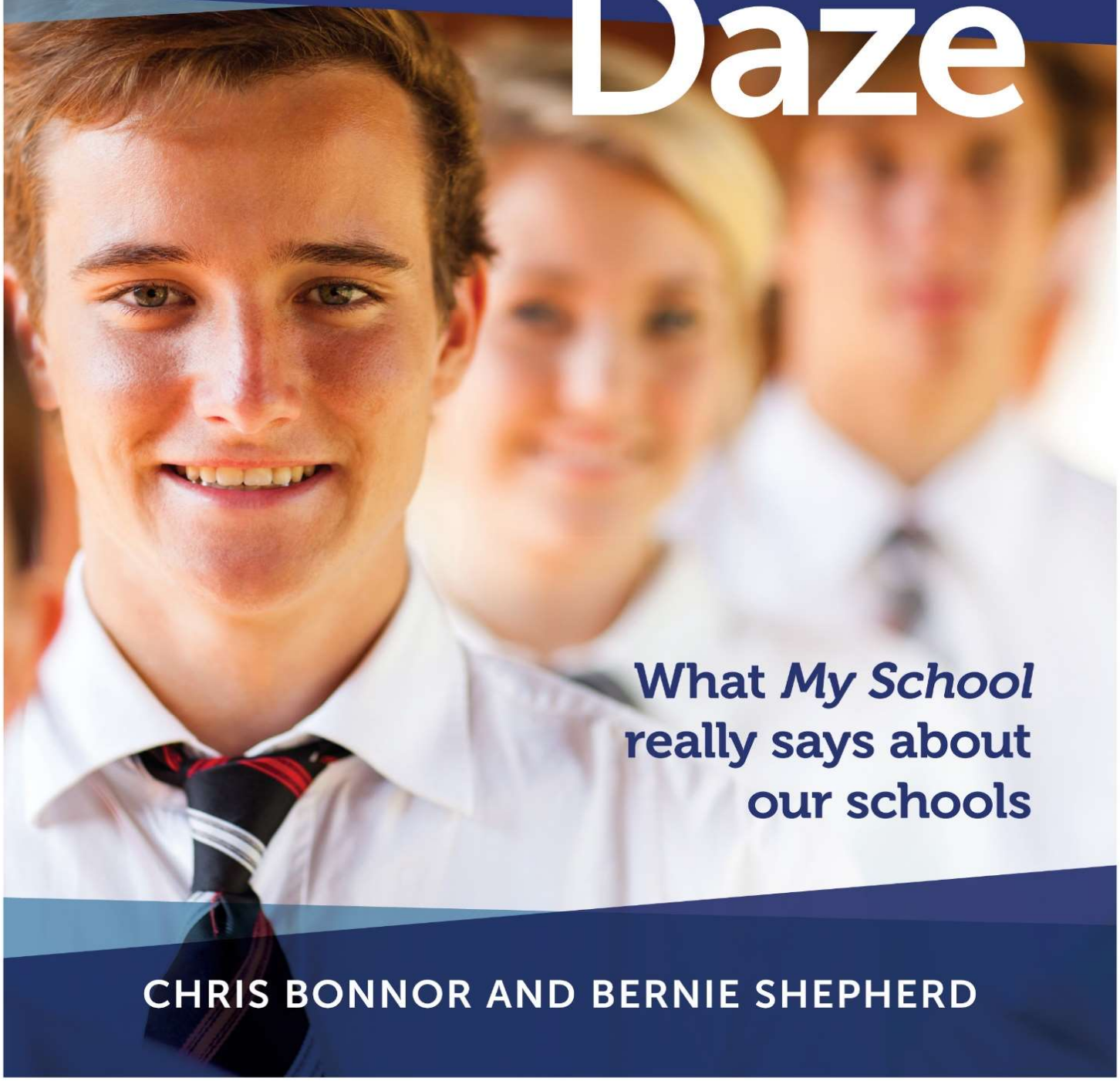
School Daze



What *My School* really says about our schools

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What *My School* really says about our schools

Australia's schools are very diverse, if only because of where they are and who they serve. Educational diversity is something to value, but we also have a social diversity, in fact **a socio-educational hierarchy of schools** (page 7) which is serving some people more than others - and not serving the nation at all well.

The **socio-educational gaps between schools are getting wider and deeper** (pages 8-9), between urban and rural schools and especially between the school sectors, Independent, Catholic and government. The two private sectors and high status public schools are enrolling more of our most advantaged students - and fewer from less advantaged families. There is a noticeable **enrolment shift from lower socio-educational advantage (SEA) schools to higher SEA schools** (page 9).

Increasing socio-educational differences between schools have contributed to **a serious school equity problem** (page 10) - a problem **worsening over time and very apparent in our cities and in secondary schools** (page 11). The Gonski review told us that family background matters more than it should. We have found that it matters more than it used to. Against this background of worsening equity, **student achievement in Australia seems to be drifting** (page 12). *My School* shows differences between states and schools, but there is an increasing divergence in student achievement between higher and lower SEA schools generally.

Achievement differences are usually attributed to variations in quality between schools, school types and especially between sectors. Quality matters; some schools are certainly better than others, but *My School* data tells us that **achievement differences between schools don't align with sector labels such as public and private** (pages 13-14). Schools that are enrolling high SEA students get the best results regardless of sector. The reverse is also true.

When it comes to improving schools and lifting the strugglers, money matters. *My School* data tells us that government schools enrol more of the strugglers, yet **public funding to government schools between 2009 and 2013 has increased at around half the rate (12.4%) of funding to Catholic (23.5%) and Independent (23.7%) schools** (page 15). When funding from other sources is added, government schools are even further behind.

These levels of funding have challenged some beliefs, especially the belief that having private schools saves public money. The **public recurrent funding of private schools is getting closer to, and in some cases exceeding, public funding of similar government schools** (page 16). This raises many issues and seriously challenges the sustainability of Australia's already odd framework of public and private schools.

Many students who are already advantaged, especially those who attend high socio-educational status private schools, are generously funded from a variety of sources. But *My School* tells us that **their measurable results are much the same as those achieved by similar students attending much lower-funded government schools** (page 17). We are constantly told that providing more money doesn't improve results. It seems we now know where that happens: in the most expensive schools.

In raising such issues we know we'll be told that it's all about school choice, something which is used to justify a range of oddities in our framework of schools. *My School* shows that **choice of a fee-charging school is available only to those already advantaged** (page 18). This choice is an illusion for half the population – hardly surprising, but something which can now be reasonably measured.

There are always things which data won't tell us. Having been school principals we have lived our careers through the decades when great changes were taking place in our framework of schools. We were told about, and believed the importance of the school as a centre of the community and a source of the social and cultural capital that makes communities work. But **less than a third of our schools now have an enrolment which resembles the cross-section of people in the school's local area** (page 19). Schools and communities are drifting apart. The social diversity which previous generations witnessed within schools is increasingly evident between them. Someone needs to convince us that this is a really good idea.

CB and BS

Your school … and *My School*

This is a booklet of observations and reports fresh from the *My School* website, a digital wonderland which reveals far more than you might have imagined.

A warning. Don't read this booklet if you:

- usually avoid topics like politics and religion … and schools
- have happy relationships in a wide circle of family and friends
- want to be invited back to BBQs and dinner parties

Why a booklet about *My School*?

We are retired school principals who spent a combined 80 years in education. We found much to celebrate. But we also watched as our framework of schools changed to concentrate increasingly advantaged students in some schools - and the strugglers in others. We could see how this was impacting on students, schools, communities … and Australia.

Six years ago we discovered a fountain of data, revised annually, which confirmed our worst fears and more. So we began to reveal what the data behind the *My School* website was telling us and what is might mean for our kids' and our country's future. At times we wondered if we were in some parallel universe, because what we were discovering didn't match up with commonly-held beliefs about schools. Our reports in this booklet challenge these beliefs in ways which might contribute to a better debate.

Why is *My School* so important?

Because it is so good. It had a turbulent beginning but it has improved dramatically over the years. It has transformed what we know about Australia's schools. We've always had general data about schools, but *My School* tells about each and every school. Its data is deeper, richer, more direct and always recent. It provides a new lens through which we can examine what schools are doing – *and*, just as important, what we are doing to schools. We can ask better questions and check the answers; we can now test claims and counter claims about schools – always essential, especially when debates about schools heat up. Yes, the *My School* website can always improve further and it certainly isn't a one-stop shop for information about schools - but full marks to the people who put it together.

My School … and yours.

The *My School* website[1] tells about 10,000+ school settings, including who attends, staffing, students' background, test results, school finances and more. The website includes a measure of the level of socio-educational advantage (SEA) of each school's enrolment. This is presented both as a numerical *Index of Community Socio-Educational Advantage*, or ICSEA[2] - and as the percentage of enrolled students who come from each of four SEA

Student background 2014

Index of Community Socio-Educational Advantage (ICSEA)

School ICSEA value	938
Average ICSEA value	1000
Data source	Parent information

Distribution of students [2]

	Bottom quarter	Middle quarters		Top quarter
School Distribution	51%	28%	15%	6%
Australian Distribution	25%	25%	25%	25%

Percentages are rounded and may not add to 100

"quarters". More than anything else, these measures tell us about which students go to which schools. Schools with the same ICSEA are said to be "statistically similar" on a range of home and family characteristics that are known to influence educational outcomes.

Apples aren't pears

They look a bit similar, but apples aren't the same as pears. So can we really rate one against the other? Schools are much the same. People are certainly quick to judge and compare them but not always fairly. They are ranked in league tables and we are told about how they range from good to 'don't go there'. Schools are different, some may function better than others but they also differ in ways that have little to do

with what they actually do. Some are in the city, others in the bush. Some select their students (by tests or charging fees), others have to take all comers. When it comes to schools, apples just aren't pears. *My School* and in particular the ICSEA index is starting to help people compare individual schools more fairly. In comparing large groups of schools it is gold. These days, any comparison of schools which doesn't take school ICSEA into account can be written off as deficient at best and in some cases fraudulent.

Rules and exceptions

Claims about schools are often spun into good stories. To counter impressions a principal of a middle ICSEA public school might talk about the number of the school's parents who are merchant bankers or surgeons. An advocate for Catholic schools might point to the children of struggling families who are granted fee exemption.

An independent school parent might claim that the school enrols many Indigenous students. All we can say about such stories is: "that's great!", but most people have to pay a fee to get into a Catholic school and the vast majority of Indigenous students attend public schools. In other words, such stories are actually about exceptions … which demonstrate the rule/s.

Lies, damn lies and statistics.

This brings us to the often murky subject of statistics. The *My School* website is loaded with stats. Our task in this booklet is to find out what they say about schools – and then tell about this in ways that are accurate and meaningful. Alas, statistics aren't always presented that way, so here is a heads up about some tricks to watch out for:

On average, averages are … just average

Averages are often thrown around In debates about schools, without any other information, as convincing proof of all manner of things. Did you know that, on average, schools in the bush get lower NAPLAN scores than city schools? Wow, but significant numbers get much higher scores than equivalent schools in the city - and there are often vast differences between schools in the same town. Did you know that, on average, students in Catholic schools get only 77% of the public funding going to students in government schools? Sounds unfair, but when schools with similar students are compared the story is very different. Averages tend to blur the complete story and this is where looking at groups of schools with similar enrolments can be very revealing. It can also more complex – but when it comes to something as important as schools we can't afford to just tell half the story.

Impressing … with impressive numbers

"We know about this problem and have invested $76 million…"

Don't you squirm when politicians use numbers to convey an impression of action and improvement? In this booklet we rarely use total numbers unless they mean something. In comparing school funding, for example, we use dollars per student and how these vary by factors such as school location, enrolment and sector. We look at where the money comes from and where it is going – and how this changes over time. Oh, and when we talk about government funding we refer to funding from both federal and state governments.

"…and student test results are up by 27 points"

$ Sources and sorcerers.

In the past people have conjured up all manner of statements about schools and money – and they conduct heated arguments using non-comparable figures. Some figures which are commonly cited are problematic: the Productivity Commission's figures showing the cost of government schools are inflated by the inclusion of what's called the user cost of capital.[3] This is generally considered to add around 15%. In contrast, the finance data on the *My School* website uses consistent methodology across all sectors – unsurprisingly, we use these apples Vs apples figures when comparing school dollars.

The NAPLAN trapland

The level of student achievement in each school is indicated on the *My School* website by the school's NAPLAN averages. Criticisms of NAPLAN can be well founded, even if the tests themselves have improved over the years. Schools serve many purposes and NAPLAN is a measure of just one. Much of what is learned and achieved at school is not measured; nor are qualities such as student engagement or depth of learning. The latter are essential for lasting knowledge and skill outcomes. But until we

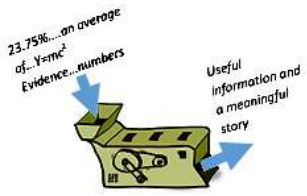
value these other things enough to measure them, NAPLAN is substantially what we have. In some of our work we have used a carefully weighted composite NAPLAN performance index.[4]

Assertions Vs evidence

We are all influenced by assertions - and people make them about schools as much as about anything else. Most people are experts when it comes to schools – after all, we all went to one. People willingly recount their school experiences and attribute praise, blame or both. If we have a choice of schools (and that's a big 'if') we go through torment – and then feel the need to rationalise our choice, often by telling unhappy stories about the 'other' school. In this process, assertions and beliefs reign. The reports in this booklet will produce evidence to challenge some of the most rusted-on beliefs about schools. If you can deal with this, congratulations. If you can't then you are in good company: governments often spend up big on initiatives and policies which don't pass the evidence test.

Turning numbers into narrative

But raw data by itself is not enough. One of the problems that most teachers face – and we are not immune from this – is that they believe that all they have to do is parade the facts in their chosen field and the rest will take care of itself. Yet people are strongly influenced by stories which touch the heart strings and excite action. In one sense our reports in this booklet are stories about the data. We have tried to keep them simple and translate the numbers into an interesting but accurate narrative about schools.



Keeping up to date

All books date, some faster than others. We know that the data on which this publication is based will change – and this means our booklet be need to be updated regularly. Some of the data has shown consistent and continuing trends. But such trends, and the features of our schools, will change. It is our intention to produce updates, some updates will be available on Edmediawatch.com.[5]

We hope you enjoy our booklet. It's only a couple of dozen pages. Just how long does a wake-up call have to be?

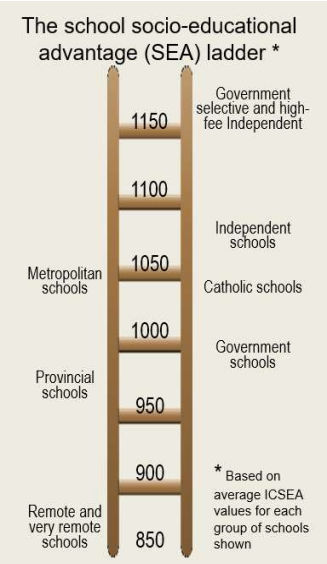
CB and BS

1. A school is a school is a school – or is it?

Whenever people want to blur the differences between schools they say that schools are really all the same. Yes, they all have students, classrooms that look much the same, curriculum and testing is standardised, teachers are trained in much the same places. If you compare schools with similar students even the results are much the same.

Schools are located in a variety of places and that reason alone they are quite diverse. But the biggest difference between schools is found in the students who walk in the front gate each day. And we know much more about this: for each school the *Index of Community Socio-Educational Advantage* (ICSEA) measures the socio-educational advantage of its enrolment, created by things such as location, parents' education, family type and more.[6] Schools enrolling the most advantaged have ICSEAs around the 1100 and 1200 mark; schools with the least advantaged are mostly in the 700s and 800s. This information about schools tells us much more, not only about individual schools, but about our whole framework of schools.

ICSEA tells us that metropolitan schools tend to enrol students who are more advantaged. The average ICSEA for all metropolitan schools is around 1040. The ICSEA of provincial schools averages around 970. The figure is much lower – around 850 – in remote and very remote areas. Of course these are averages and we warned you about averages. You'll find some enormous gaps between schools in the bush. The provincial average ICSEA might be 970 but in places such as Tamworth school ICSEAs range from 667 to 1065, in Bendigo from 850 to 1105 – quite a range in each town for schools not too far from each other.



So it's not just about location, it's also about who schools enrol. Some schools are required to enrol any local students, others set an entry test, charge fees or have a range of enrolment discriminators. Entry tests are a big discriminator, but it is the charging of fees that mostly explains the way in which our schools are 'stacked' in ICSEA order. Among the three main sectors, Independent schools enrol the most advantaged students (average ICSEA 1072), then Catholic schools (1041), then public schools (983). The ICSEA gaps between secondary schools are even greater.

These are large socio-educational differences when you think that two-thirds of schools fall between 950 and 1150. The highest ICSEA schools include metropolitan selective schools and Independent schools charging the highest fees. All others form a loose hierarchy behind them. And there are hierarchies within hierarchies. Anglican schools usually charge the highest fees and have an average ICSEA around 1100 - even in provincial areas they have the most advantaged student enrolment. Other Independent schools have a less advantaged enrolment: schools designated as Christian schools usually have a lower ICSEA, often lower than systemic Catholic schools.

But for want of a better description there is, in effect, a 'social class' difference between schools. If you have the time and energy you can use *My School* website to plot the school socio-educational hierarchy around where you live.

Sometimes we hear about "low fee" schools, the implication being that just about anyone can afford to go. But in low income communities even "low" annual fees have the effect of sorting school enrolments according to socio-educational advantage.

Of course these figures are averages and even the most exclusive school can talk about the occasional student they enrol from a struggling family. It makes a good story – but it is a story about exceptions and not the mass of evidence. Sorry, we can't turn our evidence into a nice story, because clearly Australia's schools are almost brutally stratified, odd for the great egalitarian country and this reality does little or nothing for equity, efficiency and overall student achievement.

2. Mind the gap: it's getting wider

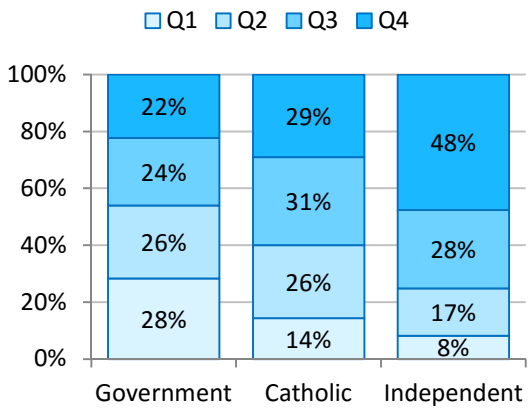
The *My School* website has been around now for several years. This means it not only tells us what is, but how things are changing from year to year. In this report we look at how the composition of school enrolments is changing.

As well as showing the ICSEA value for each school *My School* also shows the percentages of four socio-educational "quarters" of the nation that are represented in each school's enrolment. Q1 is the percentage of students from families in the lowest quarter of socio-educational advantage nationally. Q4 is the percentage from the highest quarter. Q2 and Q3 are the quarters in between.

The distribution of students in each quarter varies from school to school. In metropolitan schools, an average of 22% of students in 2014 were in Q1, compared with the national average of 25%. In provincial schools a much higher percentage of students (36%) were in this lowest quarter. The average is even higher (49%) in remote and very remote schools. These schools certainly do have a large proportion of disadvantaged kids in their enrolment. It also appears that their proportion of Q1 students has increased over the six years, with the proportion of Q1 students in metropolitan and provincial schools now lower. When it comes to the students they serve, the gaps between the city and the bush appear to be widening.

How does the distribution of enrolments by these quarters look in the different school sectors? Keep in mind that the average distribution nationally is 25:25:25:25.

SEA quarter distribution 2014
Source: My School website 2014



The graph on this page shows that the distribution in each sector is anything but average. Q1 students are very prominent in government schools and under-represented in the two private school sectors. The spread of the most advantaged students, shown by the darker blue on the graph, is also very uneven. They especially dominate the enrolment in Independent schools.

Has the representation of Q1 students changed in government, Catholic and Independent schools in recent years? Yes, but because of some changes in ACARA's data and calculations from year to year, we are reluctant to come up with any firm conclusions about changing averages.

But we learn more if we look at groups of schools in different sectors which enrol similar students. Again we have to be cautious but it is quite noticeable that:

- Schools in all sectors in the lower ICSEA range of 800 to 950 are seeing a reduction in their proportion of the more advantaged students (Q3 and Q4) in their enrolment.
- Schools with more advantaged students (950-1150), again in all sectors, have reduced their proportion of Q1 students, somewhat offset by an increased proportion of Q2 students. The private school sectors have increased their proportion of the most advantaged (Q4) students,
- Schools above 1150, again in all sectors, have a reduced proportion of lowest quarter students and an increased proportion of the most advantaged (especially Q4) in their enrolment.

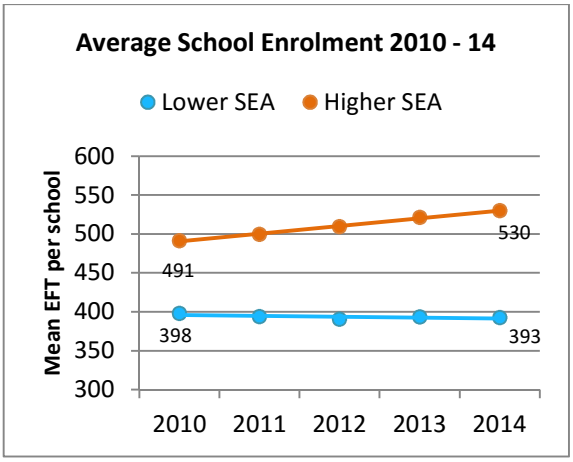
It seems that, regardless of sector, our higher SEA schools, those with an already advantaged enrolment are increasing their proportion of the most advantaged students - and, in one way or another, shedding the strugglers.

The gap shows worrying signs of getting wider.

3. Mind the gap: it's getting deeper

Whether in the media or just over the back fence, stories about schools often refer to 'the drift to private schools'. That little phrase adds up to a powerful narrative. It suggests a clear and inexorable movement, one which any aspiring family would want to join.

But the shift of student enrolments between schools is far more complex and can't be so easily described. Some years ago we found that higher SEA (socio-educational advantage) NSW public schools, those enrolling more advantaged students, were getting bigger - and those enrolling more of the strugglers were getting smaller. We were keen to know what *My School* data might tell us about growing and declining schools. Also, which students moved around between 2010 and 2014 – and where did they go?



To find out, we looked at two very big groups of Australian schools: lower SEA schools (with an ICSEA between 800 and 950) and higher SEA schools (between 1050 and 1100). The changing average school size of the higher SEA schools is shown by the orange line on the graph, the changing school size of the lower SEA schools in blue.[7]

As population increases schools will grow. On average, schools grew by over 4.6 students each in each of the years shown. But, as the graph shows, they didn't grow evenly: the higher SEA schools have grown by around 10 students each year, the lower SEA schools have shrunk by just over one each year.

There was a general shift of 6-7 students from low to high SEA schools each year – a significant movement.

We know which schools gained and lost, but which students moved around? *My School* doesn't directly say, but as indicated earlier, it does tell us something about the changing make-up of students enrolled in the two groups of schools. The proportion of students from lower SEA families (the Q1 and Q2 students – see previous report) rose in the case of the lower SEA schools from around 75% to around 80%.

As we know from our previous report, the proportion of these students in the higher SEA schools declined over the same time. At first we thought that this might just be happening in government schools – but a similar thing is happening in Catholic and Independent schools. Precisely the reverse trend occurred in respect of high SEA (Q3 and Q4) students. In all sectors these students are increasingly attending higher SES schools.

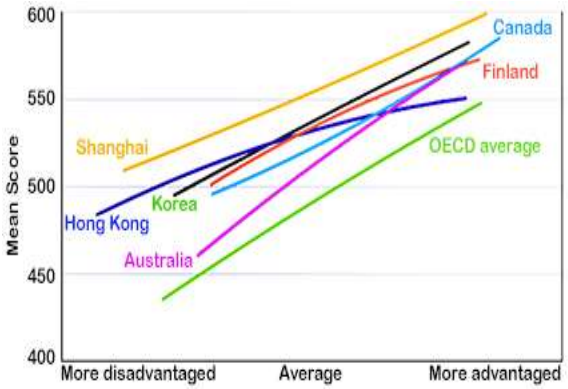
So it seems that there is an exodus of students from schools enrolling lower SEA students to schools enrolling higher SEA students. Certainly, a drift to private schools is part of this pattern - but people in Melbourne's east and Sydney's north can attest to the high demand for public school places in those better-off areas.

Many years ago the OECD showed that Australia was, more than most other countries, concentrating our disadvantaged students into disadvantaged schools and the advantaged into schools with their peers.[8] We show that this trend is continuing in ways that are measurable over just a few years. It is sometimes thought of as a flight to higher quality schools – yet assumptions about school quality are often poorly supported by evidence about what schools are and do. Regardless of the reasons stated for changing schools the data suggests that the way we provide and resource schools is reinforcing inequality and social class.

4. Australia's school education equity problem

Claims that we *don't* have a school equity problem keep popping up.[9] It is an important topic to investigate because the claimed existence of our equity problem drove the whole Gonski review and its findings and recommendations – so we need to know if we really do have a problem.

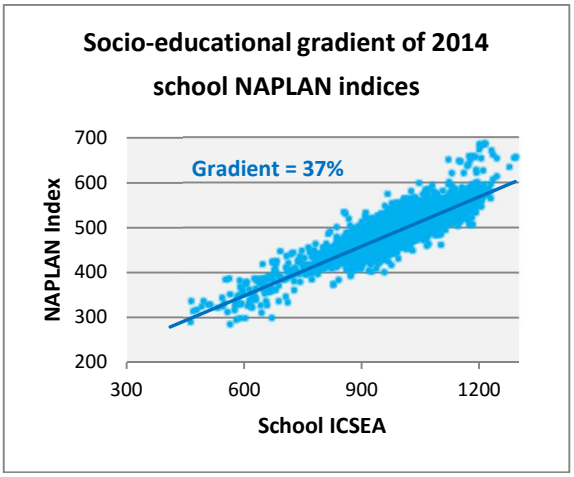
So what is equity all about? The Gonski reviewers defined equity as an aspiration to ensure that: "differences in educational outcomes are not the result of differences in wealth, income, power or possessions."[10] They explored the influence of student background on educational outcomes.



Social Gradients in PISA Reading Literacy, 2009

The extent of this influence can be illustrated by what are known as "social gradients". These are sloping lines on a graph and show the extent to which educational outcomes are related to some social or socio-economic indicator. The graph above, included in the Gonski report, shows (for Reading literacy) Australia's steeper social gradient compared with many similar countries – in other words a strong association between the level of advantage/ disadvantage and levels of student proficiency in reading.

That should be enough to establish that we do indeed have an equity problem, but we wanted to know if ICSEA and NAPLAN data on *My School* might also show if we had a noticeable social gradient. To examine this, we combined test scores in each NAPLAN domain to create a single composite index. This index combines the results of different cohorts equally and weights literacy-based domains equally with numeracy results. Since the ICSEA is a socio-educational measure, we can call the slope of any trendline a *socio-educational gradient* (SEG) for NAPLAN performance.



And this is what we found. The dots on the graph above are schools, thousands of them. The schools are positioned on the graph according to their NAPLAN index and ICSEA value. Notice how the schools are aligned from the bottom left (low ICSEA, low NAPLAN) to top right (high ICSEA, high NAPLAN). The SEG trendline forms a slope of around 0.37, or 37%.

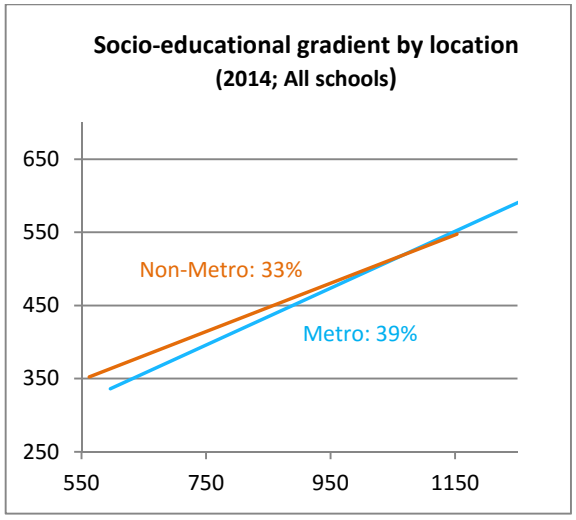
Student background sure matters! *My School* provides proof, if ever it was needed, that we have an equity problem. Any statement to the contrary is simply not true.

But we found out much more because the socio-educational gradient changes from place to place and also changes over time. This is revealed in our next report.

5. Our equity problem – over time and place

Being able to use *My School* data to study our equity problem was just the beginning. The data could also tell us about changes over time. Is inequity in our system of schools a static or changing problem? Our findings may surprise and in some cases, alarm.

Remember how the equity slope, i.e. the socio-educational gradient (SEG) was 37% in 2014? We found some variations between the states and territories. It was lowest in the ACT at 32.7%. Then came (in order) Queensland (33.3%) and Victoria (33.6%). Then there is a gap before Tasmania (36.1%), Northern Territory (36.2%), South Australia (37.7%), Western Australia (37.8%) and New South Wales (37.8%). There may be many and complex explanations for the differences.



More interesting, however, are the differences between the city and the bush, illustrated by the above graph. In 2014, for example, the Socio-educational gradient for country schools (in *My School* speak: provincial, remote and very remote) was 33%. The SEG for city (metropolitan) schools was 39%. While we are rightly concerned about educational opportunities for country students – and their levels of achievement - it appears that school-to-school equity is less of a concern.

Are there equity differences between primary and secondary schools? Absolutely and huge. Using NSW as an example, the SEG for Metropolitan government primary schools in 2014 was 39% - but it was 61% for metropolitan government secondary schools. One explanation might be that parents are exercising more discrimination for their child's secondary school than their primary school. Hence even in the government system Year 6 students disperse to a variety of secondary schools. As we have indicated elsewhere, this contributes to the socio-educational divides among schools. It might also explain the more gentle equity slope in non-metropolitan areas where choice of schools is often reduced.

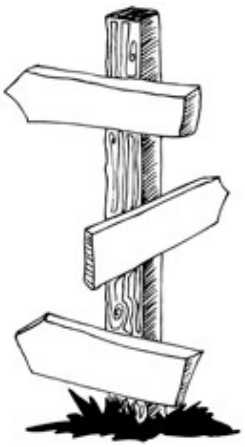
How are socio-educational gradients changing? Our most recent average equity slope across Australia is around 37% - but it was just 32% in 2010. The slope has increased, our school-to-school equity situation has worsened nationally, in just a few years. Again using NSW government secondary schools as a sample the most dramatic shift has taken place in metropolitan areas, from 58% to 61%. The gradient in provincial areas is reasonably static.

What can we conclude from all this? Ideally the educational outcomes of schools should be created by the things that schools do, by the effort and expertise of teachers and by school leadership, all supported by the right policies about how we provide and resource schools. We don't want these outcomes to be the result, in the well-known words of the Gonski review, of *"differences in wealth, income, power or possessions"*. But this is just what we see happening to a very great extent, especially in our cities.

And it seems to be getting worse. Is it having any impact on the level of student achievement? In the next report we find out.

6. The consequence: student achievement is drifting

There is no shortage of media stories about a crisis in student achievement and the implications for our economy and Australia's international standing. We take some of these reports with a grain of salt, but we do need to know what the indicators are telling us about student achievement. We also have some reservations about NAPLAN as a sole measure, but NAPLAN scores have a big impact on policy and practice at many levels.



Media reports generate excitement about whether scores are rising or falling and which states are winners or losers. But we present a story which doesn't get much attention. To do this we don't directly compare test scores, as they tend to fluctuate. Instead we have tracked the changing *ranking* of schools, especially the two groups of schools we created to track shifting enrolments (see *Mind the gap).* You'll remember that one group were higher socio-educational advantage (and growing) schools and another group were lower SEA (and declining) schools.[11]

You may not be surprised at what we found about their NAPLAN performance. The higher SEA schools *improved* their position from 2008 to 2014, from an average ranking of 69.4 (within the national dataset of schools) to 72.1.

Over the same period, the average ranking of the lower SEA schools *decreased* from 23.1 in 2008 to 20.6 in 2014.[12] Average student achievement is improving slightly in the more advantaged schools and declining slightly in the less advantaged schools. The differences are small, but the trend is noticeable and consistent.

Maybe the solution is to put pressure on the less advantaged schools to make them perform better. We've done a lot of that in Australia - but we've done it over the same period that the gap is continuing to widen. And now it seems we may walk away from providing the full funding that Gonski recommended in the next few years.

No one seems to notice or care that the way we provide and resource schools is creating greater obstacles for lower SES schools. We have shown (*The drift to where?)* that their more advantaged students are shifting to schools up the socio-educational ladder. We don't make any judgment about decisions made by families; what is happening is an inevitable consequence of "market forces" at work. But equally evident are the consequences: can anyone really be surprised that the gap has widened?

WHY IS IT HARD FOR DISADVANTAGED SCHOOLS TO IMPROVE?

There is no reason to assume, for any given student, that moving to a school up the socio-educational 'ladder' will provide an advantage – but there can be more positive outcomes for students who are learning in more advantaged schools. Schools with students who are advantaged accumulate the social, cultural and even financial capital of their supportive and resourceful parents. In this sense, the educationally "rich" are very likely to get "richer". The students in the less appealing schools experience a different dynamic in their learning environment, with the cultural influences of higher-performing students no longer bringing that stimulus to their classrooms. The parent organisation might lose some of its more articulate and energetic advocates. Teacher experiences and expectations, as well as curriculum offerings and access, can change. Teachers might shift subtly from continually exploring new ground to having to consolidate skills and knowledge already traversed. The range and availability of resources might reduce.

There is a real element of the "zero-sum" argument here. The advantage gained by one section of the school population has created a recognisable disadvantage to the remainder. As a society we have made the choice to allow advantaged students to aggregate together and to gain the benefits of that aggregation. Equity demands that we don't disadvantage those who can't access those benefits. The policy response has been to provide some extra support for struggling students and schools - and sing the praises of schools that seem to make a difference. That's good, but it isn't enough, the response is patchy and still leaves too many struggling against a tide of residualisation.

7. Busting a myth: '*Private schools get better results*'

The next four reports are more controversial. Gonski's solutions were sector blind, with funding to be based on need, not sector – a sound enough idea in all of the circumstances. But our problems are partly created because we have schools in different sectors, with too many different rules, obligations, funding and accountabilities. The solutions can be sector-blind – but the problems certainly aren't.

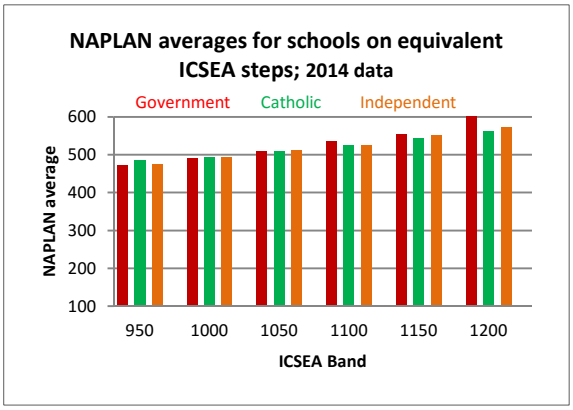
Let's start with impressions and especially those about student results. In fairness, claims about better private school results are usually made *about* the schools rather than *by* them. Regardless, assumptions about private school results may be driving current moves to remake public schools to resemble private schools – so it is important to test these assumptions.

Of course, anyone can show that private school results are 'better' by perusing the list of schools at the top end of published league tables. Or you can check out your local schools and it is likely that the private ones outscore the public ones. But that won't tell you much about school quality unless you take into account the students who actually attend each school, in particular their degree of socio-educational advantage. It's that ICSEA thing again. It is important: you want to know what difference the school itself makes to the achievement level of students? To do that you have to account for the impact of family background.

As we know, the *My School* website shows a close link between the ICSEA value of each school's enrolment and the achievement of its students. So what do the results look like when we compare public and private schools that enrol similar students?

In the graph on this page all Australian government, Catholic and Independent schools are grouped into six ICSEA ranges.[13] What is most obvious is the similarity, in NAPLAN scores, between the sectors in each range. But before you shout it from the rooftops some cautions are needed. The numbers of Catholic and Independent schools are quite low in the lowest ICSEA range – and the presence of some selective schools might distort comparisons in the highest range.

Other than that there is a slight tendency for better NAPLAN scores to be found in the small number of lower SEA Catholic schools – and a larger tendency for better NAPLAN scores in government schools above 1100. There is a similar graph on page 15. The safest conclusion is that any sectoral differences in school NAPLAN scores all but disappear when schools with similar enrolments are compared. It is always the case that students in some schools will score higher than others. But school sector - government, Catholic or Independent - explains very little if anything of the NAPLAN differences between schools.



Of course this comparison focuses on the limited NAPLAN testing, so maybe there are sector differences in HSC (NSW) or VCE (Victoria) scores? In our full paper on this topic we show some differences[14]. In some ICSEA ranges government schools are slightly ahead, in others it might be Catholic or Independent schools. Every school sector has its cheer squad and everyone has their school preferences – but, if it is school results you are after, nothing in these findings suggests it is worth the journey, the fees or all the other agonies involved in pursuing a school with a particular label.

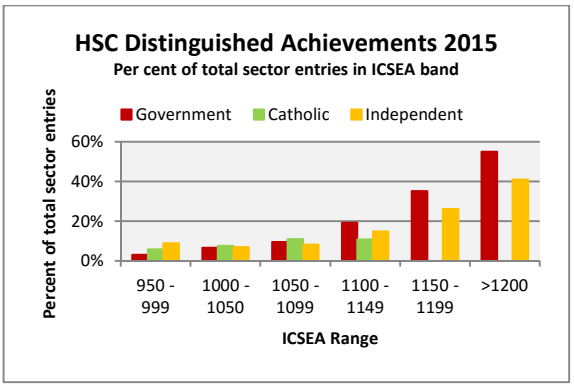
So the myth that private schools consistently get better student results is busted. That knowledge should pour cold water over what has been four decades of frenetic debate! If parents have a choice of schools (and that is a big 'IF') they would be best advised to put urban myths and rusted-on beliefs to one side, do their homework, visit the schools and pay much closer attention to the many and complex indicators of school quality.

8. Those HSC distinguished achievers

The previous report is mainly about achievement in NAPLAN, so let's have a closer look at the Higher School Certificate. Years ago one of us (we aren't saying which one) suggested to a journalist that we write up her annual HSC school and student success stories for the next ten years – in advance. Let's face it, the story is the same each year – it's just the names of the students that change, plus the odd school that (somehow) zips up the league ladder or apparently falls from grace. It's exactly the same with the VCE south of the Murray.

But let's have a closer look at the New South Wales distinguished achievers (DAs) – the students who achieve Band 6 in the HSC. Media reports about these high achievers are more nuanced these days – usually showing, for each school, distinguished achiever results as a percentage of HSC entries. There are inevitable accolades for schools with a high percentage of DAs, and these are mainly selective, high fee and well located ('postcode selective') schools.

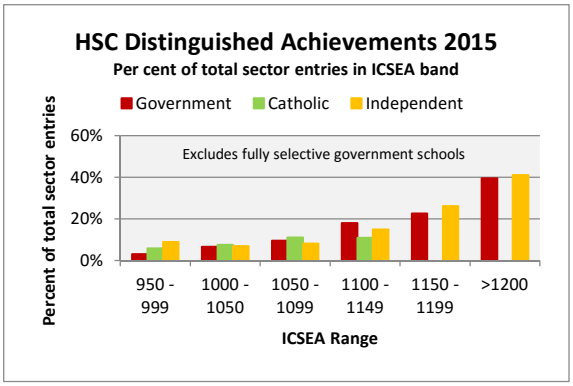
We can discover more about the distribution of distinguished achievers if we look at groups of schools in different sectors which enrol similar students – in other words, if we use ICSEA to make fair comparisons.



The graph above shows that the greatest percentage of high achievers are found in the highest ICSEA schools, the ones on the right. No surprise there, but let's compare sectors in the 1000-1050 and 1050-1099 ICSEA ranges. This is where there are enough schools from each sector to enable a fair comparison. The graph shows that the high achievers are quite evenly distributed among the sectors. It's just like NAPLAN: there isn't any substantial sector advantage.

What about the high ICSEA end, the schools with the most advantaged students? Comparisons have to be made carefully. The dominance of government schools didn't surprise us because there are many selective government schools in these ICSEA ranges.

So what happens if we take the (somewhat dubious) step of removing the selective schools from the graph - how are the distinguished achievers then spread between the sectors? The answer is 'quite evenly', as shown in this second graph.



Government schools still do well, but don't dominate. Of course many higher SEA schools, especially Independent schools, 'select' students both actively and passively, but *My School* data doesn't record this.

Don't get us wrong. All this takes nothing away from the success achieved by students, teachers and schools. And there are schools which seem to improve and schools which seem to drop the ball from time to time. But the differences *between the sectors* evaporate when schools enrolling similar students, as measured by school ICSEA, are compared – and they should only be compared in this way.

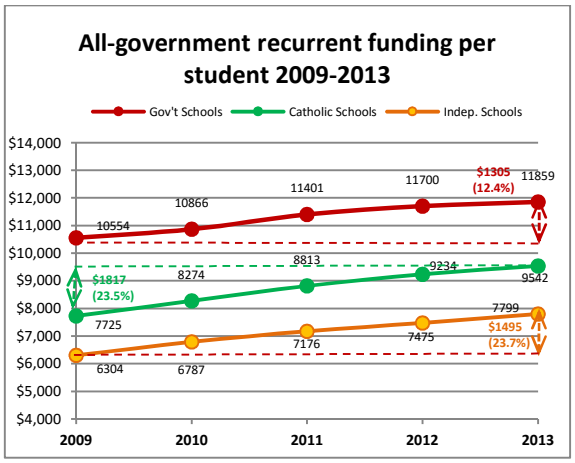
If you are a parent, principal or just a pundit checking the number of high achievers in this or that type of school - then it is time for a rethink. If you've dined out for years on stories about the superiority of elite, selective, Independent, government or Catholic schools – then you can now rewrite your script. When it comes to a school's high-end HSC results it's certainly about hard work, but it is also about choice or lack of it: schools that can choose their students … and kids who can't choose their parents.

9. The money-go-round

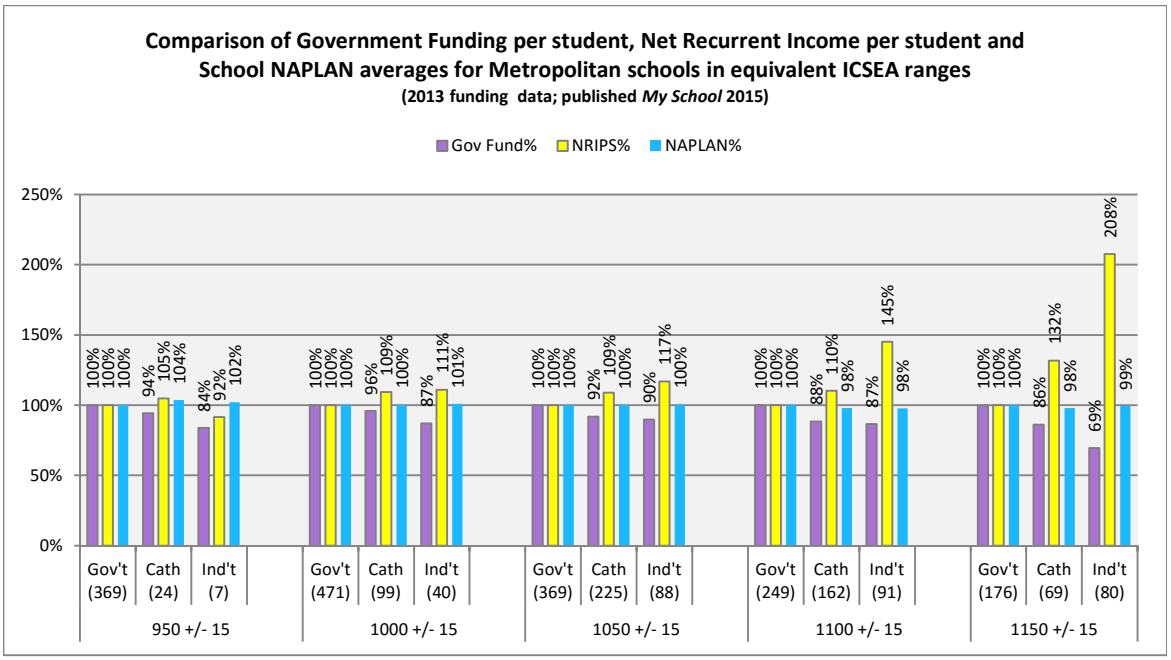
There are many competing claims about money going into schools: where it comes from, who gets it and how it is used. We are not going to canvass all these questions, we'll just show what *My School* tells about two things that are often the subject of debate.

Governments pay about $42 billion each year to run Australia's schools. By 'governments' we mean both federal and state. Many schools get funds from other sources, including from fees. In showing who gets what we mainly talk about amounts per student, in schools with similar enrolments. Things like total figures and sector averages are, in the absence of other information, very misleading.

The graph below shows five ICSEA groupings of schools. It shows averages of government funding per student (purple), net total recurring income per student (yellow) and NAPLAN (blue). The columns for government schools are set at 100% within each group so you can more easily compare the three sectors. If any column is above or below 100% it is above or below the column for similar government schools. The graph also shows NAPLAN, and once again you can see the negligible difference between the sectors, as we outlined in Report 7. The purple columns show that government funding of non-government schools is at much higher levels than is commonly thought. More about that later. The yellow columns show the net total recurrent income (from all sources) per student. These amounts are generally higher and sometimes much higher in private schools, especially those in the Independent sector at the higher ICSEA end.



The graph above shows a surprising trend. Given the high total income per student in advantaged schools you would imagine that governments might make sure that public funding increases are greater for the sector with the most needy students. But the graph shows that the reverse has happened: between 2009 and 2013 combined government funding per student to the two non-government sectors increased by around 24%. Funding to government schools only increased at half this rate. Go figure!



10. Busting a myth: '*private schools save public money*'

For decades this claim has featured in almost every debate about school funding. But as we saw earlier, public funding of private schools has risen dramatically over recent times and the claim is far less true today than it may have been in the past. Hence the claim is at best a half-truth – and on current trends is on the way to becoming a myth.

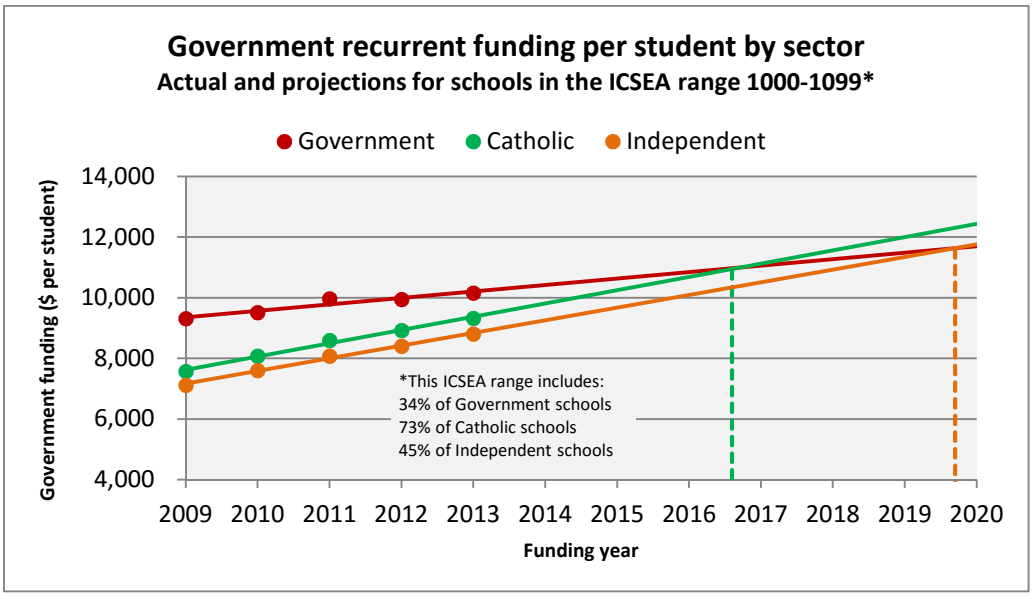
If we look at government funding to all schools it is true that, *on average*, less public funding goes to students in Catholic and Independent schools. But public schooling is inevitably expensive - only governments must make schools available for every child from every family in every location. Private schools don't have to be open or available to all – and, with a few exceptions, overwhelmingly they aren't. *My School* shows that their students are, all other factors being equal, measurably more advantaged and located in mainstream schools in more accessible places. So it is a nonsense to compare funding averages across sectors.

If we compare public and private schools enrolling similar students, as *My School* enables us to do, how much public money do private schools really get each year to run their schools? In this snapshot we include only schools in the ICSEA range 1000-1099[15]. However this includes most Catholic and almost half the Independent schools, so it is a very big sample. Our full report shows comparisons in a number of ICSEA ranges.[16]

The red line on the graph below shows public funding of government schools – actual to 2013, and projected to 2020. Many things will impact on future funding - but bear with us and consider the long-standing *trends*. Catholic schools (the green line) may start getting more public funding than similar government schools from 2016. Independent schools (the orange line) are likely to be similarly blessed after 2019. In other words, if recent trends continue, private schools in Australia are about to cost *more* each year – to governments – than similar public schools. If you ever need to describe a situation of utter lunacy that's a good one. But remember our warnings about family gatherings, BBQs and dinner parties.

In our longer paper we raise some 'ifs' and 'buts' - and discuss other funding. But private schools in Australia are funded more generously than just about anywhere else. Many are on the way to becoming fully publicly-funded – but without the obligations and accountabilities required of public schools. In many countries private schools are integrated into the state system and all schools follow the same rules. At the very least we should develop a public charter for all schools receiving public funding. The charter would extend to matters such as obligations, accountability, fees, right of access.

Australians believe in the idea of a level playing field – and we work hard to achieve this, especially in sporting competitions. When it comes to schools we don't even try.



11. Busting a myth: *money doesn't improve results'*

This is an oldie but goldie that we hear from anyone who doesn't want to invest in schools. There is ample research evidence that the statement is a myth[17] but *My School* does show that pouring money into *some* schools doesn't improve results. It should be enough to worry Federal Minister Simon Birmingham, who wants extra spending on schools to provide "more value for money, most importantly better outcomes from the students"[18]. But when we investigated the schools where extra spending *isn't* delivering better outcomes we were more than a little surprised.

But first, some obvious truths about school funding. Because of their location and who they enrol, some schools are far more expensive than others - and their running costs alone are going to rise substantially each year. The cost of some schools can also be inflated by expensive assets; there is a resources and facilities 'arms race' between well-funded schools.

All schools need resources, but even the most needy should be able to show how their resources make a difference. If this or that program doesn't deliver, there is a problem. But in dollar terms it seems that the needy schools aren't the ones where high spending turns out to be such a poor investment.

How does *My School* show this? We have already shown that schools enrolling similar students get very similar results. So the next question is: how much money goes into these schools to get these similar results? The answer is: very different amounts.

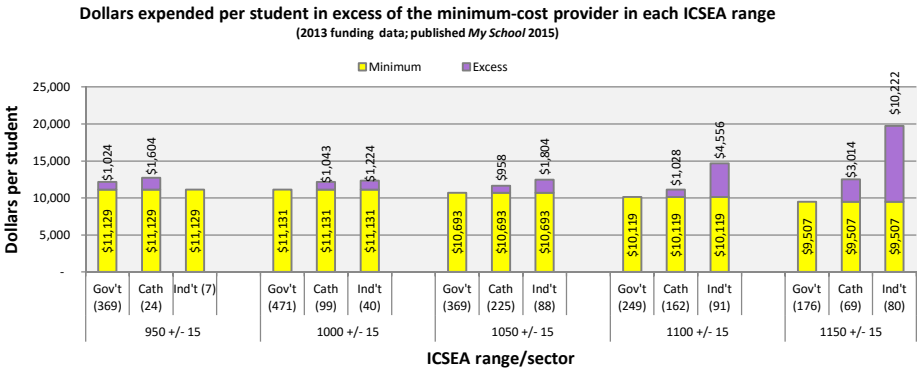
We found this by analysing the funding going into, and results coming out of, schools with similar students - but different resourcing. In almost all ICSEA ranges it is the government schools where the amounts spent per student are the lowest; these schools are the *lowest cost* providers. On the graph below this lowest amount, the amount needed to be spent per student in various ICSEA groups (to achieve the common outcome for each group), is shown by the yellow columns. Amounts *actually spent* in each case are shown by the yellow columns plus the purple extension. The totals per student are shown at the top of each column.

At the risk of hyperbole let's call these additional amounts shown in each column, *overspend*. This overspend exists at times in all sectors, but is dramatically large in *private* schools with more advantaged students. We have calculated this overspend across all Australian schools to be around $3.3 billion. The bulk of this overspend, especially in the more advantaged schools, is money paid by parents, mainly as fees. The government share of this overspend totalled around $1.3 billion in 2013. It is likely to be much higher now.

In terms of measurable student results we have a very cost-inefficient education system, with too much spent on large numbers of quite high achieving, advantaged students.

In our full paper on this topic[19] we toss around the arguments about what is demonstrably a poor investment. We do believe that the government portion of this overspend, if redirected to good programs in more needy schools, would raise outcomes. It would be a more targeted investment in students, one which would improve levels of student achievement across Australia.

It's time that the critics of spending more on schools took a closer look at where existing funding goes – and where it should go.



12. The illusion of school choice

Choice of schools is like parenthood; just about everyone believes in it. Even when politicians are backed into a corner over some idiotic school policy they escape by reciting the choice mantra. Choice is claimed to deliver competition and quality (it doesn't) and personal advantage (it can – but only for some). We're not against choice - we just don't support how it is done in Australia.

Narratives about school choice must bemuse half the population – because when it comes to choosing a school that charges fees, half our families have little or no choice at all. It is easy to show this. Whether families can afford school fees depends on their disposable income, after tax and after meeting a range of other expenses. We can estimate this capacity to choose by comparing average disposable family incomes against amounts charged by schools. More information on how we do this is found in *Is the school community a myth*?[20]

So how much choice of a secondary school is really available for average two-parent families with children and with two incomes (44.6% of all families)? Let's start with how much money these people have. We can calculate their net disposable household income, using the most recent figures (for 2011), in this way:

Median weekly income (couple with children)	$2310
Minus tax (on both incomes) of $462[21]	$1848
Minus median Household Expenditure[22]	$1747
Balance(net disposable income)	$101

Next, let's consider which schools, on average, might be available for families with $101 each week to spend on school fees? In 2011 the average figure for fees, charges and parent contributions per student in Catholic schools with secondary enrolments was $3829 ($73 per week over a whole year) and for Independent schools $6575 ($126 per week). This means that the net disposable income of two-parent families on median incomes in Australia was, in 2011, enough to pay the average Catholic school fees. Hence some choice of schools is available, on average, for one child in each median income family. The choice for families on higher or lower incomes will be different. Families with more than one child have to decide which one goes to the fee-charging school. Families on one average income or less, can largely forget the idea. Capacity to choose might also vary according to family type, location of schools, school enrolment practice and possible fee concessions, family access to other funds, other or unforeseen family or school costs.

But we know that averages don't tell the whole story - it varies considerably from place to place:

- Average two parent families with children in Orange NSW have no income left over after tax and family expenses – hence have no choice of a non-government school. There are still non-government schools in Orange, but, as the school ICSEA values show, they are accessed by more advantaged families.
- The same scenario applies in places like Goulburn in NSW and Toowoomba in Queensland.
- Average two parent families with children living in the Kooyong federal electorate in Melbourne could enrol six children in the lowest fee Catholic, or four children in the lowest fee Independent school. In Port Philip Bay, average two parent families in Corio electorate (Geelong) could enrol one child in the lowest fee Catholic or one child in the lowest fee Independent school.

So what? Well, public funding of private schools has long been justified on the basis that it provides ever-increasing choice. True to a point - as long as fees don't escalate – but who gets to choose? Advocates for fee-charging schools need to acknowledge, far more than they do, that their schools aren't available to most families.

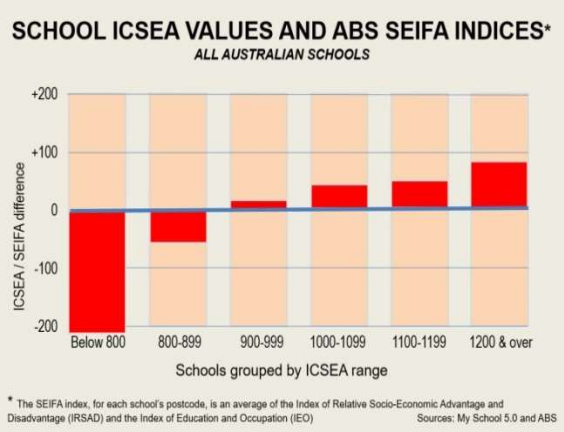
There are other issues relating to school choice across all schools – this report just relates what *My School* data tells us. Unless carefully structured, systems of school choice almost always favour advantaged families.

13. And where did the school community go?

People in and around schools know the benefits of a close relationship between a school and its community. We've seen these benefits. Schools should be a community hub – kids and families are the winners if schools are responsive to local needs and help lift communities. Schools can help create social capital, which includes the networks of leadership, influence and support that knit communities together. They provide cultural capital, especially the knowledge, skills, education, and advantages that people need to achieve success.

They can still do this to some extent, but for most schools the local community is increasingly not the community of the local school. More than ever before, students go elsewhere to school, or the local school's enrolled students come from somewhere else. Despite all the talk about the school community, less than a third of our schools have an enrolment which resembles the cross-section of people in their local community.

We found this out by about comparing the composition of school enrolments with the socio-economic profile of people who live in the locality of each school.[23]



This graph sums up the story. In the graph Australia's schools are grouped by ICSEA range. To the left of the graph are the schools enrolling the more disadvantaged students, to the right are schools enrolling the more advantaged. The columns show the difference between the socio-educational advantage (SEA) of the schools and a measure of the socio-economic status (SES) of people in each school's locality.

The higher SEA schools on the right enrol students who are more advantaged than might be the case if the schools just enrolled students from their postcode. Students in the lowest SEA schools are far more disadvantaged than the families in the schools' postcodes. This suggests that the more advantaged students in any low SES locality tend to go elsewhere to school.

We believe that there is scope for more detailed work in this area, but our tentative findings are suggesting that:

- The differences between school enrolments and local people are more noticeable for secondary schools.
- The differences are more evident in provincial, rather than metropolitan areas.
- Higher SEA schools in places such as outer western Sydney seem very socially detached from their localities.
- Enrolments in middle and higher SEA public schools seem to be more representative of their localities

Does it matter? After all, not all communities are defined by geography. But at the very least, we need to know much more about the impact of school choice on the distribution of social and cultural capital. And even the impact on our daily lives: transporting kids elsewhere to school costs, and clogs our urban roads.

It is another dimension of our divided schools. The social diversity which previous generations witnessed *within* schools is increasingly evident *between* them. We need someone to convince us that this is a really good idea!

Challenges for our schools' future

The findings about our schools, derived from *My School*, challenge the ways we think about our schools.

For decades now we have been rolling out a marketplace of schools, underpinned by choice and competition. *My School* itself was part of this. But mounting evidence at home and abroad shows that competition and choice has failed to produce the expected results – and too many students have been falling behind.

The Gonski review and its findings proved to be a timely reality check. Its recommendations, if implemented, would have slowed and even reversed our drift towards what can best be described as our school socio-educational apartheid. But the Gonski findings were forgotten and its recommendations diluted by politicians and sectional interests. Evidence soon took second place behind rusted-on beliefs and short term fixes.

The Gonski process began around the same time *My School* was launched. The data behind *My School* strongly suggests that Gonski got it right and that, if anything, things are worse now than when the review reported in 2012:

- We are increasingly entrenching socio-educational differences between our schools
- Our subsequent equity problem has worsened in ways that are noticeable in just a few years
- Student achievement is drifting, with school performance even more strongly linked to socio-educational status.
- Money can make a difference, but the biggest increases still go to better funded schools…
- …to the point where governments alone are starting to fund private schools ahead of their own
- Schools and their communities have far less in common than ever

Yet the noisiest policies for schools, regardless of which party is in power, seem to stress anything but these issues. Common debates about schools recycle longstanding beliefs about the value of choice, the advantages of private education and the way it saves public money. The data behind *My School*, presented in our reports, seriously challenges these beliefs. Educators can use the findings in our reports to carry this challenge into the public arena, shifting the focus to fair go, opportunity and achievement for all.

After having looked closely at what *My School* tells we worry about future opportunities for students in a framework of schools which lacks viability and efficacy. It is simply broken. It no longer adequately serves student achievement, community building and national progress. Australia's somewhat unique hybrid arrangement of 'public' and 'private' schools is not sustainable in its current form. It is an experiment that failed. We believe that our findings point to big sleeper issues in Australian schooling. Time to wake them up!

CB and BS

Now test yourself

People do make very definite statements about schools, in some cases long after a deeper analysis shows them to be wrong. This section includes some recent comments and some others that are fossilised in older documents still in circulation. The comments have been made by politicians and some journalists – or come from publications issued by schools or school peak groups. A small number come from … educators!

We've decided to leave out who said what. We want you to focus on what is being said and, having read our reports, how you might respond. After all, it shouldn't be about the people; it's about the argument/s.

Of course we can't help ourselves and we do suggest a possible response, but it is upside down at the end of the booklet. Please don't peek! Think of it as a way to test yourself.

Equity and all that

1.	*"The link between performance and SES is far from proven."*
2.	*''Overall, the 66 per cent of Australian school students who attend public schools get 79 per cent of government funding….the 34 per cent of Australians who attend independent schools get just 21 per cent of government funding. So there is no question of injustice to public schools here. If anything, the injustice is the other way."*
3.	*"There isn't actually an issue in Australian schools that revolves around equity".*

Students: who goes where?

4.	*"Unfortunately the debate is often undermined by misinformation and destructive stereotypes. Chief among them are inaccurate characterisations of government, Catholic and Independent schools and the misconception that each sector serves a different, distinct population of students"*
5.	*"The range of students and types of schools within each sector is larger than the differences between the sectors. Each sector enrols students from across the socioeconomic scale, in all geographic locations, from all cultural and language backgrounds, and across the ability spectrum"*
6.	*"There is a common perception, encouraged by media portrayal, that independent schools are large, urban schools which only cater to high income families. In fact, ninety percent of independent schools are low to medium fee establishments which cater to the full spectrum of Australian society."*

Student achievement

7.	*"… on average across Australia, students in Catholic schools achieved higher mean scores than the national average…."*
8.	*''The results also indicate that test outcomes vary by school sector, with private schools having higher school-average scores. Even after differences in schools' ICSEA are taken into account.''*
9.	*"Education outcomes in the non-government sector are higher than in the government sector."*

Some 'choice' quotes

10.	*The first principle: Families must have the right to choose a school that meets their needs, values and beliefs"*
11.	*"Choice is not only a right, but government funding allows it to work."*
12.	*"Denying parents a choice in schooling is immoral."*

Dollars and (non)sense

13.	*"spending more money does not necessarily get you better outcomes"* *"You've got to make sure that when you're spending more, you're actually getting more value for money, most importantly better outcomes from the students."*
14.	*"The funding of Independent schools is a partnership between governments and parents, with fees paid by parents often necessitating considerable sacrifice. This in turn saves governments money: the average government funding to non-government schools is $8,812 per student, while the average per public school student is $15,703.*
15.	*"When funding from both government and private sources (from tuition fees and fundraising) are taken into account, the amount of funding in the three sectors is still similar"*
16.	*"The Catholic school sector is able to maintain its strong education outcomes with relatively low resources, operating with the least net recurrent resources per student of any school sector"*
17.	*"Funding for private schools is not welfare or a gift. It's a payment for services provided — a modest top-up of fees contributed by parents."*
18.	*"If the 1.24 million students now in private primary and secondary schools were shifted back to public schools, Australian governments would face an annual extra cost of $9bn.* *"In short, it would be fiscal suicide.*

SUGGESTED RESPONSES

1. Yes it is. See Report 4 *Australia's school education equity problem*
2. This statement interprets equity to mean equal or proportionate share – and assumes that public schools and independent schools enrol (in total) similar students.
3. Perhaps not "an issue", in fact there are a host of issues
4. There is obviously a range of students in each sector but ICSEA (and other *My School* data) clearly shows that the sector differences are very obvious. See Report 1 *A school is a school is a school – or is it?*
5. This is a meaningless and deliberately misleading statement which refers only to *range* and ignores *distribution*.
6. A "low" fee in a low income community is not low at all. Regardless of who they might like cater for, *My School* shows who independent schools enrol. In almost every locality in Australia the ICSEA of Independent schools is higher than the ICSEA of government schools.
7. We can't assess the accuracy of this statement as it stands, but unless the profile of students in Catholic schools are accounted for it is another meaningless and misleading assertion, completely useless as a basis for comparison .
8. Incorrect. This conclusion comes from a study of the first iteration of *My School* with its notoriously inaccurate ICSEA values based on census districts. We always ignore the first ICSEA values in our work.
9. Incorrect. See Reports 7 and 8
10. The source didn't go on to specify any other principles important in school education.
11. To some extent, but only for some people.
12. It's not our intention to engage with questions of morality, but we wonder if the writer has considered the financial and logistic implications of providing genuine choice to everyone, everywhere as public schools do.
13. It certainly doesn't if you compare the different expenditure between the sectors. The inclusion of "necessarily" makes the first statement acceptable. It usually isn't included in such statements. We don't have any problems with the second statement, but would like to see this principle applied to all schools. See Report 11
14. The main problem is that the statement talks about average funding in sectors that clearly don't enrol average students.
15. No it isn't. See Report 9 *The Money–go–round*
16. It used to, but not anymore.
17. You might be able to apply this statement to the highest fee schools, but for the rest the top-up has lost any modesty it once had – in money terms the "top-up" is looking more like a takeover.
18. "Fiscal suicide"? We don't think so. Latest *My School* finance data (2103) shows the cost might be around a quarter of that figure and almost certainly less today.

[1] http://www.myschool.edu.au/

[2] http://www.schools.nsw.edu.au/media/downloads/schoolsweb/news/announcements/yr2010/jan/what_is_icsea.pdf

[3] See Appendix 1 of *Private school, public cost:* https://drive.google.com/file/d/0BxK25rJrOw-eQ3dlZmZZRGNNV1k/view

[4] This index combines the results of different cohorts equally and weights literacy-based domains equally with numeracy results.

[5] www.edmediawatch.com

[6] Source needed

[7] For more information, including about the methodology, see *Gonski, My School and the Education Market* https://drive.google.com/file/d/0BxK25rJrOw-edGFOLU9sTzNXdjg/view

[8] http://www.oecd.org/pisa/pisaproducts/48852584.pdf

[9] For example http://www.abc.net.au/lateline/content/2013/s3899668.htm

[10] https://docs.education.gov.au/system/files/doc/other/review-of-funding-for-schooling-final-report-dec-2011.pdf

[11] For more information, including about the methodology, see *Gonski, My School and the Education Market* https://drive.google.com/file/d/0BxK25rJrOw-edGFOLU9sTzNXdjg/view

[12] ibid

[13] For more information, including the methodology see *The public and private of student achievement* https://drive.google.com/file/d/0BxK25rJrOw-eMi1BVjJTYjJyQTg/view

[14] ibid

[15] Our longer paper on this topic includes graphs showing funding of the full ICSEA range of Catholic and Independent schools. For more information see *Private school, public cost* https://drive.google.com/file/d/0BxK25rJrOw-eQ3dlZmZZRGNNV1k/view

[16] ibid

[17] For a recent example see http://www.saveourschools.com.au/funding/another-study-shows-that-money-matters-in-education

[18] http://www.abc.net.au/tv/qanda/txt/s4321172.htm

[19] *School funding and achievement – following the money trail* https://drive.google.com/file/d/0BxK25rJrOw-eckVtUDhoU0hLNjQ/view

[20] https://drive.google.com/file/d/0BxK25rJrOw-eS1dUQXdheTVRdjg/view

[21] http://www.abcdiamond.com/australia/income-tax-rates-2010-2011-australia/

[22] For 2009-10 http://www.abs.gov.au/AUSSTATS/abs@.nsf/Lookup/6530.0Explanatory%20Notes12009-10?OpenDocument

[23] *Is the school community a myth*?

[23] https://drive.google.com/file/d/0BxK25rJrOw-eS1dUQXdheTVRdjg/view