



COMMONWEALTH OF AUSTRALIA

PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES



**HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES**

**STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS**

**School Funding**

**SPEECH**

**Wednesday, 14 September 2011**

BY AUTHORITY OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

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## SPEECH

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<b>Questioner</b>		<b>Responder</b>	
<b>Speaker</b>	Tudge, Alan, MP	<b>Question No.</b>	

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**Mr TUDGE** (Aston) (13:54): Last week the government released a number of additional reports as part of the Gonski review into school funding. These reports give an indication of the likely direction that the government will be heading with its new school funding policy once the existing agreements expire in two years time. They raise considerable concern for Catholic and independent schools generally, including those in my electorate of Aston.

The key directions are threefold. First, it would introduce a 'national resource standard' or benchmark. This would work by decreasing funding if the school's total resources per capita, comprising fees and government funding, go above a certain level. The impact of this would be a massive disincentive for parental investment and a reduction in funds for many schools. Second, it would reduce the rate of indexation. The current AGSRC indexation tracks school cost increases. There is no commitment to maintain this. And, third, it would compel non-government schools to take certain cohorts of students or lose school funding.

We have seen the first two directions before; they mirror Mark Latham's policy in the 'hit list' election in 2004. But, on top of this, Catholic and independent schools may for the first time be required to take certain cohorts, and this is an incredible intrusion. I am particularly concerned about the impact on the Knox School in my electorate by the likely introduction of a national resource standard. While only attracting \$3,500 in federal funds, it has total resources of about \$17,000. It will undoubtedly have its funding cut under the Labor model, pushing the fees up higher. The government could simply say that no school would be worse off, but it will not. (*Time expired*)