

Funding Principles for Christian Schools

- 1. The role of parents as the primary educators must be affirmed and maintained.**
- 2. The historical and continuing role of faith communities in education must be respected and supported.**
- 3. Equity, a fair go, must be at the heart of any allocative mechanism.**
- 4. Schools must be provided with certainty and transparency in any funding model.**
- 5. Accountability must be meaningful and proportionate**

1. The role of parents as the primary educators must be affirmed and maintained.

- Both Biblically and under international human rights instruments the role of parents as primary educators is acknowledged and supported in the funding framework.
- As those with primary responsibility parents have a 'prior right' to choose the education given to their children
- Governments have a responsibility to support parents in exercising their choice of education and contributing to it.

2. The historical and continuing role of faith communities in education must be respected and supported.

- Faith communities have a long tradition of involvement with education in Australia stretching back to the early days of the colony.
- Through their involvement in education faith communities have made and continue to make a substantial contribution to the social, moral, intellectual and cultural capital of the nation.
- The unique contribution of faith communities in supporting the full scope of the *Melbourne Declaration on Educational Goals for Young Australians* deserves respect and support from Government including the maintenance of historic freedoms.

3. Equity, a fair go, must be at the heart of any allocative mechanism.

- All Government funding (recurrent, capital and targeted) must be allocated in a fair and equitable manner.
- Equitable funding mechanisms must address the differential needs of students including those with disabilities, indigenous or non-English speaking backgrounds and those at risk because of poverty, mental illness, extreme social dislocation or remote location.
- An allocative mechanism based on fairness and equity must provide for a level of Government support for all students.

4. Schools must be provided with transparency and certainty in any funding model.

- Funding models must be based on transparent distribution mechanisms and reliable, objective and independent data that are open to scrutiny and subject to appeal.
- Future funding must have sufficient certainty and predictability to allow appropriate school planning.
- Future funding must be indexed annually to reflect the full costs of providing an education consistent with the full scope of the *Melbourne Declaration on Educational Goals for Young Australians*.

5. Accountability must be meaningful and proportionate

- Accountability for educational outcomes must remain primarily to parents and the school community.
- Public accountability for the expenditure of Government resources should be transparent, coherent and comparable across all schools.
- Compliance and accountability requirements must be proportionate and not hinder or compromise the unique nature of Christian schools.