
LABOR UNDERLINES ITS COMMITMENT TO SCHOOL EDUCATION

The National Catholic Education Commission has welcomed Opposition Leader Bill Shorten's clear support for school education in his Budget-in-reply speech, reiterating the principles of the "Your Child. Our Future" policy announced in January.

Mr Shorten last night said he is committed to ensuring "every child, in every school, gets every opportunity for a great world-class education".

NCEC executive director Ross Fox said Mr Shorten has laid the groundwork for school education to be a focus ahead of the election.

"We know that both major parties are committed to Australian schools," he said.

"As Mr Shorten said last night, ensuring a quality education for students is an investment in the Australian economy, in productivity and in growth. It's about preparing the workforce of tomorrow."

Mr Fox said the nation's 1,731 Catholic schools, with 765,000 students – one in five Australian students – are increasingly educating students with additional learning needs. Over the past decade, the number of students with disability and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students has doubled.

"Mr Shorten has clearly stated that Labor's policy will support students in all schools, and that funding will reflect the needs of students and schools," Mr Fox said.

"Catholic schools are strong supporters of needs-based funding that allows each student to have his or her educational needs addressed.

"With the enrolment profile of Catholic schools, and a desire to meet increasing demand for a Catholic education, that needs-based funding is crucial."

Mr Fox said both major parties are taking a new education policy to the upcoming federal election. The policies have some things in common, but also some differences.

"Parents and those with a strong interest in school education should consider how the respective policies will best support teaching and learning in all schools," he concluded.

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