No excuse for Barnett to continue to deny WA Gonski funding



The State School Teachers' Union has called on the Barnett Government to reconsider its refusal to sign up to Gonski education funding, after the federal Labor party committed to providing the final two years of funding if elected.

The Labor party has announced a decade-long education plan worth $37.3 billion, including $4.5 billion to fully fund Gonski in its final two years (2018 and 2019).

WA and the Northern Territory are the only two governments not to sign up to the Gonski model, denying WA millions of dollars in funding.

"When Colin Barnett refused Gonski funding, WA had the strongest performing economy in the nation," said SSTUWA President Pat Byrne.

"WA has since slipped dramatically down the economic rankings, and the government can no longer afford to say 'no' to $2 of federal funding to match every $1 the state puts in.

"The students in this state should not be punished because Colin Barnett is too arrogant to swallow his pride and tell the Federal Government he made a mistake and should have signed WA up to Gonski."

Ms Byrne said it was incredibly difficult for educators in WA to watch other states significantly benefit from Gonski funding, while having to endure almost $200 million in budget cuts in this state.

"One of the conditions of signing up to Gonski was that State Governments were not allowed to make any cuts to state funding, so WA would not have had to endure these cuts if we had have signed up," she said.

"Students in other states that commit to Gonski are getting more one-to-one support in classrooms and extra literacy and numeracy programs.

"Students who are at risk of falling behind are getting the early intervention support they need.

"In WA, the government has cut back programs and Education Assistant time, which means while students in other states are getting more support, students in WA are getting less.

"WA children will start falling behind other states if Gonski funding continues to only flow to those states with funding

agreements.

“Gonski funding is the only way to ensure all children have a chance to make the most of their potential.”

Authorised by Sally Dennis, General Secretary, The State School Teachers' Union of W.A.
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