

## School funding needs to keep pace with school costs

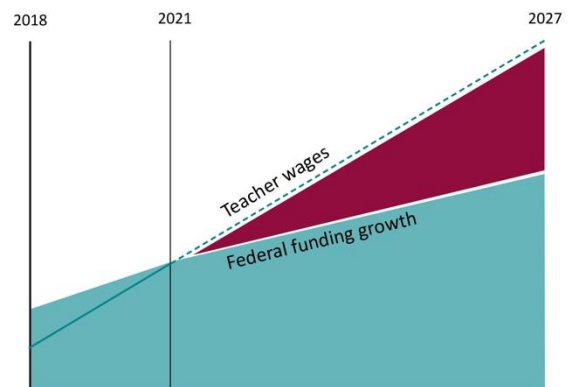
Nearly one in four Victorian students attends a Catholic school.

Catholic school families are pretty similar to government school families and are open to anyone seeking Catholic education. Catholic schools tend to keep school fees as low as possible, so that more families can make that choice for their children.

Over the next three years, the Australian Government has committed to growing funding for Catholic schools in Victoria by only 3.5%. While this might seem high in the current climate, to put it into context, teacher salaries in Victoria are expected to increase by 3.25% over the same timeframe.

This short-term gain comes with long-term pain.

From 2021, the Turnbull Government is now proposing to introduce a minimum annual indexation rate of 3%. The government originally intended on introducing a variable measure that would have resulted in significantly lower annual increases to Catholic school funding. While the government's newer proposal is a positive step, annual funding growth may not keep pace with school costs, particularly if teacher salaries continue to rise at the current rate.



Any decision to reduce Catholic school funding – by not having school funding keep pace with actual school costs – will mean that parent fees will have to go up. The alternative is to cut educational programs in schools, which will undermine the good work that many Catholic schools like this one do every day.

Neither option is acceptable, nor will our school community take this cruel hoax from the Education Minister, Simon Birmingham.

