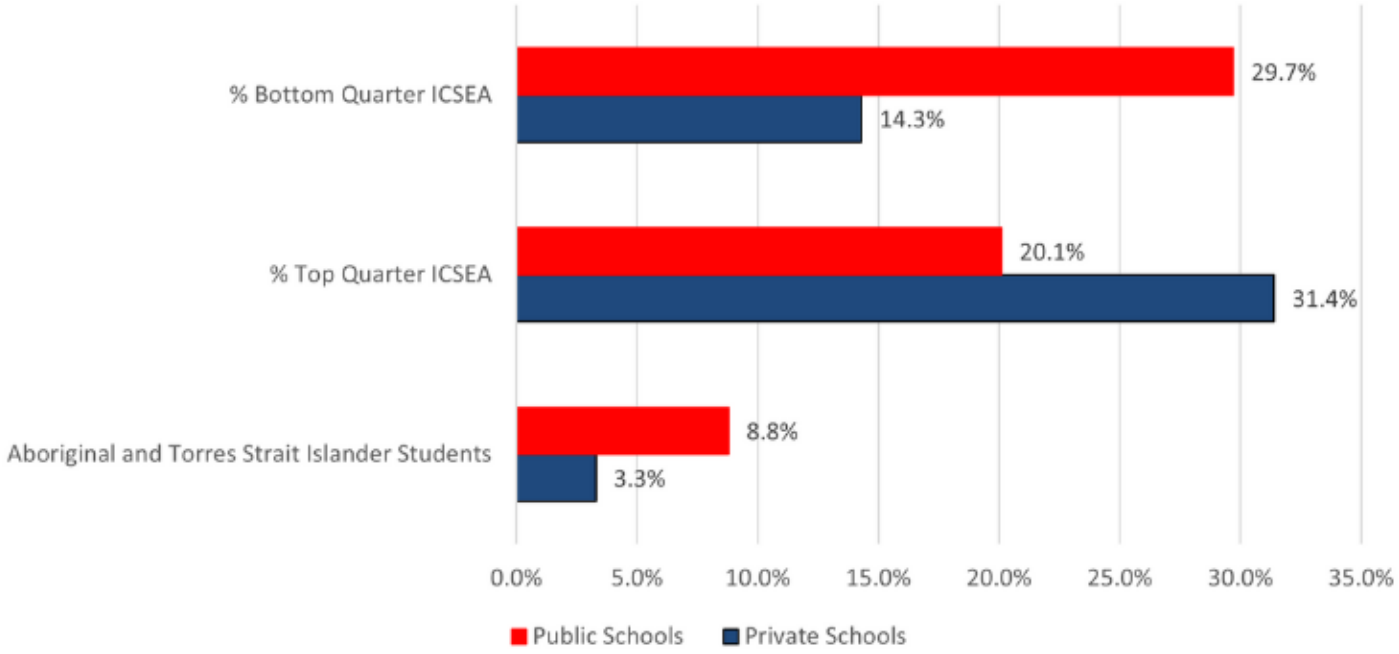
WA school funding

Public schools in Western Australia educate proportionally more than twice the number of students from low socio-educational advantage backgrounds, compared to private schools and 2.7 times the number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students.

Western Australia student demographics by school sector 2023



Public school underfunding in Western Australia

Despite the clear and increasing need of public school students in Western Australia, under the statement of intent signed by the WA and Federal governments in January 2024 they will continue to be underfunded by the Commonwealth and state governments:

- Public schools will be underfunded by $1.78 billion over the five-year period 2024-2028.

	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028
Total public school SRS %	91.00%	93.5%	96.00%	96.00%	96.00%
Per student public school underfunding	$1,864	$1,389	$880	$909	$937
Total public school underfunding	**$549,032,853**	**$412,201,355**	**$262,955,732**	**$273,418,385**	**$283,774,131**

- Every public school student will be underfunded by $1,864 in 2024, and will still be underfunded by $937 each in 2028.
- $1.32 billion of the underfunding of public schools in Western Australia over the five-year period 2024-2028 comes

from the state government's use of the "four per cent additional allowance" for school transport, capital depreciation, kindergarten expenditure and regulatory bodies – costs never intended to be covered from the Schooling Resource Standard (SRS).

- In January 2024 WA Education Minister Dr Tony Buti claimed: "That has been always considered as part of the funding agreement. Every other state does it. That four per cent goes to ensuring that we have a quality education."[1]
- That is not the case, as these costs were never intended to be counted as part of recurrent school funding and were explicitly excluded from the SRS when it was devised.
- As shown in Commonwealth Department of Education internal briefings[2], this clause was introduced in 2018 during bilateral funding agreement negotiations between the then Commonwealth Treasurer Josh Frydenberg and state and territory treasurers.
- This alone will remove $244.0 million of funding out of classrooms in 2024, rising every year to $283.8 million in 2028 and accounts for a total of $1.32 billion in underfunding over the five years 2024-2028.

As shown above, and contrary to claims from the Cook Government, the statement of intent signed between the WA government and the Commonwealth will leave public schools in WA underfunded by at least $1.78 billion in total over the five-year period 2024-2028.

The continuation of the four per cent "additional allowance" will deprive public school students of at least $280 million per year ongoing after 2028.

Private school overfunding in Western Australia

WA private schools overfunding	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028
Total private schools SRS %	103.0%	102.4%	101.8%	101.2%	100.6%
Overfunding per student	$425	$350	$271	$186	$96
Total private school overfunding	**$64,515,722**	**$53,203,895**	**$41,103,853**	**$28,369,283**	**$14,579,619**

Under current arrangements, over the next five years private schools in the state will continue to be overfunded by the Commonwealth and WA governments by:

- A total of $201.7 million from 2024 to 2028.

On a per student basis every private school student in Western Australia will receive $425 above their full SRS in combined state and Commonwealth funding in 2024 and a total of $1,328 over 100 per cent of the SRS over the five-year period 2024-2028.

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[1] **Buti, Tony. 31 January 2024. Press Conference. Hamersley, WA.**
[2] **Senate Estimates Briefs. April 2023. FOI Disclosure Log, p.187. https://www.education.gov.au/about-department/corporate-reporting/freedom-information-foi/foi-disclosure-log**

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