



Tasmanian Greens Party Policy 2014

Education

[RATIFIED: 18 JAN 2014 - VERSION: 14.1.0]

The Tasmanian Greens believe that education is integral to our quality of life, and to Tasmania's social and economic future. It is the influence shaping our economy and society, over which we have most control. Accessible and affordable education also underpins a vibrant, informed, open and progressive democracy. It is at the heart of achieving a clean, green and clever Tasmania.

Education should, therefore, be a continuous process where learning opportunities are available to all citizens throughout their lives. Education is not just about training and management but learning to think critically and challenge ideas. Fundamental to this is a highly professional and valued education sector workforce.

For these reasons, education will be a major funding and policy priority for any responsible government. The Greens strongly advocate a high quality, state funded, inclusive public education system funded on a needs basis.

The Greens also strongly believe in a need for a, non-government education system, openly accountable, and funded on a needs basis.

Socio-economic disadvantage and demographic isolation remain barriers to education for some Tasmanians. This results in lower retention rates, poorer literacy and numeracy outcomes and higher levels of challenging student behaviour and disengagement. The Greens advocate curriculum models, teaching methods and organisational structures, which lead to improved access and participation in learning, regardless of a student's economic, social or geographic circumstance.

Frequent, ill-considered and under-resourced changes to the environment in which learning institutions operate are detrimental to effective learning and a disincentive for educational practitioners to continue in the workforce. Furthermore, students experiencing learning or engagement difficulties, for whatever reason, need to be identified at the earliest possible age and compensating strategies applied.

Tasmania is capable of providing world-class education, and the Greens see no reason why that cannot be achieved. Such a system will have international benefits through the attraction of students to our learning institutions with the flow-on effects to our society, international relations and our economy.

Measures

Accessibility and Relevance

The Tasmanian Greens will work towards:

1. recognising the specific learning needs of each individual student irrespective of their background and ability so that all students feel empowered to achieve their personal best;
2. supporting an education system funded on a needs basis;
3. recognising the importance of early education by investing more into Launching into Learning;
4. involving the local community in the school culture;
5. ensuring all educational facilities are of a standard conducive to student learning;

6. ongoing resourcing for schools and new strategies to improve participation and retention rates for rural and remote students;
7. continuing to extend the development of Year 11 and 12 courses in rural and remote schools to provide for students in their local area, whilst maintaining the college system in urban areas;
8. recognition of the need to prepare young people for future jobs in a new economy;
9. working with communities to ensure taking a part-time job does not cause a student to cease study because of timetables or transport.

Assisting Students

The Tasmanian Greens will work towards:

10. ensuring a comprehensive range of curricular offerings to extend able students and to involve the less engaged;
11. training students in mediation and conflict resolution processes;
12. ongoing development of the Education Department's policies and practices regarding inclusion, language and bullying to ensure they remain best-practice;
13. developing state-based programs for at-risk students who are not safe for themselves or others within the school community;
14. providing more psychologists in schools so that problems can be dealt with immediately;
15. working with all stakeholders to implement strategies that encourage learners to value and continue with education beyond that age;
16. increasing local police and school interaction to build new, and maintain current, relationships within the community;
17. maintaining support for youth workers.

Education Department Staff

The Tasmanian Greens will work towards:

18. supporting schools and colleges in becoming learning communities to ensure the opportunity, resources and encouragement for teachers to further their professional skills and meet the standards set by the Australian Institute of Teaching and School Leadership through its Performance Development Process;
19. continuing to invest in the support and development of leadership across all schools and colleges;
20. working to resolve any outstanding issues regarding the working conditions and remuneration of all teachers, temporary teachers, short term and ancillary staff;
21. supporting pay parity with other states for teachers;
22. developing a recruitment program to attract high quality exiting students into teaching and the professional support services;
23. reviewing the recruitment of teachers to ensure ongoing renewal and regeneration teaching staff;
24. providing additional resources and support for teachers of special needs students;
25. supporting ongoing agreements that provide teachers with more time for lesson preparation;
26. taking action to address the unpaid stand-down of Teacher Assistants.

Curriculum and Assessment

The Tasmanian Greens will work towards:

27. implementing a structured, innovative and long-term approach to arts education to provide essential extrinsic benefits, such as improved school attendance, academic achievement across the curriculum and social and emotional wellbeing;
28. continuing the implementation of the Australian Curriculum;
29. consulting stakeholders as to the best assessment processes for the curriculum so that teaching and learning match assessment;
30. working with all stakeholders to reassess the role of the Tasmanian Qualifications Authority to provide for the needs of students and the community;
31. encouraging healthy lifestyles through school physical activity programs;
32. supporting the development of niche tertiary courses to complement the economic and social needs of Tasmania.

Information Technology

The Tasmanian Greens will work towards:

33. ensuring equitable access to information and communications technology across all educational facilities recognising that all schools need access to as much data as possible through high quality connections;
34. supporting the roll-out of the National Broadband Network to provide all schools with fast data speeds and to help mitigate the effects that distance has on education participation rates in regional areas.

Post-Compulsory Education

The Tasmanian Greens will work towards:

35. ensuring that all students continuing past year 10 have equitable access to high quality, full-time, flexible and inclusive education;
36. providing support to schools and colleges to make key transitions as seamless as possible - pre-school to kindergarten, Grade 6 to Grade 7 and Grade 10 to Grade 11;
37. consulting with the federal government, local government, parents and friends, students and business groups to create a climate that increases retention in post-compulsory education;
38. providing more attractive, accessible and affordable programs to those from remote or disadvantaged areas;
39. requiring that all public learning institutions continue to monitor and record the full attendance and academic progress of all students to ensure the best possible chance of individual success;
40. providing counselling and assistance in changing direction if a student's original learning pathway proves untenable;
41. evaluating all changes to the delivery of post-compulsory secondary education and, in genuine consultation with teachers, parents and students, take appropriate action to address any shortcoming.

General

The Tasmanian Greens will work towards:

42. supporting international students and their families in our schools TasTAFE and Universities.

43. while supporting the principle of inclusion, reviewing the Inclusion Policy to allow a thorough, open evaluation of the effects, strengths and weaknesses of the policy as currently implemented, and to ensure that the Policy is meeting the needs of students individually and collectively. Initiate recommendations which result from that review;
44. ensuring corporate and business sponsorship in all state-funded educational institutions is appropriate, and provides real value to students and school communities;
45. continuing to phase-out food with poor nutritional value from all state school canteens;
46. co-operating with the Federal government to provide the best possible primary and secondary student dental service.