

## CSA Policy Priorities

***For students with disabilities, it is the level of their need that should determine the funding available to them, not their choice of school.***

Current funding policies discriminate against students with disabilities. At present, funding support for students with a disability depends on their school setting, with students in non-government schools receiving significantly less support than those in state schools.

CSA schools report differences of up to \$20,000 for a student with high support needs. This denies students with disabilities real choice. It causes heartache and further dislocation for their families.

In the case of families for whom school choice involves principles of faith and belief, the lack of equitable funding provides an additional layer of discrimination.

This appalling situation cannot be allowed to continue.

***Ending this injustice is our top priority for the 2010 election.***

## Labor Policy

*'Gillard Labor will provide new access to early intervention services to help give more children with disability a better start in life. **The Better Start for Children with Disability** initiative will ensure children with disabilities will have access to intensive early intervention therapies and treatments from expert health professionals.*

*Assistance for students with an Autism Spectrum Disorder will be available through the \$190 million Helping Children with Autism Package. This can include professional development for teachers, school leaders and other school staff to build their skills in working with children with autism and workshops and information sessions for parents and carers to assist them to work with their child's teachers, school leaders and other staff.*

*Labor is already delivering assistance to students with disabilities through the Smarter Schools National Partnerships. The National Partnerships are focussed on improving teacher quality (\$550 million), boosting literacy and numeracy (\$540 million) and raising achievement in disadvantaged school communities (\$1.5 billion). This investment aims to generate better educational outcomes for all students, including those*

## Coalition Policy

At the Christian Schools National Policy Forum in May 2010 Shadow Minister Pyne was asked for the same commitment (see left) His response:

*"Students with disability should have exactly the same support from government, whether it is state or federal government or a combination of both, and whether they choose a non-government or government school."*

- Work at a Ministerial Council level to reach national agreement on clear categories for funding students with a disability by 1 July 2011.
- Introduce an Education Card for students with disability from 1 January 2012, based on agreed nationally consistent definitions, providing up to \$20,000 of additional funding that is portable between schools or school systems.
- The Education Card will be introduced incrementally commencing with 6,000 of those who need it most with eligibility to be expanded as the federal budgetary situation improves.

*'The Coalition's Plan for Real Action to Help Students with a Disability and their Families' – 30 July 2010*

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	<p><i>with special learning needs.</i></p> <p><i>Targeted assistance is also being provided through the Literacy, Numeracy and Special Learning Needs Program for students in non-government schools.'</i></p>	