

# THE FACTS ON SCHOOL FUNDING IN AUSTRALIA



**School funding** can be a confusing and contentious topic – so it's important that parents and school communities know the facts.

This leaflet explains how and why governments fund all not-for-profit schools, including Catholic schools.



## KEY STATISTICS (2018) - CATHOLIC SCHOOLS IN AUSTRALIA

Schools



1750

Students



764,190

Staff



96,098

Catholic schools have educated Australian students for almost 200 years

## CATHOLIC SCHOOLS EDUCATE 1 IN 5 STUDENTS



## THE COST OF A SCHOOL EDUCATION

The true cost of a school education in Australia is much higher than most people realise. The Federal Government calculates the basic cost at \$11,343 per primary student and \$14,254 per secondary student for 2019. That would be a huge cost for most Australian families, especially if they have two or more children.

This is why state/territory and federal governments provide some funding to all not-for-profit school sectors.



PRIMARY STUDENT  
\$11,343



SECONDARY STUDENT  
\$14,254

## HOW GOVERNMENT FUNDING IS CALCULATED

Funding for all schools in all sectors is calculated using the same needs-based measure – the Schooling Resource Standard (SRS).

Each school's SRS is calculated according to the needs of its students, starting with a base amount - \$11,343 per primary student or \$14,254 per secondary student plus extra funding for six types of disadvantage.

So a primary school educating many disadvantaged students may have an SRS of more than \$17,000 per student, while another educating highly advantaged students may have an SRS of less than \$12,000 per student.

The SRS is a funding target and was introduced in 2014. For many state and territory governments, it represents a big jump in their school funding commitments as they are the majority funders of public schools which educate two-thirds of all students. Meeting the SRS is therefore being phased in over several years with Federal assistance.

## WHO PAYS THE SRS?

In public schools, the SRS is funded solely by state/territory and federal governments; parents are not required to contribute.

In Catholic and other non-government schools, state/territory and federal governments fund 20-90% of the SRS base amount according to a means test of the school's parents, who are expected to make up the shortfall. The more parents can afford to pay, the less public funding a non-government school attracts.

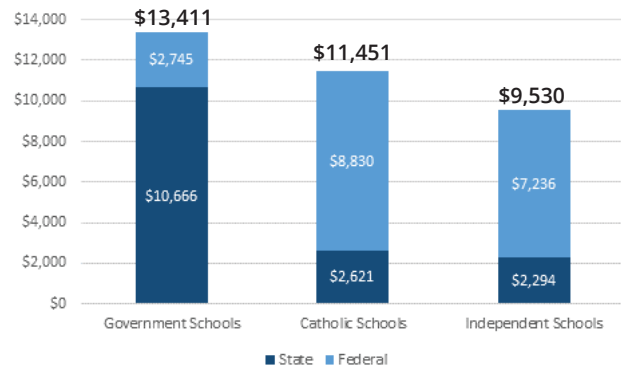
## IT'S A FACT



- Funding for all students in all school sectors is calculated using the same needs-based measure - the Schooling Resource Standard (SRS)
  - In public schools, the SRS is solely funded by taxpayers
  - In Catholic and other non-government schools, parents pay part of the SRS according to an assessment of their ability to pay
  - Public school funding has never been cut to fund Catholic schools. Funding for public schools has risen every year in line with enrolments and indexation
- Catholic Education supports a strong, properly funded public schools sector
  - All Australian students should have access to a quality education, no matter which school they attend
- Catholic school parents are also taxpayers and deserve a fair share of government funding support to keep their children's schools affordable
- By keeping Catholic schools affordable, one in five Australian children can attend a school that reflects their parents' values and beliefs – an important feature of a pluralist society
- Catholic schools save taxpayers money; without affordable Catholic schools, taxpayers would need to fund 100% of the cost of educating Catholic school students, instead of around 70%

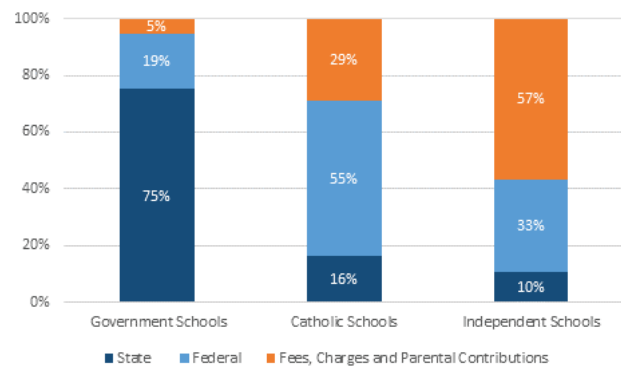
## HOW MUCH GOVERNMENT FUNDING DO SCHOOLS RECEIVE?

2017 TOTAL GOVERNMENT RECURRENT FUNDING (per student average)



## HOW MUCH DO CATHOLIC SCHOOL PARENTS PAY?

SOURCES OF RECURRENT FUNDING 2017



Catholic school communities, on average, contribute almost 30% of the cost of educating their students. The remainder is covered by a combination of state/territory and federal government funding.

Without this government funding support, Catholic systemic schools would need to charge parents the full cost of educating their child. This would put a Catholic education out of reach for most Australian families, forcing them onto the public schools sector which is already stretched.

In 2017, Catholic school communities paid \$3.6 billion in fees and \$1.27 billion in capital funding to support their schools. This represents a significant saving to taxpayers.

2017 FUNDING SOURCES - CAPITAL

