



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

6 June 2007

SCHOOLS FUNDING IS A GOVERNMENT RESPONSIBILITY

A statement by Federal Education Minister Julie Bishop today that it is beyond any one Government to properly resource schools is more evidence that the Howard Government has turned its back on public schools.

“Governments have a fundamental responsibility to provide high quality public education in Australia,” said AEU Federal President Pat Byrne.

“How can Julie Bishop say it is beyond any one Government to properly resource schools when Australia has an \$11 billion budget surplus?

“Free and universally accessible schooling is the basis of our society and it is critical that every Australian child has access to a high quality public education.

“This statement from Julie Bishop today just reinforces that the Howard Government sees public education as nothing more than a safety net.

“That’s not good enough for our children or for a globally competitive economy.

“The Howard Government has reduced the share of federal funding for public education from 42% to 35%.

“Now they are proposing to further abrogate their responsibilities by introducing corporate sponsorship into schools.

“Corporate sponsorship of our schools will lead to a compromised education system and further inequity between schools.

“We also urge caution in regard to the Minister’s proposal for “charter” schools established by particular industries which would then influence what was taught.

“It is vital that children receive a well-rounded education before they begin to specialise.

“Specialist industry schools could result in narrowly educated students who won’t have the skills to adapt to a rapidly changing workforce.

For further information, please contact:

Pat Byrne
AEU Federal President
0411 693 244

Erin Farley
Media
0409 510 879