



# Media Release

## System schools to lose hundreds of millions in funding

Non-government schools belonging to systems will lose hundreds of millions of dollars due to an oversight in the Federal Government's new funding plan that favours independent schools.

The oversight means that 'overfunded' independent schools – those currently receiving more than their Schooling Resource Standard (SRS) Commonwealth funding entitlement – will have their funding corrected over 10 years.

But non-government schools in a system - such as Catholic, Lutheran, Anglican and Seventh Day Adventist schools – will have their funding adjusted down in 2018 in one fell swoop, collectively losing hundreds of millions before their funding climbs to its correct level in 2023.

Catholic Education Commission NSW (CECNSW) says it faces the loss of \$353 million unless the Federal Government moves to ensure school systems are not disadvantaged.

"When he announced his new 10-year funding model, Federal Education Minister Simon Birmingham said all non-government schools will be treated in exactly the same way," CECNSW's acting Executive Director Ian Baker said.

"But as we examine the detail of Senator Birmingham's school funding plan more closely, it is plain that some schools will enjoy a much softer landing than others.

"Independent schools are being given 10 years to adjust down to their correct funding level while system schools must suffer a huge immediate cut, then wait until 2023 for their Commonwealth funding entitlement to reach its correct level.

"This could force systems to make deeper cuts to staffing and resources much sooner than independent schools need to."

Mr Baker said the Minister has unwittingly created an incentive for some schools to abandon their membership of a system because they can obtain a financial benefit as a stand-alone school.

"School systems have been supported by successive governments for 40 years as an effective way to deliver school funding and support the education of Australian students," he said.

"Catholic education is deeply committed to retaining the integrity of its school systems."

Mr Baker said the National Catholic Education Commission has sought urgent clarification from the Minister on the issue and is awaiting a response.

He said the Catholic sector estimated it would lose \$1.07 billion nationally by 2023 if the Federal Government did not resolve this inequity.

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