
GOVERNMENT SCHOOL FUNDING REFLECTS NEEDS

Students in non-government schools receive 58 per cent of the government funding a student in a government school receives. Recent increases in public funding for non-government schools reflect the changing profile of students in Catholic and independent schools, the National Catholic Education Commission has explained.

The Productivity Commission yesterday released its Report on Government Services for childcare, education and training. It includes data on schools up to 2014 and shows there has been a steady increase in the level of government support all schools receive.

“When considering the way the Commonwealth, along with state and territory governments, have supported education for students in all schools over the past five years, funding for students in non-government schools has increased from 52 per cent of the funding for peers in a government school to 58 per cent,” National Catholic Education Commission executive director Ross Fox said.

“That change reflects the needs of students and families who are choosing a Catholic or independent school.”

Mr Fox said between 2009 and 2014, the number of students with disability in Catholic schools increased from 24,805 to 33,669 – a 36 per cent increase.

Over the same period, the number of Indigenous students has increased from 14,261 to 19,995 – a 40 per cent increase.

“Catholic schools are committed to welcoming families from all communities across Australia. Government funding is calculated based on student need,” Mr Fox said.

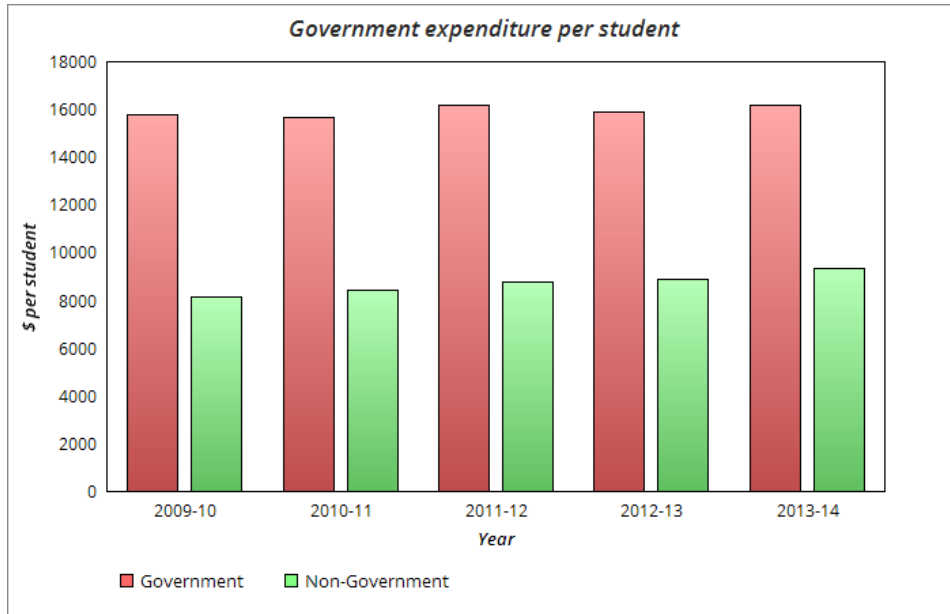
“Needs-based funding is a reality in Australia, and the changing profile of Catholic school students – with a larger proportion of students with educational need – has driven the changing levels of government funding.”

Mr Fox said despite that increase in government funding, parents continue to have to make a significant contribution to support their child in a Catholic school.

“The Productivity Commission reports that parents with students in a non-government school are paying more than 40 per cent of the cost of educating their child,” he said.

“Parents understand that fees are a part of a Catholic education, but parents should not be forced to pay an increasing share of the cost of educating a child in a Catholic school.”

A graph and tables on the following page further explain changes in funding and Catholic enrolments.



Source: Report on Government Services, Productivity Commission

Government expenditure per student in non-government school as % of student in government school

Year	Percentage
2009-10	51.7
2010-11	53.9
2011-12	54.2
2012-13	56.0
2013-14	57.7

Source: Report on Government Services, Productivity Commission

Changes in Catholic school enrolments (2009-2014)

	2009	2014	Increase
Students with Disability	24,805	33,669	36%
Indigenous students	14,261	19,995	40%

Full-time equivalents. Source: Commonwealth Department of Education and Training