

From: do-not-reply@mail.parliament.vic.gov.au
To: [stateeducationinquiry](#)
Subject: PUBLIC: Submission to Inquiry into Victoria's State Education System
Date: Sunday, 8 October 2023 10:04:34 PM

Organisation: Brighton Primary School Council

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Submission:

Attention: State Education Inquiry

Subject:

Submission to the Inquiry into the state education system in Victoria

To whom it may concern,

We are writing to you on behalf of our school community to raise awareness of the inequity of capital funding provided to schools which impacts the burden on teachers and ultimately impacts students' learning outcomes and wellbeing.

Background: Brighton Primary School (BPS) is 148 years old with a population of 550 students. It is an International Baccalaureate school with the PYP and member of the Council of International Schools, attracting between 30 to 50 international students each year, and we are the only school in the inner and south-east that has a dedicated hearing unit, supporting up to 20 students who are deaf or have hearing difficulties. There are 15 portable classrooms on-site, some nearly 50 years old.

These portable classrooms are in a part of the school that is down the back of the school site, with some classrooms situated directly on the railway line. The educational setting currently on offer is not a best practice model for teachers and does not support improvement in student learning outcomes and wellbeing.

Funding issue & impact on teachers: BPS has not received capital funding since 2016, and as an ageing school, is in desperate need of a capital investment - not just VSBA patch up funding through the Rolling Facilities Evaluation program. The school has made a large investment and commitment to improving teacher competency and capabilities with professional development in literacy and numeracy, yet the staff has to teach in poor conditions that are not conducive to best practice and stimulating learning.

Teachers at Brighton Primary School, as in all government schools, deserve to work in an environment that supports their professional efforts. Inadequate facilities create additional challenges for educators, impacting their ability to deliver the curriculum effectively and provide students with the best possible education. The dedication of teachers should not be overshadowed by the shortcomings of their workplace.

Inequity of funding: Unfairly, many schools surrounding Brighton have received capital funding, yet Brighton Primary, sitting in a Liberal electorate, is repeatedly overlooked. This inadequacy of funding allocation is directly impacting teacher efficacy and the student learning outcomes and wellbeing. As this inquiry is looking into the administrative burden on teachers, examples of best practice to improve student learning outcomes and wellbeing, and school funding adequacy and its impact on student learning outcomes and wellbeing, then equity in the funding allocation needs to be a strong consideration, particularly as every student has as much right to a good education as the next, regardless of the postcode.

Sometimes it seems socio- economic disadvantage can be reversed, with assumptions made about a particular area, which are not true. Below is an excerpt from a speech to Victorian Parliament by James Newbury MP, on Wednesday 23rd June 2023, who is advocating for equity in school funding.

We know that Labor refuses to meaningfully invest in schools outside of Labor electorates. We know that the recent state budget directed 93 per cent of school funding into Labor electorates, despite Labor holding just over 60 per cent of electorates in the chamber. Despite the coalition holding a third of the seats, those electorates – our electorates – only received 6 per cent of school capital funding. Nineteen out of 20 school investments were in Labor seats. Sadly, the trend on funding being misappropriated has been long standing. In the last budget, 85 per cent of new metro school constructions occurred in Labor seats, 82 per cent of school upgrades were in Labor electorates and 82 per cent of metro school upgrades were in Labor electorates. Premier, how is it fair for the government to refuse upgrading a school that houses one of Melbourne’s four specialist hearing units for deaf children because it is in the Brighton electorate?

We hope our submission helps to elucidate the committee on the inequity that is capital investment funding for schools, and ensures this is a consideration when looking at how to improve teacher efficacy, reduce the burden and ultimately improve student learning outcomes and wellbeing.

Yours sincerely, BPS School Council