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CHANDLER PUSHES COSTS ONTO SCHOOLS

Opposition Shadow Minister for Education, Natasha Fyles, has slammed the latest CLP Government move to swamp our schools in budget pressures.

“Education and education budgets are the responsibility of Government,” Ms Fyles said.

“Parents sign up to join school councils to support their children’s education and academic outcomes, not manage a business.

“This cynical cost-shifting exercise by Education Minister, Peter Chandler, comes off the back of a $15 million cut to Education that schools are already struggling to grapple with. With fewer teachers and support staff schools are now being asked to carry the burden of the physical infrastructure – from repairs and maintenance to the myriad of minor new works that impact on a school’s operations.

“School council members have numerous questions about these global budgets and also what this change will mean for school councils.

“In other jurisdictions where these changes have occurred schools have been forced to employ less experienced teachers whose wages put less of a demand on their already stretched budget rather than a more experienced senior level teacher.

“Will education outcomes for students in the Territory be adversely affected when Territory schools are forced to make similar decisions?”

Ms Fyles said the CLP Government is ignoring the concerns of school councils and educators across the Territory by ramming through Global School Budgets for the 2015 school year.

“The Minister is ramming through this change through when next year’s schools budget allocation has been repeatedly delayed,” Ms Fyles said.

“Territorians need improved resources in Education and instead the CLP Government is pushing the responsibility onto Principals and parent school councils to manage in an already unbearable environment.
“This will push schools grappling with aging infrastructure to breaking point and give Principals less time to focus on quality teaching and learning and bury them in an administrative quagmire.

“How will this help our students? Where is the evidence that this is better for our schools?”

Ms Fyles asked whether schools would receive additional resources under the Global Schools Budget to meet CPI pressures.

“The accepted budget growth pressure in Education is five per cent, is this additional funding going to be factored in? What happens with significant infrastructure failure requiring repairs and maintenance?

“The CLP need to stop pursuing cost cutting at the expense of our children.”

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