

Media Release

Wednesday 25 September 2024

Is this equitable education for all Tasmanian students or just “better than before”?

The Tasmanian Association of State School Organisations (TASSO) has responded to today’s announcement of a funding deal to improve desperately needed per-student funding in Tasmanian government schools.

John Allan, TASSO President said “We celebrate today’s joint federal and state announcement that there is a bilateral agreement to reach 100% Schooling Resourcing Standard (SRS) funding for Tasmanian government schools by 2029”.

Today’s announcement relates to the SRS, which establishes a baseline per-student funding level in schools that, when fully funded, is required to educate 80% of students to the above the minimum national education standard.

“Every child deserves their schooling to meet the minimum educational standards, but remember the SRS is a bare minimum to successfully educate only 80% of students to the national standard.” continued Mr Allan. “Whilst an improvement, this new announcement is not fully equitable and there is certainly scope to do better”.

The *Better and Fairer Schools Agreement* continues to contain an accounting loophole that equates to 4% of the SRS. “That’s 4% of funding that does not go directly toward students’ education in government school, it could be supporting intervention for students lagging behind their peers, extension programs for students excelling, supports for teachers, or resources to support the curriculum. It’s not swimming pools and gymnasiums! In an equitable agreement the 4% loophole would be abolished” Mr Allan noted.

“To adequately educate students TASSO support the abolishment of the clause so as to truly fund all schools to the full resource standard.” said Mr Allan. “Continuing the unfair division of funding continues to foster unnecessary divisions between government and non-government schools.” Mr Allan reiterated.

When asked what this announcement mean for families, Mr Allan stated “Simply put, if your children started kindergarten prior to 2015, their entire education in a government school will have been underfunded according to the government’s own formula developed 13 years ago”.

“Only students born around now will enter a schooling system that is, pending removal of account loopholes, fully funded” Mr Allan concluded.

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