



ASSOCIATION OF INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS OF VICTORIA

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AISV WELCOMES ALP 'RIGHT TO CHOOSE' EDUCATION POLICY

AISV Chief Executive, Michelle Green today welcomed the ALP's commitment to fund education so that parents have the right to choose where they send their children to school.

Mr Beazley said in Canberra today that the Labor Party would support whatever choice parents made in the education of their children based on personal conscience, religion or values.

Ms Green said a guarantee by the Leader of the Opposition, Mr Beazley not to cut government funding to independent schools is a reversal of ALP policy, reflecting the reality that a third of Australia's school students from about a million families are educated in non-government schools.

Dropping Labor's 'hit list' of independent schools and adopting a 'no losers' approach for education funding is good news for schools and their families, Ms Green said.

AISV believes that all students, whether attending independent or non-government schools, are entitled to government support for their school education.

In Victoria total state and federal government funding for non-government schools is \$1,434 million compared with \$5,013 million for government schools. In 2003-04 government schools in Victoria received more than \$9000 per student while non-government schools received about \$5000. Independent and Catholic schools educate more than a third of Victorian school children but receive about 22 per cent of government funding.

Ms Green said that AISV is still to see the details of Labor's schools' policy and details of the allocation model that the ALP intends to use but any move away from a policy that penalises parents for investing money on their children's education is very positive.

AISV is ready to provide the Opposition and Government with information and the views of Victoria's independent schools and their parents to help frame education funding policies.

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