New analysis shows public and private schools delivering same results despite funding gap

A new analysis of NAPLAN results shows that public schools deliver similar academic results as private schools, once students' socio-economic background is taken into account.

AEU Deputy Federal President Correna Haythorpe said the results were a testament to the strength of public schools, which had fewer resources than private schools.

"This analysis backs up previous research which has found that students' socio- economic background plays a far bigger role in determining results than whether they attend public or private schools," Ms Haythorpe said.

"We need our schools funding system to recognise this and deliver Gonski funding to support students in low-SES schools."

The analysis of Year 9 NAPLAN results, published today by Save Our Schools, breaks schools into High, Medium and Low Socio-Economic Status groups and finds that public and private schools in the High and Medium groups record similar results.

"This performance of public schools is particularly strong, given the disparity in resources between schools. In some cases public schools are doing better than private schools, such as in the High SES category in NSW and Victoria," Ms Haythorpe said.

"The Federal Government's own issues paper on Education, released in December found that public schools had an average of $12,400 per student in recurrent funding, while Independent schools received $18,000 from all sources."

"This analysis also confirms that very few private schools fall into the low-SES category, and educating those students is left up to the public system."

"Public schools remain the only schools in Australia which must educate all students, regardless of their parents' income and it is imperative that they are properly funded."

"We need a real commitment from the Abbott Government and the States and Territories to break the link between social disadvantage and poor school results, and make sure all students have a chance to realise their potential."

"This means the delivery of the full six years of Gonski funding and lifting all schools to the minimum resource standard."

"Successive OECD reports have highlighted that better-performing countries target funding to tackle disadvantage. In doing so they drive improvement in equity and excellence for all students."

"Unless governments and schools can make long-term decisions and target those groups of students most in need, the gap between the disadvantaged and the advantaged in the Australian school system will increase."

The full analysis can be found here.

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