WA Government admits to education cuts in public schools

SSTUWA media release: 4 December 2018, WA Government Admits to Education Cuts for Public Schools

The State School Teachers' Union says the WA Government has admitted it would cut its share of recurrent education funding by up to 10 per cent over the next six years, spelling disaster for WA public schools.

In a tweet on Tuesday morning Treasurer Ben Wyatt admitted that the government would reduce its level of funding to WA public schools under the new education funding deal signed between the state and federal governments on Monday 3 December 2018.

The SSTUWA estimates that this could be as much as $6 billion over the next 10 years.

"This new deal is a disaster for WA public schools, students and teachers because the state government now has no obligation to continue its current level of funding, in fact it is allowed to reduce it," said SSTUWA President Pat Byrne.

"Schools are already cut to the bone, with 90 per cent of teachers already dipping into their own pockets to provide the basics."

The State currently funds WA public schools to 85 per cent of its School Resource Standard (SRS), the minimum amount required to achieve successful education outcomes, but the new deal means the State can drop its level of funding to 75 per cent over the next six years.

"Previous WA Governments have made a policy decision to provide a higher quality public education system by funding public schools at a little over 100 per cent of their SRS, taking into account federal funding," said Ms Byrne.

"But the WA Labor Government has now taken a deliberate policy decision to degrade the quality of its public education system by implementing a massive loss of funding over the next 10 years of more than $6 billion."

"For example last year the SRS was funded to 105 per cent; this year it has been funded to 101 per cent.

"It was always a concern that the utterly flawed Coalition Government federal funding changes would open the door to states reducing their contribution. Now those fears have been realised.

"Schools need funding to 100 per cent of the SRS or better, not to be left with gaps which leave schools struggling for funds while state and federal governments play blame games," said Ms Byrne.

The extra $200 million over six years is the only new money in the deal, and is a pittance in the context of the total education budget over the next six years.

"This is a dud deal for WA public schools, particularly our most disadvantaged students. There is no guarantee that funding will increase, but a strong likelihood that funding to WA public schools will be cut," she said.

SRS Funding under the new deal

Sector	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Government	84.43%	80.56%	77.56%	75.56%	75.00%	75.00%
Non-Government	26.30%	25.72%	20.00%	20.00%	20.00%	20.00%

Authorised by Sally Dennis, General Secretary, The State School Teachers' Union of W.A.
ABN 54 478 094 635 © 2026