



Australian Education Union - Federal Office

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21 August 2006

AEU DISMISSES CLAIMS FOR PERFORMANCE BASED PAY AS SIMPLISTIC

The Australian Education Union (AEU) today dismissed the rationale behind Craig Emerson's claim that teachers should be paid on "good performance" as simplistic.

"In the context of a national and international teacher shortage, the answer does not lie in the simplistic solutions advanced by Craig Emerson and Julie Bishop. We need to ensure that governments develop sound policy to ensure a supply of teachers for the future. The most effective strategy to attract and retain teachers is to pay a competitive, professional salary.

"Performance pay is a political gimmick based on a failure to understand the essence of teaching and teacher quality. The key issue relates to support for the profession through the provision of relevant professional learning opportunities for all teachers, for which governments must take responsibility.

AEU Federal President Ms Pat Byrne said the Federal Labor backbencher, had failed to acknowledge that public school teachers are doing a great job working in a system that had been systematically undermined and under-funded by the Howard Government over the last decade.

"The OECD Performance Indicators of Student Achievement report (PISA) shows that Australian students are achieving results comparable with the best in the OECD. Further, it points out that the difference between high achievers and those not doing as well can be attributed in part, to the distribution of resources which, in Australia, actually reinforce socio-economic difference.

"We know that the public education system is currently under-funded by more than \$2.9 billion. Until additional funding is provided to ensure that all teachers are well paid and have access to adequate resources to provide quality education for all children, teacher supply will continue to be a problem, especially in a situation where possibly 40% of current teachers could leave the profession within the next five years," said Ms Byrne.

The AEU is currently campaigning for an additional \$2.9 billion per year to ensure all students in public schools have the opportunity to get a high quality education.

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