

## Media Release

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### School funding can be fairer and more transparent: new report argues

A major research report released today by Education Foundation, a division of The Foundation for Young Australians, argues for systemic reform to school funding in Australia.

The report, titled *Resourcing schools in Australia: A proposal for the restructure of public funding*, recommends that all registered schools in Australia be funded under a single framework. This would help to overcome problems with Australia's current parallel funding systems and make school resourcing fairer and more transparent, the report argues.

Under the new funding model:

- All schools would be guaranteed a minimum 'community rate' of government funding;
- Additional government funding for all schools would then be calculated based on their private resource levels (including revenue from fees), where private investment is encouraged but government funding is gradually reduced as private funding rises above a certain point;
- Schools with little or no private investment would receive support from two new major public sources: 'needs-based funding' and the 'community guarantee fund';
- This innovative \$2 billion 'community guarantee fund' would be established to encourage and reward those schools in all sectors that offer open enrolments, and support closer integration of schools with their communities.

*Resourcing schools in Australia* was authored by Professor Jack Keating, as Thought Leader for Education Foundation, and made possible through a grant from The R.E. Ross Trust. The report comes amid the Federal Government's ongoing Review of Funding for Schooling, the first such review since 1973.

"Under the current system, we are seeing exclusionary enrolment practices and a steady drift of students away from government schools to fee-based non-government schools," says Prof Keating. "This limits the capacity of the government system to do its job of providing educational equity and excellence. This proposal aims to spark debate and ultimately lead to a more positive and sustainable approach to schooling in Australia."

Dr Lucas Walsh, Senior Executive of Research at FYA, says, "Finding more effective ways to support schools and students in need is at the very heart of our agenda at Education Foundation. This proposal puts forward a timely and achievable framework for dramatically improving the way we fund Australian schools. *Resourcing schools in Australia* is an important step towards tackling gaps in educational achievement and breaking cycles of socio-economic disadvantage in this country."

"This proposal rises above old battle grounds in the debate on school funding by suggesting a politically viable and more equitable path forward. Under a model like this, thousands of schools across Australia can expect to benefit. Genuine needs-based funding and government investment in community building around schools will help ensure that all young Australians have access to a great education."

*Resourcing schools in Australia* can be viewed or downloaded at [www.fya.org.au/what-we-do/research/](http://www.fya.org.au/what-we-do/research/)

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**Prof Jack Keating, Thought Leadership Fellow at Education Foundation and Professorial Fellow at the University of Melbourne is available for interview**

**Media Enquiries:** Jon Myer, Communications Manager, P 03 9604 6232 | M 0408 082 066