

Thursday, 7 December 2017

Auditor-General's report gets it wrong on funding of Lutheran Schools

Lutheran Education authorities today refuted the findings of the Australian National Audit Office (ANAO) report on school funding, saying the Australian Government's own records confirm that Lutheran schools in NSW received exactly the level of funding they had been allocated by the funding model.

Julian Denholm, acting Executive Director of Lutheran Education Victoria/NSW/Tasmania (LEVNT), said: "It is clear that a significant error has been made by the Australian Government during the reporting and audit process."

"Not only do the Department of Education and Training's own records confirm that each of the schools received their correct allocation of funding in 2015, but these funds were also paid directly to each school by the Department without any involvement whatsoever from Lutheran Education system authorities."

The Auditor-General's report, *Monitoring the Impact of Australian Government School Funding*, was tabled in the Australian Parliament on 6 December 2017 and reported widely in the media. It incorrectly states that, in 2015, St John's Lutheran Primary School (Jindera, NSW) received just \$469,061 instead of its allocated funding of \$1.722m. The school actually received \$1.725m.

The report also incorrectly states that St Paul's Lutheran Primary School (Henty, NSW) received \$201,086 when in fact it received \$469,061, while St Paul's College (Walla Walla, NSW) received its allocated funding of \$2,605,352 and not \$5.19m as stated in the report.

"The reported figures are not only completely wrong but they are also, inexplicably, completely at odds with the Government's own records," said Mr Denholm.

The Association of Independent Schools of NSW (AISNSW) has supported the call from Lutheran Education for the Australian Government to rectify the reporting error immediately.

"It is incumbent upon the Department and the Auditor-General to publicly assure the Lutheran school communities highlighted in the ANAO report, and the broader Australian community, that funding for these schools has been paid exactly in accordance with the school funding legislation," said Dr Geoff Newcombe AM, AISNSW Chief Executive.

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