



Australian Federation of Graduate Women Inc.

PO Box 224, Enmore NSW 2042

www.afgw.org.au

6 September 2012

The Hon Julia Gillard MP
Prime Minister
Parliament House
CANBERRA ACT 2600

Dear Prime Minister,

The Australian Federation of Graduate Women welcomes the announcement of a new funding system based on the recommendations of the Gonski Review of Funding for Schooling. In September 2011, we made a submission to the Review expressing support for a school funding system based on student need. We are very pleased that the Government's model addresses this situation and congratulate you on this historic decision. We do however have reservations about the recent undertaking to raise funding to ALL schools believing this dilutes the funding available to students in need and is not in the spirit of the proposed model for equity.

In addition there are specific areas of education funding that do not appear to have received the attention they deserve; in particular, the needs of rural and isolated children who are some 2.5% of school aged children. The new school funding model does not acknowledge the additional expense involved in providing boarding facilities, the cost to families who must send their children to boarding school to complete their secondary education or the cost of home schooling younger children in remote areas where there is no alternative. We seek assurance that this will be a factor in the formula for assessing need. Will the 'Assistance to Isolated Children Scheme' be continued independently or will its principles be incorporated into the needs-based process planned in future?

Above all we press you to expedite the introduction of this overdue revision of the model of school funding so that we move towards equity for all Australian children in the field of education.

Yours sincerely

Jane Baker
President
Australian Federation of Graduate Women Inc