

# THE FACTS ON SCHOOL FUNDING IN NSW

Source: MySchool 2016 data

School funding can be a confusing and contentious topic – so it's important that parents and school communities know the facts.

This leaflet explains how and why governments fund all not-for-profit schools, including Catholic schools.

## Key statistics (2018)

● Australia  
● New South Wales

### CATHOLIC SCHOOLS



1741

595

### STUDENTS



765,000<sup>+</sup>

255,000<sup>+</sup>

### STAFF



94,000

23,000



CATHOLIC SCHOOLS EDUCATE 1 IN 5 STUDENTS

CATHOLIC SCHOOLS HAVE EDUCATED AUSTRALIAN STUDENTS FOR ALMOST

# 200 YEARS

## The cost of a school education

The average cost of educating a child – in a government or non-government school – is more than \$13,000 a year. That would be a huge cost for most Australian families, especially if they have two or more children.

This is why state and federal governments provide some funding to all not-for-profit school sectors.



**\$13,000<sup>+</sup>**  
**PER CHILD**  
**PER YEAR**

## How government funding is calculated

Funding for all schools in all sectors is calculated using the same needs-based measure – the Schooling Resource Standard (SRS).

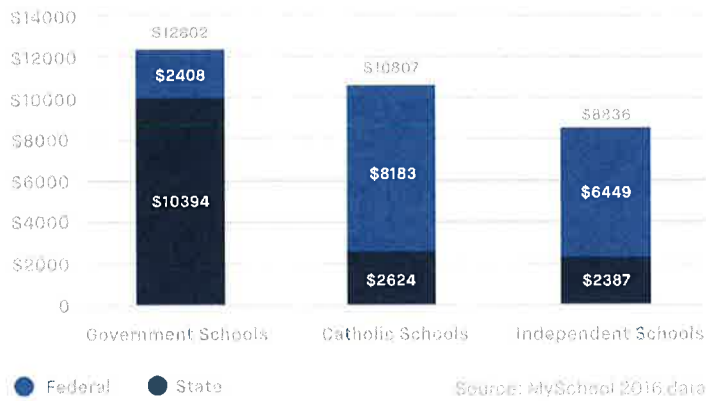
Each school's SRS is calculated according to the needs of its students, starting with a base amount (in 2019, it is \$11,343 per primary student or \$14,254 per secondary student) plus extra funding for six types of disadvantage.

So a primary school educating many disadvantaged students may have an SRS of more than \$17,000 per student, while another educating highly advantaged students may have an SRS of less than \$12,000 per student.

The SRS is a funding target and was introduced in 2014. For many state and territory governments, it represents a big jump in their school funding commitments; they are the majority funders of public schools which educate two-thirds of all students – so meeting the SRS is a large commitment for state and territory governments and is therefore being phased in over several years with Federal assistance.

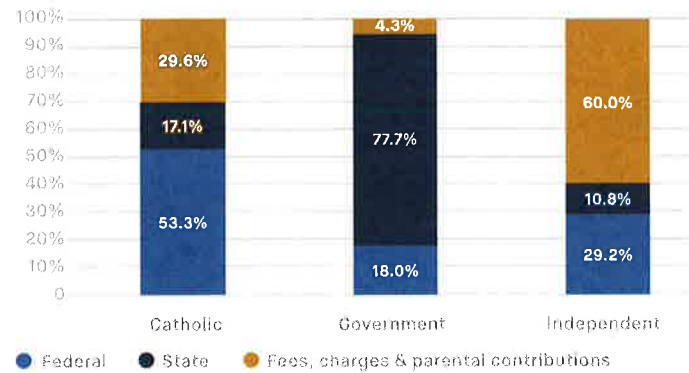
## How much government funding do public and Catholic schools receive?

### 2016 Total Government Recurrent Funding (per student)



## How much do Catholic school parents pay?

### Sources of recurrent funding 2016

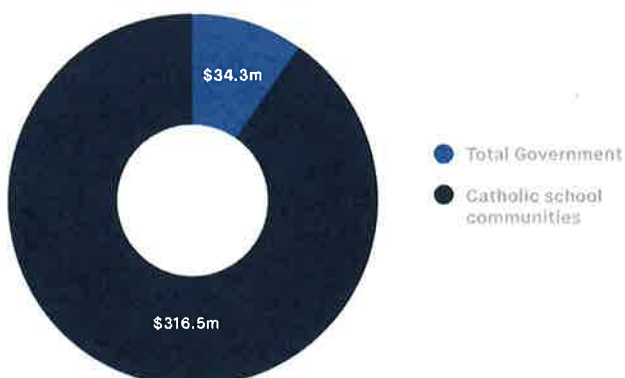


Catholic school communities, on average, contribute some 30% of the cost of educating their students. The remaining 70% is covered by a combination of State and Federal government funding.

Without this government funding support, Catholic systemic schools would need to charge parents more than \$13,000 a year to educate their child. This would put a Catholic education out of reach for most Australian families, forcing them onto the public schools sector which is already at capacity.

In 2016, NSW Catholic school communities paid \$1.17 billion in fees and \$316.5 million in capital funding to support their schools. This represents a significant saving to taxpayers, who provided \$2.76 billion in recurrent funding and \$34.3 million in capital funding.

### 2016 funding sources – capital



## Who pays the SRS

In public schools, the SRS is funded solely by state and territory governments; parents are not required to contribute.

In Catholic and other non-government schools, state and territory governments fund 20-90% of the SRS base amount according to a means test of the school's parents, who are expected to make up the shortfall. The more parents can afford to pay, the less public funding a non-government school attracts.

## IT'S A FACT



- Funding for all students in all school sectors is calculated using the same needs-based measure – the Schooling Resource Standard (SRS)
- In public schools, the SRS is solely funded by taxpayers
- In Catholic and other non-government schools, parents must pay part of the SRS according to an assessment of their ability to pay
- Public school funding has never been cut to fund Catholic schools. Funding for public schools has risen every year in line with enrolments and indexation
- Catholic education supports a strong, properly funded public schools sector
- Public schools exist in hundreds more towns and suburbs than Catholic schools and therefore are the only option for many families
- One in six public school students comes from a Catholic family
- Catholic school parents are also taxpayers and deserve a fair share of government funding support to keep their children's schools affordable
- By keeping Catholic schools affordable, one in five Australian children can attend a school that reflects their parents' values and beliefs – an important feature of a pluralist society
- Catholic schools save taxpayers money; without affordable Catholic schools, taxpayers would need to fund 100% of the cost of educating more than a quarter of a million NSW Catholic school students, instead of just 70%