



# Reward for school improvement

**Julia Gillard and Labor**  
Let's move Australia forward



## **REWARDING IMPROVEMENT, SO EVERY SCHOOL BECOMES A GREAT SCHOOL**

The Gillard Labor Government will provide reward payments to the schools that deliver the greatest improvements across a range of areas. This will help drive excellence in every school and better results for every child.

Individual Australian primary schools will receive \$75,000 if they show the most improvement and high schools will receive \$100,000. Areas covered will include:

- School attendance.
- Literacy and numeracy performance.
- Year 12 attainment and results.
- Post-school destination information, such as the number of students going onto further education, training or work.

The *Reward for School Improvement* program will provide an additional incentive for schools to improve in the areas that matter most to children and their parents.

Reward payments will be provided for 500 schools in 2013, based on improvement in the 2012 school year, and will be provided to 1000 schools based on improvement in 2013. Principals and school communities will determine the best use of their reward payments, to sustain and drive further improvement.

### **Why do we need reward payments for schools that improve?**

At the core of the Gillard Labor Government's plan to deliver a world class education system is the need for better outcomes at each and every school across the country.

Parents and the Australian community now have more information about school performance through the MySchool website. This has started a new national conversation about school performance.

While more than 90 per cent of Australian students in years 3, 5, 7 and 9 are performing at or above the national minimum standards in literacy and numeracy, there is still a cohort of students in each year level that are not meeting benchmarks.

Parents and the community rightly expect that we will put in place a comprehensive plan to drive greater school improvement, and ensure that every individual child receives the learning they need. This is particularly important for schools that may not be delivering the current outcomes their students deserve.

This reform represents the next step in Federal Labor's plan to drive greater school improvement by rewarding principals and school communities who put in the hard work and generate significantly better results for their students.

This reform will help create a school system that is geared towards improvement and results. This initiative is part of the Gillard Labor Government's commitment to a world class education system, so every Australian student reaches their full potential.

### **How will this initiative work?**

To implement these reforms a new Office of National School Evaluation, within the Australian Curriculum and Reporting Authority, will develop a comprehensive National School Improvement Framework.

This will be shaped and informed by a Steering Group that will consist of representatives from each of the major school systems, principal, teacher and parent representatives, as well as data and measurement experts.

The draft School Improvement Framework will be released in the second half of 2011, for full public consultation, and will be finalised in 2012. This process will help ensure that the School Improvement Framework is independent, transparent and equitable.

From 2013 each school will receive a comprehensive assessment in line with the School Improvement Framework, and will submit a school self-evaluation report.

The self-evaluation report will include information about other important factors that contribute to school performance – such as the level of parental and community engagement, the range of extra-curricular and support activities, and will include case studies, teacher, parent and student feedback.

Both the assessment and self-evaluation will be used to determine which schools receive reward payments.

The first 500 reward payments will be based on interim indicators of performance and improvement in the 2012 school year, and will be made in early 2013. This will include 275 reward payments for primary schools and 225 for senior schools.

The new system will be fully operational from 2013, so that from 2014 reward payments can be provided each year to 1,000 schools – 550 primary schools and 450 high schools. These payments will be distributed across State and Territories, depending on their proportion of schools at each level.

### **What will this mean for schools?**

This means that schools that put in the time and effort and generate significant improvement in their results will be rewarded for that achievement.

From 2013, when the school improvement framework is fully operational, 1,000 schools will benefit from reward payments of either \$75,000 or \$100,000 based on their performance in the 2013 school year. This reward payment will be used by each

individual school in a way that best supports their work, so they can sustain and drive further improvements. For example, schools might employ a literacy coach, purchase new equipment and technology, or provide a greater range of extra-curricular activities.

All schools will also benefit from the comprehensive evaluation framework. Each school will receive an assessment against the quality indicators each year. This will help schools identify their strengths and weaknesses, and develop a comprehensive school improvement strategy.

### **What will this mean for students?**

Students will benefit from attending better quality schools with a greater focus on results and improvement. This will help ensure that every child receives a high quality education that equips them with the skills they need to successfully participate in our community and economy.

### **What will this mean for parents?**

Parents will benefit from knowing that each and every school is geared towards improvement and excellence. Parents will also be able to contribute to each school's self-evaluation and will have a greater role in providing feedback and helping the school improve.

### **Financial Implications (\$m, underlying cash balance)**

In total \$388 million will be provided over five years in reward payments to schools from 2012-13. Over the current forward estimates the cost of this initiative is \$164.7 million.

<b>2010-11</b>	<b>2011-12</b>	<b>2012-13</b>	<b>2013-14</b>	<b>Total<sup>1</sup></b>
-5.1	-16.9	-49.7	-92.9	-164.7

The cost of this new policy will be fully offset over the forward estimates, consistent with the Gillard Labor Government's commitment to return the Budget to surplus in three years.

### **Labor's record**

The Gillard Labor Government has taken unparalleled action to build a world class education system, so every Australian child can reach their full potential.

This includes an unprecedented investment of \$63.7 billion in Australian schools over four years, almost double the amount provided by the former Liberal-National Coalition Government.

We are delivering a national school curriculum to equip young Australians with the skills, knowledge, and capabilities they need to effectively engage and prosper in society, and thrive in the information-rich workplaces of the future.

We have established the MySchool website which provides nationally comparable data on school performance for the first time ever – providing transparent information on each school's literacy and numeracy results. The MySchool website has had over three

<sup>1</sup> Totals may not sum due to rounding.

million visits, and has created a new national conversation about school performance and student outcomes.

And we are providing \$2.6 billion through the Smarter Schools National Partnership Agreements to drive better student results by giving low-SES schools additional resources, driving literacy and numeracy improvements, and raising the quality of teaching in our classrooms.

We have laid the foundations for a world class education system and the Gillard Labor Government is determined to continue driving improved student outcomes, so all Australian children are equipped with the skills they need for a successful future.

### **THE COALITION'S RECORD**

**As a former Cabinet Minister, Tony Abbott was part of the Coalition Government that:**

- ✘ Neglected schools, investing only \$33 billion over four years. The Gillard Labor Government is providing \$63.7 billion over four years – almost double this amount.
- ✘ Talked about a national curriculum but failed to deliver.
- ✘ Focused on putting flagpoles in schools, not on improving outcomes for students.

**If he is elected Prime Minister, Mr Abbott has already made clear that he would cut almost \$3.2 billion from the education system. This includes cutting the \$425 million Teacher Quality National Partnership which is currently delivering:**

- ✘ Increased local decision making in schools across the country including the popular Independent Public Schools trial in Western Australia with 34 schools commencing this year.
- ✘ High achieving non-education university graduates to the most disadvantaged secondary schools through the Teach for Australia program.
- ✘ New Teaching Excellence scholarships for pre-service and existing teachers.

**Mr Abbott's cuts to education will also mean:**

- ✘ 120,000 students across the nation will miss out on a computer in 2,300 schools and 670,000 computers that are already funded will become useless and out of date without funding to upgrade and replace them.
- ✘ Over 1,800 secondary schools and 1.2 million students will miss out on a chance to access a Trade Training Centre and start a trade.

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