



COMMONWEALTH OF AUSTRALIA

PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES



HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

PROOF

Federation Chamber

CONSTITUENCY STATEMENTS

Corio Electorate: Education

SPEECH

Monday, 26 February 2018

BY AUTHORITY OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

SPEECH

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Questioner	Responder
Speaker Marles, Richard, MP	Question No.

Mr MARLES (Corio) (10:42): Back in 2011 the review of funding for schools was really a breakthrough in policy in this place around ensuring that all children would get proper education irrespective of where they lived and irrespective of what sort of school they attended. The funding of schools has been as big an issue in public policy that's been considered in the halls of this building and, indeed, the former parliament house as perhaps any since Federation. We felt that it was a breakthrough back then in part because it attracted the support of the then coalition opposition such that, going into the 2013 election, the coalition promised to 'match Labor's school funding dollar for dollar.' Since being elected in 2013, that pledge has been broken day in and day out, and we now have a situation where billions of dollars less is being provided to schools around Australia than what was originally committed.

The Australian Education Union website now provides a way of tracking that in terms of individual schools, and it makes for very dire reading for the schools in Geelong. What it shows is that Northern Bay College, for example, in the year 2018-19 is likely to be more than \$2 million worse off. Bellarine Secondary College will be \$1 million worse off. North Geelong Secondary College will be up to \$900,000 worse off. Nelson Park School will be \$700,000 worse off. Newcomb Secondary College will be \$700,000 worse off. Western Heights College will be \$700,000 worse off. Geelong High School will be \$700,000 worse off. Across the river in Geelong in the electorate of Corangamite, the reading is just as dire. Belmont High School will be \$1.6 million worse off. Barwon Valley School will be \$700,000 worse off. Grovedale College will be \$700,000 worse off. Tourquay College will be \$600,000 worse off. Oberon High School will be \$600,000 worse off. Colac Secondary College will be \$600,000 worse off. Surf Coast Secondary College will be \$500,000 worse off.

Our mining boom was fantastic. The mineral resources that we have in this country are wonderful. But ultimately it is investment in the human intellect which is going to be the most important act of policy that governments make. Not only does it liberate people from the tyranny of their postcodes to make sure that they can have all the opportunities that everyone else in our society can have. A school like Northern Bay Secondary College is so fundamentally important for the suburbs of Norlane and Corio. Not only does it do that; the human potential which is captured by enabling those people to fulfil their opportunities is utterly essential for our nation in terms of our economic productivity going forward. We are going to campaign on this issue day in and day out right through the next election.