

## Letter to *The Age*, 9 September 2009

### SCHOOL FUNDING

The Age's reporting of independent school funding (9 September) provides your readers with an insight into the total ignorance of the paper and its education reporters about overall funding for Victorian schools.

Publishing total block funding amounts for a four-year period without accounting for school enrolments is either naive, or malicious. You and your reporter have also failed to account for the savings these schools make to Victorian taxpayers.

Funding for students varies according to which education sector parents choose to send their children. No child in an independent school receives more funding than a student attending a government school.

Based on the most recently available data, the Victorian Government provides 91% of the overall funding, at an average of \$9731 per student for students attending Victorian government schools. The Australian Government provides a top up amount of \$985 per student.

Non-government school students receive, on average, \$1228 per student from the Victorian Government, while the Australian Government provides, on average, \$4588 per Victorian student, based on a calculation made through the socioeconomic status (SES) funding model. The article names 22 schools but fails to acknowledge that, collectively, these schools educate more than 32,000 students. On average, these schools receive \$3660 per student from both the Australian and Victorian Governments. The article fails to mention the gross inequity in student funding, which sees students at these schools receive a third of the funding that students at government schools receive.

Parents, and your readers, know that this inequity exists. They also know that SES funding is a per capita model and the funding provided to non-government schools reflects the decision made by a significant number of Victorian parents to exercise choice in their children's education.

A school's SES is determined according to a number of factors of socioeconomic need by the Australian Bureau of Statistics and includes the addresses of individual students.

From next year, there will be a review of all Australian Government funding for education and the Association of Independent Schools of Victoria welcomes the opportunity to participate in an evidence-based policy discussion for funding of all Australian students.

We therefore challenge your newspaper to argue this issue comprehensively, not cherry-pick data to suit an agenda.

Michelle Green  
Chief Executive  
Association of Independent Schools of Victoria

Association of  
Independent  
Schools  
of Victoria Inc.  
A0009210H A.B.N 44 711 074 857

20 Garden Street  
South Yarra Vic 3141

PO Box 2138  
Prahran Vic 3181

T: 03 9825 7200

F: 03 9826 6066

W: [ais.vic.edu.au](http://ais.vic.edu.au)

# AiSV