



# Voting for Public Education Election 2010



**Based on an assessment of the announcements made to date, it is clear that the policies of The Greens are superior with respect to the funding needs of public education. This should certainly be taken into consideration when voting for the Senate. What is also clear is that in a choice between the major parties, the election of an Abbott Government would result in less funding and less opportunity in education.**

**Regardless of who wins the election, we must continue to campaign for fundamental reform of school funding.**

## Labor

In its first term of government, the ALP invested unprecedented amounts of funding into education and initiated a long awaited review into schools funding. Unfortunately, during the federal election campaign, the ALP announced that it will extend the inequitable and discredited SES funding system until the end of 2013. That is most regrettable considering that the ALP has repeatedly acknowledged that the current funding system is flawed. The ALP will continue with the review of schools funding and then bring in legislation that will set out the future funding of schools after 2013.

Labor's lack of commitment to its original timetable for funding reform has been coupled with a policy agenda similar to the Coalition's on teacher bonus pay, devolution / school "autonomy" and the extension of the chaplains in schools program. The ALP has also announced a policy on school "bonuses"/ rewards.

## Coalition

Continuing to support the inequitable SES funding system, the Coalition has promised to extend it until 2016. In addition to that, they would slash approximately \$2 billion from the education budget. Those cuts, which include computers and trade training centres, would disproportionately impact on government schools and, in particular, government secondary schools.

New initiatives announced during the campaign include performance bonus pay, the extension of the school chaplains program and a modest school technology fund. The performance pay initiative and technology fund would be paid for by cuts to existing National Partnership programs benefitting schools. For the first time, private school fees would also be made tax deductible.

Instead of providing more funding for schools and TAFE, the Coalition would bring back stand-alone Australian Technical Colleges which would be created using public-private partnerships.

## The Greens

The Greens want the SES funding system replaced. Recognising that true equity in the provision of education can only exist if public schools set the standard for high quality education, The Greens are committed to dramatically increasing funding for public schools. They have also announced policies aimed at further attracting teachers to the profession by way of scholarship programs along with induction and mentoring programs.

# What the parties are offering

	Labor (labor.org.au)	Coalition (liberal.org.au)	The Greens (greens.org.au)
<b>School Funding and Resources</b>	<p><b>Keep</b> the SES funding system in place until 2014 (review now underway).</p> <p><b>Reward</b> payments of up to \$100,000 to 500 schools from 2013 and 1,000 schools from 2014.</p> <p><b>Extend</b> the school chaplaincy program to another 1,000 schools.</p>	<p><b>Keep</b> the SES funding system in place until 2016.</p> <p><b>Direct</b> BER funding straight to schools.</p> <p><b>Abolish</b> the Computers in Schools program. <b>Further</b> cut National Partnership funding to pay for a smaller technology fund.</p> <p><b>Extend</b> the chaplains in schools program.</p> <p><b>Offer</b> voucher funding to a small number of students with disabilities.</p>	<p><b>Replace</b> the SES funding system with one that substantially increases funding to public schools.</p> <p><b>Start</b> a community fund that will pay for enhanced student and community outreach services.</p> <p><b>Increase</b> funding for Asian language teaching.</p>
<b>Teaching/School Leadership</b>	<p><b>Allow</b> other professionals into teaching after 8 weeks of initial training.</p> <p><b>Give</b> principals the power to select and employ teachers in 1,000 self-managed schools.</p> <p><b>Introduce</b> performance pay with 10 per cent of teachers to get bonuses equal to 10 per cent of their salary from 2014.</p>	<p><b>Establish</b> a board of trustees that schools can apply to for teacher pay bonuses from 2013. (Paid for by cutting funding for low SES schools and literacy and numeracy).</p> <p><b>Negotiate</b> with the states to give more power to principals to select and manage staff after 2012.</p> <p><b>Spend</b> \$20 million on PD for national curriculum.</p>	<p><b>Introduce</b> a teaching scholarship program.</p> <p><b>Introduce</b> a teacher mentoring program.</p>
<b>Assessment and Reporting</b>	<p><b>Add</b> funding and improvement data to My School website.</p> <p><b>Examine</b> recommendations of a working party on modifications to the site and how to prevent league tables.</p>	<p><b>Modify</b> My School to show school improvement not annual raw scores.</p> <p><b>Extend</b> NAPLAN testing to all years between 3 and 10.</p>	<p><b>Modify</b> information on My School to improve its accuracy and stop the media creating league tables.</p>
<b>Skills Training and TAFE</b>	<p><b>Continue</b> the roll-out of trade training centres in 1,800 additional schools.</p> <p><b>Introduce</b> a National Trade Cadetship program.</p> <p><b>Cut</b> training places to fund cash payments for apprentices.</p>	<p><b>Abolish</b> the Trade Training Centres in schools program.</p> <p><b>Establish</b> up to 30 new Australian Technical Colleges.</p> <p><b>Abolish</b> 396,000 training places (160,000 in TAFE).</p>	<p><b>Increase</b> funding for TAFE.</p>
<b>Early Childhood Education</b>	<p><b>Proceed</b> with reforms including the National Quality Framework, an early years learning framework and universal access to 15 hours of pre-school education a week, 40 weeks a year.</p>	<p><b>Review</b> early childhood education and consider a universal subsidised entitlement (minimum of 10 hours a week). Review National Quality Framework.</p>	<p><b>Committed</b> to 15 hours a week of fully government funded pre-school for 3 to 4 year-olds and 4 to 5 year-olds.</p>