



Australian Education Union - Federal Office

*Ground Floor, 120 Clarendon Street, Southbank, Victoria, 3006
Phone : +61 (0)3 9693 1800 Fax : +61 (0)3 9693 1805
Email : aeu@aeufederal.org.au Website : www.aeufederal.org.au*

September 24, 2004

Private schools attempt to gag debate on schools funding.

The Australian Education Union (AEU) today dismissed claims by the Independent Schools Councils of Australia (ISCA) about the AEU's television advertisement as little more than a last ditch attempt to seek voter support for the Coalition's education funding policies.

AEU Federal President, Pat Byrne said the AEU was intrigued to read of ICSCA's statements about the television advertisement in the lead up to the federal election.

"The AEU has been campaigning on the issue of federal funding of schools for the last twelve months. The assertion from the ISCA that we have attempted to mislead the public is farcical.

The AEU's television advertisement was approved by the Commercial Advisory Division of FACTS and all figures used were derived from the Senate Estimates Committee. The advertisement has been run across Australia in February/March and May/June this year and is now running in marginal electorates throughout Australia.

"For ICSCA to raise questions of misrepresentation at this stage of the federal election and to invite parents to formally complain about the ad make it hard to avoid the conclusion that it is doing the Coalition's bidding in this campaign.

"The issue of schools funding is now the number one education issue in Australia. The AEU is campaigning in marginal seats to ensure that parents understand that they have a clear choice in this Federal election between the Howard Government's unfair system and the Opposition parties who have all committed to making public education a national priority," Ms. Byrne said.

For further information, please contact:

Pat Byrne
Federal President
0411 693 244

Meaghan Telford
Media
0409 510 879