

New Students with Disability analysis raises funding fears

New analysis indicates that wealthy independent schools are raking in millions from the Turnbull Government's \$1.6 billion Students with Disability (SWD) funding, raising yet more questions over Education Minister Simon Birmingham's policies.

'At the end of 2016 Senator Birmingham said the so-called Nationally Consistent Collection of Data (NCCD) on SWD results showed "extreme disparity" and that this data "fails a basic credibility test",' Catholic Education Commission of Victoria Ltd (CECV) Executive Director Stephen Elder said.

'He then performed a 180-degree turn and announced he would use the NCCD to allocate \$1.6 billion in funding for SWD in schools.

'The Turnbull Government is now going to rely on subjective teacher assessment of students – rather than diagnoses by medical professionals – to fund SWD in schools. Teachers are now effectively deciding how much funding their schools receive for SWD.

'To top it all off, the Government has not yet explained how it will audit the new dataset – even though there continue to be inexplicable differences in NCCD figures between schools, states and sectors.

To date, the Government has refused to release SWD estimates from the NCCD for individual schools. CECV Freedom of Information requests seeking these estimates have been knocked back by the Department of Education. This contradicts claims by the Minister that his funding model is transparent.

It is in the public interest for this information to become available to the community. So, using publicly available data, the CECV has for the first time provided estimates of the percentage of enrolments in wealthy independent schools that will receive a SWD loading using the NCCD.

'The number of SWD claimed by some wealthy independent schools, now that SWD funding is based on teacher judgement, is highly questionable. There are only two coherent explanations. Either the new data collection method for SWD is deeply flawed or wealthy independent schools are manipulating it – especially in Victoria.

It is no longer an excuse to say the data collection is new. Most schools have now participated in it for at least 3 years. Yet some wealthy independent schools are still claiming their number of SWD has increased more than 10-fold – and the loading some of these schools receive for SWD will more than triple in 2018.

Media Release



CATHOLIC EDUCATION COMMISSION OF VICTORIA LTD

'The figures speak for themselves. In Victoria alone, our analysis shows that as part of the NCCD the prestigious Carey Grammar has submitted that at least 14 per cent of its students are eligible for a SWD loading. Geelong Grammar says at least 10 per cent of their students are eligible for the SWD loading. Yet under the previous system, which required independent medical assessments, fewer than two percent of the students at these schools were diagnosed as being SWD.'

'CECV estimates for a selection of top independent schools are shown in the attached table. As the table shows, this pattern is repeated in several top independent schools around the country.'

'All this goes to show that the Government's Gonski 2.0 "needs-based funding model" is anything but.'

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CECV estimates of SWD data for selected independent schools

School	Location	State	School fee income in 2016 (\$/student)	ICSEA score (2017)	% enrolments from highly advantaged backgrounds	% enrolments the received loading for SWD in 2017 (based on medical assessment)	% enrolments set to receive SWD loading in 2018* (based on school teacher judgment)	Loading for SWD in 2017 (\$m) (based on medical assessment)	Loading for SWD in 2018 (\$m) (based on school teacher judgement)
Alphington Grammar School	ALPHINGTON	VIC	\$14,931	1101	45%	8%	>=40%	\$0.52	\$1.11
Kingswood College	BOX HILL	VIC	\$18,119	1163	72%	12%	>=22%	\$1.07	\$0.92
The King David School	ARMADALE	VIC	\$16,996	1169	77%	11%	>=22%	\$1.03	\$0.97
Tintern Grammar	RINGWOOD EAST	VIC	\$21,490	1138	61%	3%	>=18%	\$0.37	\$0.94
Bialik College	HAWTHORN	VIC	\$15,238	1169	75%	4%	>=18%	\$0.65	\$1.22
Eltham College	ELTHAM	VIC	\$20,194	1129	55%	3%	>=18%	\$0.35	\$0.69
St Michael's Grammar School	ST KILDA	VIC	\$26,775	1155	70%	1%	>=16%	\$0.28	\$1.30
Tara Anglican School for Girls	NORTH PARRAMATTA	NSW	\$21,969	1166	72%	<1%	>=16%	(not reported)	\$0.74
Woodleigh School	LANGWARRIN SOUTH	VIC	\$18,856	1118	52%	3%	>=15%	\$0.43	\$1.03
Carey Baptist Grammar School	KEW	VIC	\$27,505	1183	77%	2%	>=14%	\$0.60	\$2.09
Yarra Valley Grammar	RINGWOOD	VIC	\$21,781	1130	58%	3%	>=13%	\$0.69	\$1.10
Trinity Grammar School Kew	KEW	VIC	\$27,763	1182	76%	2%	>=12%	\$0.53	\$1.29
Scotch College	SWANBOURNE	WA	\$26,561	1175	79%	1%	>=12%	\$0.32	\$1.23
Masada College	ST IVES	NSW	\$14,057	1158	72%	1%	>=11%	\$0.17	\$0.51
St Leonard's College	BRIGHTON EAST	VIC	\$23,840	1177	77%	2%	>=11%	\$0.59	\$1.21
All Saints Anglican School	MERRIMAC	QLD	\$10,166	1145	63%	2%	>=11%	\$0.48	\$1.32
Canberra Grammar School	RED HILL	ACT	\$18,636	1202	85%	1%	>=10%	\$0.42	\$1.39
Prince Alfred College	KENT TOWN	SA	\$19,604	1144	65%	3%	>=10%	\$0.50	\$0.75
The Hills Grammar School	KENTHURST	NSW	\$19,951	1141	63%	4%	>=10%	\$0.57	\$0.57
Mount Scopus Memorial College	BURWOOD	VIC	\$20,083	1181	80%	3%	>=10%	\$0.69	\$0.75
Geelong Grammar School	CORIO	VIC	\$19,795	1143	66%	1%	>=10%	\$0.30	\$0.98

*CECV estimate based on school funding estimates provided on the School Funding Estimator (<https://www.education.gov.au/school-funding-estimator/>), the SRS model, NCCD for Catholic systemic schools, data released by the Department of Education and Training (school enrolments in 2017, school SES scores, etc.) plus school funding data that was recently released in Senate estimates (Education and Employment, Question on notice, 2017-18 Additional Estimates, Department of Education and Training Question No. SQ18-000208 and Education and Employment, Question on notice, Supplementary Budget Estimates 2017-18, Department of Education and Training Question No. SQ17-001215).