

MEDIA RELEASE

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LABOR'S EDUCATION RESEARCH INSTITUTE A STEP IN THE RIGHT DIRECTION

The National Catholic Education Commission (NCEC) has welcomed the Federal Opposition's promise, if elected, to establish a \$280 million independent education research institute to ensure evidenced-based practice in Australian schools.

The NCEC's acting executive director, Ray Collins said Labor's policy is a step in the right direction.

"For too long, Australian educational policy has been at the whim of the ideological and political agendas of the day," said Mr Collins. "History has shown us that 'top down' policies don't work over the long term."

"High achieving school systems across the world are characterised by policies influenced by such institutes," he said. "The move towards an independent research institute to support teachers and school leaders to identify what does work to improve student learning is a sensible and long overdue approach to policy making."

"If a research institute enables schools across all sectors to identify and share excellent practice within the local Australian context, then it will not only inform quality learning and teaching, it will also help to shape evidence-based educational policy in the future," he said.

The NCEC also welcomed Labor's promise to restore \$17 billion funding to schools and urged the Opposition Education Spokeswoman Tanya Plibersek to address the unfair transition arrangements for non-government systemic schools.

Since the Australian Government's reforms were introduced last year the Catholic sector has been advocating for non-government systemic schools which have been treated harshly under the new funding arrangements.

"Low fee Catholic systemic schools stand to lose \$1.1 billion in funding over 10 years because of unfair transition arrangements," said Mr Collins. "The Catholic system simply wants the same transition processes to apply to non-government school systems as applies to stand-alone non-government schools."

"If elected, the Opposition needs to seriously consider the findings of the review of the SES methodology currently being undertaken by the National Schools Resourcing Board to ensure a more effective framework is identified to determine need," he said.

"Currently, there are significant anomalies in the way capacity to pay is determined, and if a Labor government seeks to ensure the 'world's best schools' for all Australian students, then we need in place a more robust and equitable model to determine non-government school funding in this country."

"We look forward to understanding the detail of Labor's proposed policy and its plans for restored funding to all schools," Mr Collins said.