

## Funding ‘absolute certainty’ becomes absolute farce

Education Minister Simon Birmingham faces further embarrassment as non-government schools around the country prepare for Term 3 with no idea about how much funding they will receive from the Turnbull Government in 2019, Catholic Education Commission of Victoria Ltd (CECV) Executive Director Stephen Elder says.

‘It’s pretty simple,’ Mr Elder said. ‘Schools can’t operate without money. And they can’t improve student outcomes without being able to plan ahead.’

‘When he launched Gonski 2.0 at the start of May last year Senator Birmingham promised “all school sectors” would enjoy “absolutely certainty” of funds in the future.’

‘He reiterated the point in a National Press Club speech days later, adding “our 10-year timeframe provides greater certainty to all sectors than ever before.”’

‘But by putting the horse in front of the cart, by implementing Gonski 2.0 while ignoring the advice of the final report of the original Gonski review panel and refusing to reform the SES score system, Senator Birmingham has turned funding into farce.’

‘2019 is just five and a half months away. Instead of “absolute certainty”, schools are preparing for Term 3 without knowing their funding for next year.’

‘Minister Birmingham hasn’t delivered absolute certainty. He’s actually delivered the least funding certainty of any Education Minister in living memory.’

‘It puts Senator Birmingham in a class of his own. His unprecedented bungling is making school planning next to impossible.’

‘Meanwhile the Turnbull Government keeps talking about STEM teachers, sport in schools and of course their grand plan to reform schooling, the Review to Achieve Educational Excellence in Australian Schools.’

‘They need to get the basics right – schools need funding certainty so they can plan and invest in measures to improve student outcomes. It’s as simple as that.’

‘For all their education bureaucracy, it’s just as well that Canberra doesn’t actually run a single school.’

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