



MEDIA RELEASE

THE COALITION'S POLICY FOR SCHOOL STUDENTS FIRST

THE COALITION'S POLICY FOR SCHOOLS: STUDENTS FIRST

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A Coalition government will improve Australia's schools through improved quality, greater parental involvement in decision-making, a sound national budget and deliver certainty over funding.

Click here to read our policy.

Our policy starts with a clear commitment to all Australian schools: you can be certain. The Coalition will match Labor dollar-for-dollar over the next five years.

However, we understand that if improving school standards was just a matter of money, it would have been done a long time ago. It requires so much more.

The Coalition will improve the education that Australian students receive and reverse the decline that has occurred under Labor.

This will be achieved by a renewed focus on the national curriculum, a renewed focus on teacher quality and by providing local communities with a greater say in how their school is run.

Good teachers make all the difference. Our policy will boost teacher quality and we will implement more appropriate admission standards for teacher training and provide increased support for current and aspiring teachers.

Our Policy for Schools will:

- Deliver stable, simple and sustainable funding to all Australian schools.
- Develop 'best practice' guidelines to improve admission standards into teaching.
- Improve teacher training programmes by ensuring a greater focus on practical skills.
- Work with the states to promote alternative pathways into teaching.
- End federal Labor's schools takeover and dismantle Labor's 'command and control' approach.
- Provide local communities with a greater say by encouraging around 1,500 schools to become independent public schools by 2017. We will establish a 'Independent Public Schools Fund' to help this occur.
- Match Commonwealth funding for students with disability for 12 months until a 'national formula' is developed for these students. We believe students with disabilities deserve equal support.
- Protect schools by providing \$18 million to continue the Secure Schools Program.
- Restore the focus of science, technology, engineering and mathematics in secondary schools.
- Maintain funding for the 'Primary Connections: Linking Science with Literacy' program.

programme and the 'Science by Doing' programme.

- Assist student literacy in remote areas by investing \$22 million in flexible teaching resources for local primary schools.
- Improve the take-up of foreign languages with initiatives targeted at foreign language recruitment, teacher training courses, working with the States and trialling language immersion pre-school to years 11 and 12.
- Review the national curriculum and refocus the Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority.
- Improve NAPLAN turnaround times for results.
- Develop a new school leadership programme modelled around MBA-style leadership training.

In 2007, Kevin Rudd promised an 'education revolution' but instead, our schools have gone backwards.

One-quarter of Year 4 students do not meet minimum international literacy benchmarks. The average 15 year-old maths student in Australia performs 1.5 years below their counterpart in Shanghai. And OECD PISA testing of 15 year-old Australian students dropped an average 13 points in reading, equivalent to a year of school, and a 10 point decline in maths.

Labor also broke its promises on computers in schools, teacher bonus schemes and based trade training centres.

Our Policy has been developed following extensive consultations with principals, state governments and communities about what needs to be done to raise education standards.

The Coalition's commitment to improve school standards is part of our plan to build a stronger Australia and a better future for all Australians.

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