

## Mr Goldman Sachs complains of ‘special deals’?

Prime Minister Malcolm Turnbull’s question time claims today the opposition has cut ‘a special deal for the Catholic school system’ just don’t stand up.

Mr Turnbull declared ‘For years, the Labor Party has said that they hold up David Gonski’s report as the gold standard. But they never implemented it. And what did David Gonski call for? Nationally consistent, needs-based funding. And that is exactly what the Government has delivered.’

Actually, Prime Minister, he didn’t – and neither did the Gonski Review panel. You haven’t delivered nationally consistent, needs-based funding, either.

The Gonski panel’s final report called for different arrangements for calculating ‘capacity to contribute’, depending on whether a school was part of a system. For non-government school systems, the Gonski Review panel pushed for enrolment weighted average SES scores. It’s all there on Page 177 of their final report:

*‘The existing SES measure has been used by the panel as the basis for estimating the quantum of the private contribution that should count towards meeting the resource standard in non-government systems and schools. **In the case of a non-government system this would be the enrolment weighted average SES score of all the schools in the system.**’*

Again, the Gonski Review panel supported state-based adjustments to a national funding model, under certain conditions. It did not recommend that a one-size-fits-all model be imposed on all schools nationally.

The Gonski Review panel final report only called for consistency in how all school sectors were treated *within* each state and territory, as the Prime Minister could read on Page 163:

*‘A key principle that has guided the panel is that the schooling resource standard should be a national one, **but with some flexibility in how it is applied... Any state-based adjustments in applying the schooling resource standard per student amounts would need to apply to all sectors within each jurisdiction.**’*

Mr Turnbull is also wrong in claiming that the government has delivered a nationally consistent funding model. Under his very own model, funding entitlements for systemic schools are calculated differently to funding entitlements for independent schools.

While funding entitlements for independent schools are calculated based on each school’s own circumstances, funding entitlements for systemic schools are calculated based on the average funding level of their whole system. This inconsistency was been conceded by the Education Department in the 2017-18 Supplementary Budget Estimates:

*‘Under the new Commonwealth school funding arrangements, **funding entitlements for schools within a system are calculated based on the system’s average funding level.**’*

# Media Release



CATHOLIC EDUCATION COMMISSION OF VICTORIA LTD

Mr Turnbull continued with the claim that ‘by 2023, every state school, every government school, will be receiving from the Commonwealth 20 per cent of the schooling resource standard. Mr Speaker, everyone. Right across the country.’

He appears to have forgotten about state schools in the Northern Territory. Based on information released last year, state schools in the Northern Territory won’t receive 20 per cent of their schooling resource standard from the Commonwealth until 2027.

Finally, Mr Turnbull said ‘What did we see during the Batman by-election? Much to the horror, much to the horror, what did we see? We saw, we saw the Leader of the Opposition rushing out, rushing out with a special deal for the Catholic school system.’

Mr Goldman Sachs complaining about special deals?

The Prime Minister and his Education Minister, Simon Birmingham, have created a string of special deals for independent schools under the brand name Gonski 2.0:

- Independent schools that are assessed to be ‘over funded’ are being given 10 years to transition to 80 per cent of their resource standard, while Catholic schools that are assessed to be ‘over funded’ are being given only six years to transition to 80 per cent of their resource standard, a move that will see Catholic schools lose \$1 billion over the decade to 2027
- Senator Birmingham gave the independent school sector special treatment in the development of his Gonski 2.0 funding arrangements, consulting extensively with them while excluding Catholic systems and the states and territories.
- The Turnbull/Birmingham funding arrangements increase the importance of a measure of school need – school SES scores – that CECV research has shown is biased in favour of elite independent schools, overfunding them by at least \$200 million each year. The Government has not offered a rebuttal to this research.
- Senator Birmingham decided to use a new dataset on students with disability that is being widely rorted by elite independent schools. Under this, independent schools in Victoria have claimed that more than 25 per cent of their students have a disability. Many wealthy independent schools are set to receive large funding increases because of this other Turnbull/Birmingham special deal, yet at the same time the Minister and his Department are refusing to release any details of the disability data submitted by elite independent schools requested under Freedom of Information laws as presumably this would destroy the credibility of the model.

And who was talking about being ‘addicted to special deals’ in question time today, Prime Minister?

We understand the cut and thrust of politics.

We want to be respectful.

But when you talk of ‘special deals’, Mr Turnbull, we have to beg to differ.

**Further information: Christian Kerr 0402 977 352**