

Sunday 13 April 2008

## **COALITION TO MAKE VICTORIAN TEACHERS HIGHEST-PAID IN AUSTRALIA**

Victorian teachers would become the highest-paid in Australia under a proposal unveiled today by Victorian Liberal Nationals Coalition.

The Coalition would spend \$396 million over three years on boosting the pay of Victorian teachers, currently the lowest-paid in Australia.

Victorian children should be Australia's best-educated. Improving pay for our teachers would remedy the inaction and neglect of the Brumby Government.

Victorian parents and teachers should not endure a situation where our teachers continue to receive the lowest levels of pay in Australia.

Victoria's children deserve better, and education can never be our number one priority if those who teach our children struggle on poor salaries.

We are facing an exodus of teachers from Victoria and those who suffer most are our children.

That is why we must immediately lift the pay of teachers in our school system so they are not just equal with other states, but the highest-paid in the nation.

The Coalition would ensure that government-employed teachers would become the highest-paid at their level in Australia.

All Victorian teachers would be elevated in the current round of Enterprise Bargaining Agreement (EBA) negotiations to be the highest paid teachers for their level in Australia, bringing all Victorian kindergarten, primary, and secondary teachers to national parity levels and above.

If the government maintains its wages policy at 3.25 per cent, this commitment would require an additional Budget allocation of \$396 million over three years (between 2008/09 and 2010/11).

John Brumby claims education is his number one priority, yet his neglect and inaction has resulted in:

- The lowest student literacy and numeracy rates of any mainland state (Source: OECD: Program for International Student Assessment);

# Policy

- The lowest funding per student for government schools (Source: Productivity Commission Report on Government Services, 2008);
- A school maintenance backlog which has doubled from \$130 million to \$268 million at last audit, with many schools not being fixed until 2016; and
- Parents losing confidence in Victorian government schools (in the last two years government school enrolments have fallen by 752 students while enrolments in the nongovernment school system increased by 8,658 students over the same period).

Victorian teachers have been trying to negotiate a salary increase with the Brumby Government for 12 months, yet the Premier arrogantly refuses to meet with or speak with them.

It is unacceptable that our teachers are not only the worst paid in the country but many of them earn less than their counterparts in countries like Portugal, Scotland and Korea.

If we want the best and brightest teachers we must compete and we must be prepared to fund realistic salaries.

We will not cut teacher numbers, and we remain committed to maintaining the current student to-teacher ratios in our classrooms.

Under the Coalition's proposal, Victorian teachers will become the highest-paid in Australia.

Our future lies in real commitments to new generations. We cannot allow the mistakes the Brumby Government has made in not planning for the future to continue to damage our state and future generations for years to come.

**Salary Comparisons March 1, 2008** *Source: Australian Education Union*

## ***State or Territory Beginning Teacher (4 year trained)***

### ***Top of Classroom Scale***

Victoria \$46,127 (lowest) \$65,414 (lowest)  
South Australia \$49,605 (fifth) \$68,422 (seventh)  
Queensland \$46,950 (seventh) \$69,225 (sixth)  
Northern Territory \$49,944 (fourth) \$70,047 (fifth)  
Tasmania \$47,801 (sixth) \$70,296 (fourth)  
ACT \$50,365 (second) \$71,767 (third)  
Western Australia \$50,025 (third) \$72,844 (second)  
NSW \$50,522 (first) \$75,352 (first)