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Principals Call on Senate to Reject Educationally Unsound Conditions in Schools Funding Bill

A meeting of Australian School Principals has today called on the Senate to reject the Schools Assistance Bill 2004 in its present form.

The Bill which is expected to be debated in Parliament next week provides for Federal Government funding to schools for the next four years. The Coalition Government has, for the first time, attached conditions to the provision of funds.

"These conditions cut across agreements which have been reached over long periods of time between schools and education departments and represent an unacceptable intrusion into the day to day running of schools," said Neil Free, Chair of the Australian Education Union National Principals Committee.

Many existing practices take into account local circumstance and are the result of the accumulated knowledge and experience of practising teachers and education departments. The arbitrary nature of the conditions attached to this funding package takes no account of this.

"Some of these conditions are ludicrous – the requirement for a functioning flagpole for instance – and some are educationally unsound, such as requiring teachers to report comparative performance between children within a class," said Mr. Free.

The AEU National Principals Committee represents principals, deputy and assistant principals from government schools in all states and territories.

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