resource Standard' (SRS), an estimate of how much total public funding a school needs to meet the educational needs of its students.

Under legislation, the NSW State Government is required to eventually fund 80% of the SRS of NSW public schools while the Federal Government funds the other 20%.

However, with the NSW Government diverting up to 4% of the school's SRS funding to the New South Wales Education Standards Authority (NESA), which all sectors utilise, the NSW Government will only ever fund 76% of a public school's SRS. This means public schools will be permanently underfunded under the same Gonski principles, which Mr Perrottet touts.

P&C Federation President, Susie Boyd said "It is rich for Mr Perrottet to lecture schools about improving their outcomes when he knows that these schools will NEVER reach the minimum Schooling Resources Standard".

Mr Perrottet also announced in his budget speech that increases in education funding will be "*matched by a corresponding increase in education outcomes*", though he did not specify what those outcomes will be or how they will be measured.

Ms Boyd added "Nobody is against ensuring that education funding leads to better outcomes. However, the concern is that the government could reduce funding from schools that fall behind, which would be a perversion of what education funding is supposed to be about."

**Sydney, NSW, 20 June 2019**

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