

Friday 10 March 2017

Gonski mythology is just plain wrong

Statement by Catholic Education Melbourne Executive Director Stephen Elder

In the five years since it was released the Gonski Report has been awarded the status of holy writ by some politicians and educationalists. Indeed, it's no exaggeration to say we have seen the growth of a cult of Gonski.

Like all cults, the cult of Gonski comes with its own mythology – mythology that clouds and distorts the facts.

Ken Boston's address to the TJ Ryan Foundation in February was just a further exercise in Gonski mythologising. Despite coverage in a number of papers, very little analysis was undertaken on what was actually said.

If anything, it would appear that the mythology has clouded Dr Boston's own memories of the recommendations of the original report.

Despite Dr Boston's claims, the Gonski report did not propose a 'sector-blind' funding model. It effectively recommended two – one for government and one for non-government schools.

It ignored the fact that many government schools raise significant amounts of money from parents or sources such as overseas students.

It failed to explain why government selective schools – which exclusively educate high-performing students, most of whom come from affluent families – should continue to receive full public funding.

And in his speech Dr Boston failed to acknowledge the contribution low fee non-government schools – such as those in the Catholic sector – make in assisting disadvantaged students.

[Attached are portions of the speech](#) – along with Catholic Education Melbourne's commentary on where Gonski and Dr Boston have got it wrong.

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