

Letter to the Editor

23 April 2009



Independent Schools
Council of Australia

Students with Disability Funding Arrangements

It is disappointing that Trevor Cobbold (“Disabled funding in schools”, Letters to the Editor, 23/04) has misrepresented funding arrangements for school students with disability.

Students with disabilities in independent schools receive significantly less government funding for their educational support needs than if they were educated in a government school. The funding difference is greater for students with high level support needs. The gap in funding for these students can be over \$40,000 per student per year.

Cobbold’s argument does not account for the reality that a non-government student attracts only a proportion of what a government school student is funded for general recurrent purposes from State and Federal Governments. This can be a little as \$2,540 per annum while governments provide on average \$11,874 per annum towards the cost of educating a student in a government owned school.

The most recent relevant Australian Government inquiry, “*Investigating the Feasibility of Portable Funding for Students with Disabilities*” notes that funding levels of students with disability in government schools are substantially higher than students with disability in main-stream non-government schools.

Clearly there is a case that students with disability require additional support because of the nature of their disability, not because of the school they attend. Misrepresentations about funding arrangements do little to achieve this goal.

Yours sincerely,

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