

REFORM THE SCHOOL FUNDING SYSTEM

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[DISCUSSION INVITED]

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For a more detailed analysis see School Funding letters or SES Funding Scheme

REFORM THE SCHOOL FUNDING SYSTEM

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Taxpayers of Australia are giving \$22 billion each year for the schooling of children.

This money is being badly spent.

The way our schools are funded:

- (1) distributes money unfairly
- (2) denies parents rights
- (3) lowers educational standards,
and
- (4) reinforces social classes.

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Australian children go to:

- (1) State-run schools 68%
- (2) Catholic schools 20%
- (3) Independent schools 12%.

Each sector of schools has

- (1) rich children
- (2) average children
- (3) poor children.

Most families earning less than \$500/wk use state schools.

And most families earning over \$1500/wk also use state schools.

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Where the tax money goes:

\$7500 for every State school place	\$5000 for every Catholic school place	\$3000 for the average Independent school place
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The biggest sector gets the most tax dollars per child.

The smallest sector gets the least tax dollars per child.

This system is not based on need. It is based on protecting systems.

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Where the tax money should go:

HIGHEST for lowest income children	MEDIUM for medium income children	LOWEST for highest income children
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OUR SYSTEM IS UNJUST

A child's education in Australia today is funded, not according to family income, but according to WHO RUNS THE SCHOOL.

The biggest sector (State) has the biggest clout and grabs the biggest amount per child.

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PUNISHING FREE CHOICE

If an average-income parent chooses an Independent school for their child, instead of a State-run school, they automatically lose most of their child's funding.

Parents are unfairly being denied the right to choose who shall teach their children.

Thousands of families are coerced by this biased funding into State-run schools.

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CAPTIVE CUSTOMERS

The state school system holds many families financially captive. Many parents cannot change to another sector if they believe the teaching standards are better elsewhere.

Thus the least advantaged children are concentrated by the funding system into the state sector. This makes it harder for teachers and students.

A parents' freedom to choose their child's school is the single most powerful factor in raising the standards of education.

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DENIAL of OPPORTUNITY

Education is the greatest societal instrument for freeing children from socio-economic disadvantage.

The present system forcibly herds lower-income children into State-run schools, thus REINFORCING the class system – that is, the inheriting of disadvantage.

Question. Why do we have such an unfair system?

Answer. The state system operators lobby hard to maintain their empire.

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PROPAGANDA MACHINE

State school teachers work hard – harder than they should have to, because their masters force an unnatural concentration of less advantaged students upon them.

But the state system operators, (the state unions, bureaucrats and academics), pump out a never-ending stream of misleading articles in the media, all designed to convince the public that they are actually protecting the disadvantaged children. A cruel hoax.

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WHAT IS THE SOLUTION?

The solution is to:

- (1) fund each child according to family income, and
- (2) let parents choose who shall educate their child.

This supports:

- (1) Financial justice recognizing need
- (2) Democratic rights of families
- (3) Progress in education standards
- (4) More opportunities for children.

The “SES” legislation brought in by the Federal Education Minister David Kemp is a step in the right direction.

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What is the Kemp scheme?

It is called SES funding. It means funding for each child is based on the socio-economic status (SES) of where the child lives.

This is the first time school funding has been based on actual student needs, rather than assumptions about “school” wealth.

This SES funding principle is applied within the Independent sector. Even so, the poorest Independent students are still granted at most 70% of a rich student’s (or any student’s) allotment in a state-run school.

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The Liberal Party's SES funding scheme is a small, modest step in the right direction.

It grants to the highest-income Independent school families only 13.5% of the amount paid for every student in the state system.

It does not diminish State-school funding by one cent.

The state-system defenders are supposed to be socialists. But the SES scheme is more socialist than they are – because for the first time it distributes taxpayer's money for schooling according to family needs.

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COMBATTING the PROPAGANDA 1

Question 1. But doesn't the existing funding system look after the lower-income children?

Answer. No, it financially locks them in to State-run schooling. It makes it harder for them to have any choice.

In fact, most non-state schools would gladly take lower-income children without charging fees - if they received the normal State-school funding grant for that child.

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COMBATTING the PROPAGANDA 2

Question 2. But doesn't the Government have a duty to see that every child, even the poorest, gets a decent education?

Answer. Yes, it does. But it does not follow that a government department has to personally deliver this service. Indeed, other providers often do a better job.

In fact by financially coercing lower-income families into State-run education, they create an artificial concentration of the disadvantaged.

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COMBATTING the PROPAGANDA 3

Question 3. But what about reports that Independent schools, sometimes called “private” schools, are getting more taxpayer's money than State-run schools?

Answer. These are lies, designed to conceal the present desperately unjust channeling of taxpayers money to system beneficiaries - at the expense of children's prospects.

If lies are repeated often enough in the mass media, the population tends to believe them.

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COMBATTING the PROPAGANDA 4

Question 4. Wouldn't it be fairer if every child went to a state school, thus eliminating all difference in opportunity?

No. Education standards would fall because there would be no competition. And democracy would suffer. Parents' rights would be denied.

An all-powerful state system would have free run, disseminating its own biased political values and agenda. This would no longer be a free country.

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COMBATTING the PROPAGANDA 5

Question 5. Why are you hostile to state schooling?

Answer. I am not. I welcome all styles of schooling. There are many great state schools. I believe in a parent's right of choice. There is no choice without diversity.

Indeed, if the state school system were competing fairly with other schools, there is no doubt that the average standard of service in state schools would quickly improve.

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