



Senator the Hon Simon Birmingham

Minister for Education and Training
Senator for South Australia

MC16-006203

Mr Shane Lucas
Chief Executive Officer
Early Learning Association Australia
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05 DEC 2016

08 DEC 2016

Dear Mr Lucas

Response to 'Keep Funding' campaign

The Australian Government remains committed to ensuring all children have access to quality early learning and care. We know that a quality preschool education is essential for laying the foundations for successful learning, including transition to full-time school and future school success.

Since 2008, the Government has made over \$2.8 billion available in funding support to states and territories to achieve universal access to quality preschool programs through a series of national partnership agreements.

The current *National Partnership Agreement on Universal Access to Early Childhood Education – 2016 and 2017* (National Partnership) makes \$840 million available to states and territories to support all children's participation in a quality preschool program for 600 hours per year throughout 2016 and 2017.

Significant progress has been made since the first National Partnership in 2008 with more Australian children enrolled in quality preschool programs.

The Government is currently considering funding arrangements for preschool from 2018. However I note, under the Federation, preschool is the responsibility of states and territories, with the Commonwealth's funding having only ever been a top-up a contribution to increase participation rates.

As such, future funding arrangements for preschool are a matter for all Governments and will be discussed accordingly.

Yours sincerely



Simon Birmingham

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