

## Government denies Catholic school parents information on fee increases

Openness and transparency have been abandoned by the Turnbull Government in the government's school funding estimator released today, Catholic Education Executive Director Stephen Elder says.

"The only thing consistent about the government's approach to school funding is the lack of information it is providing parents and the sector," Mr Elder said.

"This estimator shows the government funding Catholic schools should expect to receive under its funding proposal.

"What parents can't see is the fees that each Catholic school is expected to charge parents under the government's 10-year school funding plan.

"Their funding model clearly specifies what each Catholic school is expected to raise in fees – they have the information at hand."

"If the Government is genuinely interested in being transparent to Catholic school communities, then it should release this information immediately."

The school funding data released today confirmed the Catholic sector's concerns that the government will take greater control over the government grants Catholic schools receive and the fees they are expected to charge.

These concerns began after the government flagged its intentions last week to abandon the system-weighted average component of the Gonski funding model. The system-weighted average recognises all schools in a system as one school, and funds them according to the average SES score of all schools.

Mr Elder said that in abandoning the system-weight average element of the funding model, there would be greater pressure on schools to raise the fees that the Government's flawed funding model estimates they should".

"While giving with one hand, the government is taking with another," Mr Elder says.

"We only have limited information about how fees will change, but the information we have gives us great concern about the rising costs some parents face.

"If the Minister and the government want to say that we're wrong, I challenge them to put out their own estimates of what fees schools should charge so parents can check whether they can expect significant fee increases at their local school."

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