

COALITION RESPONSE TO THE AUSTRALIAN COUNCIL OF STATE SCHOOL ORGANISATIONS

1.0 FUNDING OF SCHOOLS

Q1. Will you make *need* the key factor in the next round of education funding?

- The Coalition will continue to provide a strong commitment to fund both government and non-government schools. No school will receive reduced funding. The Coalition will also continue to deliver full indexation to funding as part of the next schools funding agreement. This will deliver more than \$42 billion of funding to all schools across the 2009-2012 quadrennium – an increase of \$9 billion over the current funding quadrennium.

Q2. Will you revive the Investing in Our Schools Programme or its equivalent based on the principles of parent involvement in the design and promotion of the programme, the assessment of the school submissions and the writing of submissions made by each school?

- A re-elected Coalition Government has committed to extending the Investing in Our Schools Programme. Further details of this commitment will be released during the election campaign, however the administrative arrangements for the programme are expected to mirror those presently in place.

Q3. Will you co-operate with state governments in the management of the Investing in Our Schools Programme?

- The Investing in Our Schools Programme is a Coalition Government initiative. It is expected that State Governments – whose schools are the recipients of 70 per cent of the IOSP's \$1.2 billion funds to date – will continue to act cooperatively in the management of this highly successful programme.

Q4. How will you work with state governments to build certainty and long term planning into education funding and decision making?

- A re-elected Coalition Government will continue to work with the States and Territories through the Ministerial Council on Education, Employment, Training and Youth Affairs (MCEETYA). The Coalition will also negotiate a new quadrennium funding agreement for schools to cover the 2009-2012 period.

Q5. Will you guarantee that school national testing results will not be used to make comparisons between schools?

- As a condition of funding, the Coalition Government has already introduced requirements that schools must report a range of indicators including professional

engagement, key student outcomes, including literacy and numeracy benchmark information; and parent, student and teacher satisfaction.

- Reporting requirements will be further developed to ensure that parents have informed choice about which school is right for their child including:
 - Staff qualifications and turnover;
 - Suspension and expulsion statistics;
 - Attendance and retention rates;
 - Raw academic scores and improvements in scores demonstrating progress over time;
 - Post-school first destinations; and
 - Feedback data on parent, student and teacher satisfaction levels.

2.0 PARTNERING WITH PARENTS

Q1. Will you continue to fund ACSSO with the Grant-in-Aid/DEST Research funding to allow the peak parent body to represent its members around Australia on key bodies, in key forums and to conduct research and other activities which ensure that parents are given an effective national voice in education decisions?

- A re-elected Coalition Government will continue to provide ACSSO and APC with Grant-in-Aid funding.

Q2. Will you fund (cost \$174,500) the Parent-School and Community Partnership Bureau which ACSSO and the Australian Parents Council will use to build and support parent-school partnerships across the country?

- The Coalition Government is proud of the draft Family-School Partnership Framework that has been developed in conjunction with APC and ACSSO. Once this framework has been endorsed by all MCEETYA members, a re-elected Coalition Government will consider how its findings should best be taken forward including consideration of the Parent-School and Community Partnership Bureau proposed by ACSSO and APC.

Q3. Will you appoint and support the national parent organisations (ACSSO and APC) to boards and key reference groups such as curriculum and training authorities that help guide the Education Minister's policy decisions and the policy deliberations of his or her Department?

- APC and ACSSO members have made valuable contributions to a range of education policy enquiries and reference groups. A re-elected Coalition Government would continue this strong relationship.

Q4. Will you continue to fund the highly successful twice yearly forums between the Minister, DEST and ACSSO/APC which provide an opportunity for briefings and consultations on key education programmes?

- A re-elected Coalition Government will continue to provide ACSSO and APC with funding for consultations and briefings.

Q5. Will you renew the 3 year funding for ACSSO and APC to enable them to run programmes which promote values in Australian schools?

- The Coalition Government's national Values Education Programme will commit almost \$35 million over 2005-2008 to support values education and civics and citizenship education programs, with \$29.7 million dedicated to making values education a core part of schooling.
- We recognise that ACSSO and APC have played an important role in supporting the implementation of the values education programme. A re-elected Coalition Government will continue to work with APC and ACSSO in any extension of the values education programme in the next school funding quadrennium.