

My School data warning

UP to a quarter of public schools' State Government funding shown on the My School website goes to centralised bureaucracies.

State Government documents show the website is not fully transparent in reporting how much money schools have to spend, with up to 25 per cent of the income re-allocated to state and regional Education Department offices.

A random sample of Re-

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source Entitlement Statements for SA schools shows the recurrent income from State Government detailed on the My School website does not match up with the amount spent in schools di-

rectly. Tanunda Primary shows a funding contribution of \$2,997,485. The resource statement reveals \$2,237,871, about 75 per cent, is received by the school.

The statements, obtained by Opposition education spokesman David Pisoni under Freedom of Information, give a clearer picture on the amounts of funding that go to the department. "(My School) gives parents an unrealistic view of the money

government is spending on their children's education," he said. "The bottom line is we have a top-heavy administration of our system where schools have the least amount of autonomy and are very centrally run."

Principals said the website failed to provide a full picture of a school's operating budget but it would encourage parents and school leaders to discuss how much was going to a child's edu-

cation. "We can ask if there's balance where it should be and do schools and the department get the right proportion?" SA Secondary Principals Association president Jim Davies said.

Education Minister Jay Weatherill said expenditure not listed in the statements covered curriculum services, financial and human resources costs and projects such as the Digital Education Revolution. "Some services

are more effectively provided centrally and are therefore resourced centrally, but generally our preference is for as much local autonomy as possible," he said.

Director David Knuckey of the South Australian Association of State School Organisations, the governing council representative body, said: "Parents need to know how and where the money is being spent."

More support for indigenous families

LUCY HOOD
EDUCATIONNOW EDITOR

NEW early-childhood centres will be opened in Whyalla, Ceduna and Christies Beach as part of a Federal and State government partnership aimed at improving the quality of life for indigenous children and their families.

School Education Minister Peter Garrett yesterday announced the locations of three Aboriginal Children and Family Centres that will bring together education, childcare and health services, early learning, parent and family support programs.

The centres, at Hincks Avenue Primary School in Whyalla, Ceduna Area School on the West Coast and Christies Beach Primary School, are expected to be completed by the end of 2012.

They are part of the \$564 million Indigenous Early Childhood Development National Partnership.

"We are really pleased that we've identified these three locations in SA ... which are going to bear great fruits for the kids that go to these centres in the years to come," Mr Garrett said at yesterday's announcement at Cowandilla Children's Centre.



EXTRA HELP: Peter Garrett at the Cowandilla Childcare Centre yesterday with Ayden, Kurt, Mya, Lewis, Loxyton, Keeral, Niamh and her twin sister Isla.

Picture: TRICIA WATKINSON



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