



Media Release

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Another Save Our Schools report - another 'F' for Fail

The Association of Independent Schools of NSW today described the 'analysis' of school funding from Save Our Schools (SOS), prepared for the Australian Education Union and highlighted by Fairfax media on 11th December 2017, as "*massively flawed and a work of fiction*".

The latest effort from SOS continues its remarkable run of reports that fail to make sense, defy logic and that are lacking in any credibility whatsoever. It attempts to predict future funding levels for non-government schools but uses outdated data, speculates regarding decisions on future funding not yet made by state governments, and makes numerous assumptions that are invalid and not supported by evidence.

The report was marked '**F** for Fail' from the Independent schools sector, which noted that any number of similar descriptors could have readily been used (see below). The consistency shown by SOS was, however, considered an achievement worthy of note.

Flawed: The report was flawed from the beginning as it was undertaken with a pre-determined outcome of presenting a false and dishonest picture of the funding of non-government schools.

Fiction: In using outdated 2015 State Government funding data, combining these with projected federal funding from 2016 and making convenient assumptions as it attempts to predict future funding, the report quickly becomes a work of fiction, relieving it of any credibility it may have had, however small.

Fantasy: It then speculates on funding decisions that have *not yet been made* by state/territory governments and, using figures based purely on this speculation, extrapolates funding levels out to 2027 to take the analysis into the realms of fantasy. While this may be a suitable genre of choice for holiday reading it is completely unsuited to the more serious business of school funding.

Farcical: By failing to acknowledge the fact that all independent schools will have transitioned to the 80% Commonwealth Government funding share of their School Resourcing Standard by 2027, and assuming that all state/territory governments will maintain funding of non-government schools above their 20% share, the report descends quickly into farce. Hypothetical funding scenarios may be useful when dealing with hypothetical schools but they are unsuitable for use where real schools are working with real students.

Failure: The SOS report for the Australian Education Union fails to meet basic tests of logic and makes assumptions that have no validity, and therefore lacks credibility and is unable to be taken seriously.

The Association of Independent Schools of NSW welcomes balanced and thoughtful contributions to the complex issue of school funding. However it is unable to take seriously reports such as those undertaken by SOS which are presented by some vested interests as representing serious analysis, but are quickly shown to be lacking in credibility by having pre-determined outcomes and for not meeting basic standards with respect to research, the use of data or supporting evidence.

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