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Media Release

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CORRECTING PUBLIC SCHOOL UNDERFUNDING THE BEST WAY TO RAISE STANDARDS

The Australian Education Union has criticised Federal Education Minister Julie Bishop's attempt to distract from the real issue of Federal Government under-funding of public schools during a speech to the National Press Club today.

AEU Deputy Federal President Angelo Gavrielatos said Minister Bishop's speech today was just another irresponsible attack on Australia's teachers who continue to strive to achieve the best possible education outcomes for all students.

"After parents, there is no one more concerned about standards in schools than teachers."

"In the interests of maintaining the highest standards the AEU unreservedly rejects the Minister's proposal to allow unqualified teachers into classrooms – so much for her concern about standards."

"No matter how Minister Bishop tries to dress it up, her Government chooses to govern for private schools, despite the fact that almost 70% of Australian children attend public schools."

"Last week's Productivity Commission Report shows that the Federal government spends \$1051 per public school student compared to \$4515 per private school student."

"Australia ranks 18th out of 30 OECD countries for investment in education."

"The Ministerial Council on Education, Employment, Training and Youth Affairs (MCEETYA), has calculated that public schools nationwide require an additional \$2.9 billion in recurrent funding so that the National Goals of Schooling can be met."

"Indeed, the \$2.9 billion dollars grossly underestimates the true level of funding required as it does not include costs associated with capital, nor specific costs associated with special education or quality teaching."

"Committing this funding would be the best way for Minister Bishop to raise further standards in our schools."

"Despite these ongoing attacks, teachers will continue to show the highest level of professionalism in the interests of improving education outcomes for all Australian children."

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