



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

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OECD RESULTS SHOW THE WAY FOR EDUCATION REVOLUTION

New OECD student assessment results underline the urgent need for greater investment in public education if Australia is to avoid being left behind, said the Australian Education Union today.

While Australian students continue to perform at higher than the OECD average, the 2007 Program for International School Assessment (PISA) results show they are now being overtaken.

"A decade of Coalition neglect has placed Australia's international education rankings at risk," said AEU Acting Federal President Angelo Gavrielatos

"While we remain in the top 10, Australia is now being outperformed in crucial areas like reading and mathematical literacy by more countries than in the past."

"For the reason behind these results we don't need to look any further than the latest OECD funding figures which show that public expenditure on education in Australia is third lowest.

"Australian teachers also have to teach larger class sizes than the OECD average. Government primary schools in Australia have an average class size of 24, compared to an OECD average of 21.7.

"These results show that Australia urgently needs an "Education Revolution" of substance through a dramatic investment in public education.

"Teachers continue to strive to achieve the highest standards of excellence for every child in their classrooms.

"But they are doing so in increasingly resource-strapped conditions.

"Government research shows Australian public schools are under-funded to the tune of at least \$2.9 billion per annum.

"The overall education outcomes for Australian students are dependent on bringing public education funding up to standard."

For further information, please contact:

Angelo Gavrielatos
AEU Acting Federal President
0418 423 531

Erin Farley
Media
0409 510 879