

Minister - Hands Off Our School Budgets!

The Northern Territory Council of Government School Organisations (NTCOGSO) is calling for a commitment from the Northern Territory Government that any pay increase which results from the teachers' Enterprise Agreement will be centrally funded and won't be taken out of school budgets.

The pay increase which has been offered to teachers will be paid as an initial increase of 6% immediately and a further 3%, if the Enterprise Agreement offer is accepted and signed off by teachers when voting opens later this month.

"We've heard from Minister Chandler over the past few days that there has been money "factored in" and a "contingency plan", and that schools have to get their "budget parameters right". There have been a lot of confused messages but what parents really want to know is this: will my school be funded to deliver quality education to my child", NTCOGSO President Mr Reid said today.

"Minister Chandler reassured schools in September that "no school will be worse off in 2015 as a result of the introduction of global school budgets", but what I am hearing from School Councils is that many are being asked to cover a massive funding shortfall in their budget as a result of the teachers' pay rise not being appropriately funded for next year" continued Mr Reid.

"The number one priority for School Councils must be to ensure their school budgets are sufficient to provide for an appropriate education program for Territory kids. They should not be asked to find savings to cover pay rises which were negotiated by Minister Chandler and the Commissioner for Public Employment.

"Global budgeting is meant to be about increasing school autonomy. That means providing schools with the resources to be creative and responsive to the needs of children going to school. If Global Budgeting is simply a means of shifting the risk and responsibility to pay teachers and staff into the hands of Principals and School Councils then we (the parents of Northern Territory schools) don't want it. It must not be used as an excuse to squeeze school budgets"

MEDIA RELEASE



“We must have an iron clad assurance that funding will be provided for the enterprise agreement wage increases, and that schools will not be asked to cut into their programs and services to cover these costs” concluded Mr Reid.

Further information:

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