



AEU NT Member Bulletin 2/2017

19 June 2017

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Why we still need to give a Gonski

Today marks National Gonski Day. Around the country AEU members are keeping the pressure on Senators not to agree to Malcolm Turnbull's school funding Bill, which the government is trying to push through the Parliament.

Our reason for rejecting this bill is very simple: it fails the fairness test.

This funding package leaves every public school in the Northern Territory worse off, not just next year but potentially for a decade to come. Instead of the large funding increases our neediest schools would have received under the original Gonski plan, this package will ensure the vast majority of our public schools cannot get to the funding level they need to be at to effectively support students.

This funding level or benchmark is known as the Schooling Resource Standard (SRS). The SRS was central to the original Gonski plan – it recognised that the cost of educating students differs based on factors such as socio-economic status, Indigeneity and geography.

Shadow Education Minister Tanya Plibersek wrote to crossbench Senators last week explaining why the bill is so bad for NT public schools:

Under the bill, 85% of public schools will not reach their SRS by 2027. The Department of Education and Training has confirmed that by 2027 the vast majority of public schools will not be funded at their full SRS.

“Under these proposed arrangements the Northern Territory government school sector would receive annual funding indexation of just 1.3% a year, a real cut, which would result in less support for our most vulnerable students.

“This reduction in funding would mean that after 10 years Northern Territory public schools would be funded at just 85.8% of their SRS. This is contrary to the Gonski principle that the neediest students should receive the largest funding increases.”

[We've attached a table showing what's on offer to every school in the Northern Territory under Turnbull's funding plan. You can have a look to see what it will mean for your school.](#)

NT public schools will see their funding increase by only about 1.7%. Meanwhile private schools will see funding increases of up to 7% next year.

As you can see from the table, all our schools rely on federal funding. Generally speaking, the more disadvantaged and/or remote a school is, the more it relies on federal funding to top up money received from the Territory Government.

This is money our schools require to cater for student need. The model Malcolm Turnbull is trying to push through the Senate takes us away from a needs-based model back to an old sector-based model.

For more info on what's wrong with this proposal, [read this short guide to the Five Things You Must Know](#).

There is still a chance to stop this bill and force the federal government to negotiate a fairer agreement with states and territories. We are focusing our energies on lobbying crossbench Senators not to support the bill in its current form.

How you can help

You can help by putting in a quick phone call to Senator Nick Xenophon's office on (02) 6277 3713 or (08) 8232 1144 and asking him not to support the bill. You simply need to say your name and where you're from, and ask him not to support Malcolm Turnbull's school funding bill because it leaves Northern Territory schools worse off.

Enterprise bargaining commencing this week

All employees covered by the NTPS Teacher and Educator Enterprise Agreement (all teachers, assistant teachers, senior teachers and non-contract principals) will have received an email last week informing you that bargaining is getting underway.

AEU reps will hold our first meeting with reps from the Office of the Commissioner for Public Employment and DoE this week. We will be guided by you as members

Official Travel Policy

Many of you have raised complaints with us about the overly restrictive and bureaucratic nature of the NT Government's official Travel Policy. This policy involves too much red tape, with the Chief Executive being required to sign off on travel of all employees.

We'd like to see much greater trust of school leaders to approve travel for their staff, and trust that employees and managers will do the right thing. This policy is overly restrictive and sends the wrong message to staff.

We have raised this matter formally with the Commissioner for Public Employment and intend to do so with the Chief Minister as well. At a minimum the delegations should be relaxed to provide more authority to principals and regional directors to approve travel.

Contact the AEU

Please let us know ASAP if your workplace, contact details or income have changed

Phone 08 8948 5399 Fax 08 8948 2577

admin@aeunt.org.au www.aeunt.org.au

Unit 3, 8 Totem Rd, Coconut Grove NT

PO Box 41863, Casuarina NT 0811