

Easing Back-to-School Costs

Access to quality education is a basic human right, yet many families struggle with the costs of school. With cost of living on the rise, Tasmania needs more measures to reduce school costs for families. We have a plan that will save families up to \$892 in levies, and \$110 in school supplies.

An annual survey of families supported by charity found that 88% were worried about being able afford all the things their child will need in the 2024 school year.¹

51% think their children will miss out on digital devices required for their schoolwork, 45% think they will miss out on uniforms and shoes, and 40% think they will miss out on educational opportunities outside of school.²

Cost of living pressures are also being felt by most Tasmanians. According to a YouGov study, in 2023 over half of Tasmanians had to reach into their savings to pay for cost of living expenses, and a quarter of respondents had to substantially deplete their savings.³

School Levies

Families are currently being slugged with hundreds of dollars of cost per child during a cost of living crisis, as a consequence of the chronic underfunding of our public schools.

Levies are also unequitable and can be three or more times higher or lower depending on the school.

This means parents with less money to spare are forced into schools with more affordable levies, and these schools – which need more resourcing, not less – are in turn less able to

raise revenue for resources compared to their more expensive counterparts.

We will fight to eliminate public school levies, and cover these expenses instead through an equitable distribution of State Government funding, ensuring no school will be worse off.

School Supplies

While there are various assistance schemes for things like spectacles and uniforms, there are a range of other essential school supplies that are not covered by assistance grants.

The costs of shoes, backpacks, lunchboxes and other essential school supplies add up.

We will fight for an annual grant of \$110 per student for concession card holders to go towards purchase of supplies for school, like backpacks and shoes.

Budget

	(\$m)	1 st year	2 nd year	3 rd year	4 th year	Total
Abolish Levies		17.00	17.30	17.60	17.90	69.80
School Costs		2.70	2.70	2.70	2.70	10.80
Total		19.70	20.00	20.30	20.60	80.60

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¹ [New survey: Families worried about being able to afford back to school essentials](#), The Smith Family, January 2024.

² Ibid.

³ Seeder, B, [Living pressures 'dire' in Tasmania as rising costs bite: survey](#), The Examiner, December 2023.