

The Greens (WA) 2017 policy

Education

The Greens (WA) believe that:

- education is a public good
- education empowers people to live purposeful, satisfying lives and to participate fully as citizens in an effective democracy
- all people are entitled to free, high quality, well-funded and life-long public education and training
- the government should be the primary education provider at all levels
- the government has a primary responsibility to fund the public education system to provide high quality education to all students
- differences in educational outcomes should not be the result of differences in wealth, income, power, possessions or location
- a publicly owned and properly funded TAFE system plays an essential role in providing economic prosperity and a socially just society by offering lifelong educational opportunities and skills development to a broad range of people within the community

Aims

The Greens (WA) want:

- a quality public education and training system that is recognised as among the best in the world
- high quality education to be accessible to all Western Australians, regardless of socio-economic or cultural background, religious belief, disability or geographic location, including permanent residents and refugees
- public education infrastructure to be adequately funded for capital works and maintenance to create an optimal learning environment whilst meeting the highest environmental sustainability standards
- governments to have overall responsibility for public school finances and staffing because inappropriate devolution of decision making can:
 - shift blame for funding constraints more easily to individual school principals rather than with government;
 - undermine a system-wide transfer system that rewards teachers who are prepared to teach in more challenging environments;
 - increase harmful competition between schools and result in the entrenchment of school disadvantage in some geographic locations;
 - open up the way for privatisation of key aspects of our public schools.

Measures

The Greens (WA) will initiate and support legislation and actions that:

- provide equitable access to a quality education for all students
- abolish fees for students in public schools and Technical and Further Education (TAFE)

- fund schools based on the needs of students, including additional funding to address disadvantage
- support initiatives which encourage high quality teachers to work in schools servicing disadvantaged populations
- provide specialised support for students with special needs, those at educational risk, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students, and students from culturally and linguistically diverse (CaLD) communities (see also The Greens (WA) [Cultural Diversity](#) policy)
- include the history, culture and contemporary experience of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in the school curriculum, and the training and professional development of educators (see also The Greens (WA) [Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander Peoples](#) policy)
- set the salaries and conditions of educators at a level that recognises their professionalism, training and the importance of their work, provides secure career structures, and encourages committed and capable people into the teaching profession at all levels of the education system
- provide ongoing professional development for educators at all levels
- ensure that schools and curriculum material are free from corporate sponsorship and influence including the use of sponsors' material or logos
- support programs that aim to engage parents in the schooling of children
- allow educational communities to respond to local needs when this does not deprive children of the opportunity to achieve equitable outcomes
- support the delivery of alternative pedagogies in public and independent schools
- encourage age appropriate participation by students at age-appropriate levels in decision making within educational institutions
- enable parents to educate their children at home or in other settings, provided they demonstrate the commitment and ability to ensure balanced education and socialisation for their children
- include education for environmental and social responsibility within the curriculum
- provide incentives and support for schools and colleges to reduce consumption and waste, implement energy efficiency measures and use renewable energy sources (see also The Greens (WA) [Beyond Waste](#) policy)
- ensure vocational education and training (VET) is publically funded and primarily provided through the public TAFE system
- ensure VET funding priorities balance student needs, employer demand and provide skills in satisfying and sustainable employment
- phase out the public funding of privately provided VET where TAFE can provide the same educational and training outcomes
- reject competitive tendering and entitlement-based funding for TAFE
- address the over-casualisation of TAFE teaching by introducing a benchmark of 80 per cent of teaching by permanent staff throughout public and private VET providers
- ensure educators have a key role in developing and reviewing training packages
- substantially increase the availability of apprenticeships in rural and regional areas and other locations where there is a shortage (see also The Greens (WA) [Regions](#) policy)
- subsidise travel for country students to TAFE colleges

- provide adequate community input through independent advisory bodies to government on training and education issues
- fund diverse adult community education and training programs to foster a culture of lifelong learning
- provide adult literacy and numeracy education programs
- increase state funding for research in universities and for scholarships for students from disadvantaged backgrounds, especially students from rural and remote communities

(see also the [Australian Greens Education](#) policy)

Education policy ratified by The Greens (WA) in 2017