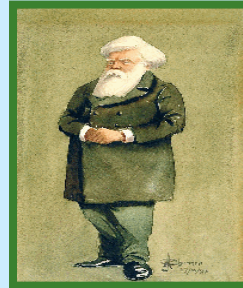

*Resourcing a supportive
school for socially inclusive
education*

Jeff Garsed
Research Officer
Australian Education Union
Tasmanian Branch

Why do we have public education in the first place?

Sir Henry Parkes, 1815-1896 A Founder of Federation



Parkes said that the purpose of public education

was to raise people

"to a true sense of the dignity of humanity and to inspire them with the love of equality and order combined, which is the true foundation of freedom."

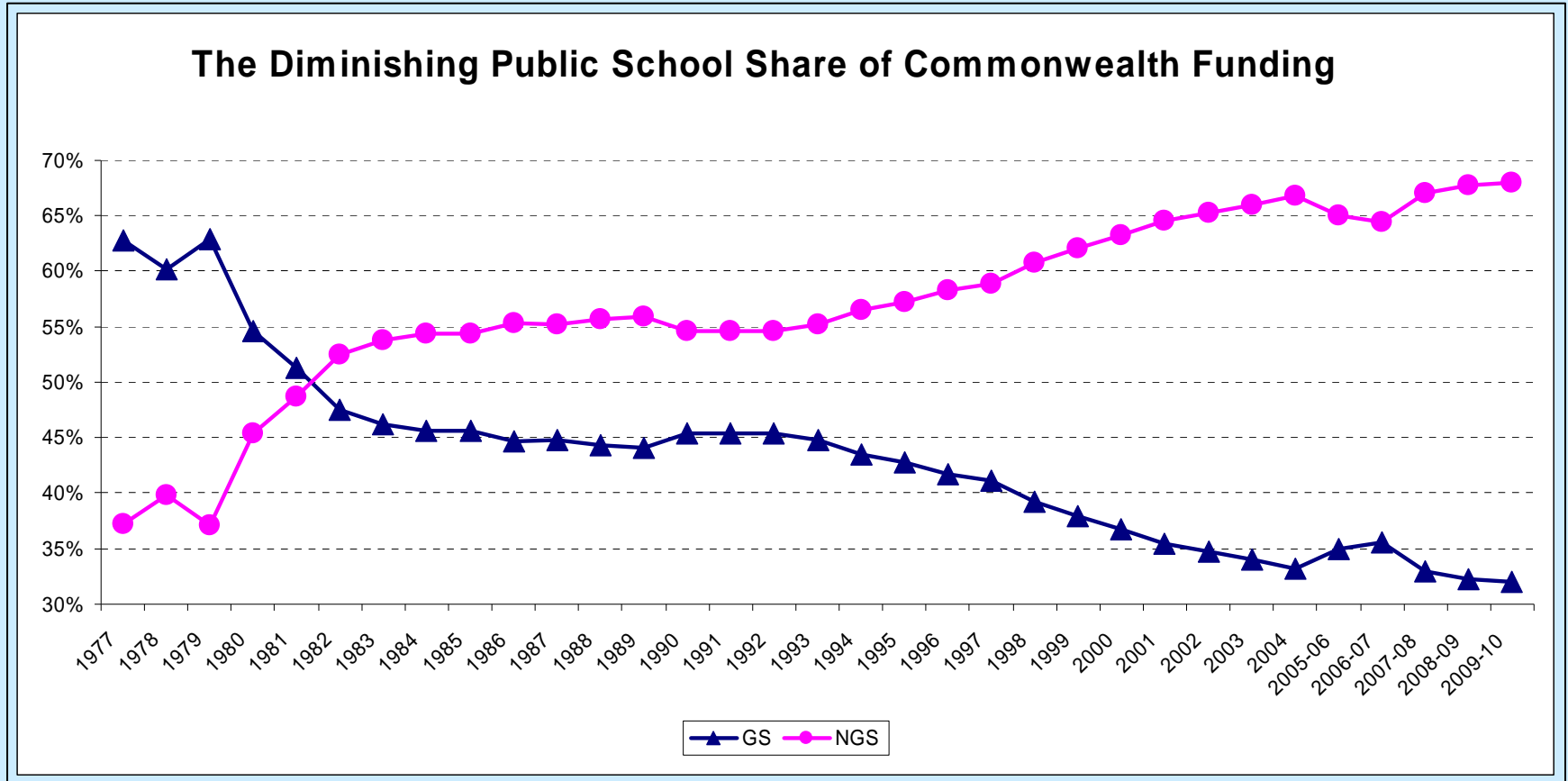
The public education system was founded upon the principles of being :

- **FREE**
 - **COMPULSORY**
 - **UNIVERSAL**
 - **SECULAR**
-

The State Governments

- Have responsibility for running schools
 - Have little capacity to generate the large amounts of revenue required to properly do so
 - Therefore, they rely on Federal Government for funds to run schools
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Government schools educate nearly 70 per cent of Australia's kids.



Public schools are also responsible for the more difficult to educate

- A greater proportion of students from lower socio economic families
 - More students with learning disabilities
 - More students with physical and intellectual disabilities
-

State funding for children with disabilities has increased

- Ironically, this has meant automatic flow-on of funds to non-government schools despite them not having a great number of students with higher needs.
 - This is because it is calculated on the Average Government Schools Recurrent Cost (AGSRC)
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Tasmanian DoE Policy on Inclusion of Students with Disabilities

“Placement of students with disabilities in regular schools is the preferred educational option in Tasmania.”

Where possible, children are educated in their local neighbourhood school

With this policy comes the responsibility to resource schools appropriately to educate students according to need

Register of students with severe disabilities

- Autism Spectrum Disorder
 - Intellectual Disability
 - Physical Disability or Health Impairment
 - Multiple Disability
 - Psychiatric Disability
 - Vision Impairment
 - Deaf or Hearing Impaired
-

Autism Spectrum Disorder

- Even in the most extreme cases a teacher aide is provided for only part of the week
 - There is a growing number of students on the autism spectrum
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Intellectual Disability

- Inclusion on the High Needs Register only for those with IQ 50 and below.
 - Arrangements to provide assistance for IQ 50 – 70 are currently being negotiated
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Physical Disability or Health Impairment

- Severe physical disability or health impairment which has highly significant implications for a student's learning outcomes
 - Physical disability can mean costly modifications to school facilities
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Multiple Disability

- Students must meet criteria:
 - for a physical disability
 - and for either autism or intellectual disability
-

Psychiatric Disability

To be eligible a student must

- have highly significant educational implications
 - bereceiving ongoing psychiatric treatment
-

Vision Impairment

Requires

- a visual acuity of less than 6/48 (severe loss)
 - a visual field of 20 degrees or less (legally blind)
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Deaf or Hearing Impaired

- a hearing loss of greater than 60 dB in their better ear as measured by an audiologist at 500, 1000 and 2000 hertz.
 - A student's functioning in the following areas is also considered:
 - audition
 - language
 - literacy
 - academic
 - social/emotional.
-

Additional Needs

- English as a Second Language
- Gifted Students
- Aboriginal Students

Some special programs are available for some of these students

Individual Education Programs (IEPs) are required for students

- on the Register of Students with Severe Disabilities.
 - not on the Register but for whom it is agreed that the student assessment continuum will not be used.
 - identified as having specific, personalised (ongoing) learning needs.
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IEPs Require

- Time for stakeholders to meet and draft
 - Expert input (e.g. support professionals, vision impaired support teacher)
 - Additional teacher work to implement
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Students with social and emotional problems

- Do not qualify for any special funding
 - Can access some special programs run by schools using School Resource Packages (SRPs)
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Resources are needed for

- Additional school support professionals
 - Staff to deal with student behaviour issues
 - Best teachers in most challenging schools
 - Reduced class sizes
 - Special education programs in low SES schools
 - Full range of curriculum in all schools
 - Alternative and community-based educational provision for some students
-

Additional school support professionals

School Psychologists, Speech Pathologists and Social Workers

- In one high school of 600, 17 students were suicidal
 - Student testing
 - Follow up on student truancy
 - New focus on 0 to 4 years
 - Lack of access to these professionals via other agencies
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Staff to deal with student behaviour issues

- Lack of staff off class to deal with incidents as they arise
 - Home-school liaison is limited
 - Limited number of support teachers to work alongside teachers to up skill them
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Best teachers in most challenging schools

- Incentives to work in challenging schools
 - Shifting the emphasis on what makes a top professional teacher
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Reduced class sizes

Resources for classes of 25 or fewer

Benefits include:

- Increased levels of literacy and numeracy
 - Improved retention and skills
 - Lower levels of disruptive behaviour
 - Lower teacher stress levels
 - Lower levels of stress related illness
 - Reduced cost of corrective services later on
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Special education programs in low SES schools

These schools have:

- High concentrations of students with learning problems
- High concentrations of Aboriginal students

What is needed includes an extensions of the 0-4 Launch Into Learning Program and a focus on parent learning

A Guaranteed Curriculum

- Small schools find it difficult to provide music, PE, art and ICT-library skills
 - There needs to be a full range of curriculum offerings in all schools
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Alternative and community-based educational provision for some students

- Just as with high needs students, mainstreaming might not always be the best option for everyone.
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Some ways to achieve these things

- Philosophy of funding on the basis of need
 - Funding quarantined for the most disadvantaged schools (meeting certain criteria)
 - Acknowledgement of the need for some school rationalisation following Tasmanian demographic change as a way of providing more resources to existing schools, so long as over all funding levels are maintained
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