



Australian Education Union - Federal Office

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PUBLIC SCHOOL STUDENTS LOSE OUT AGAIN

Peter Costello's 12th budget will further convince Australian parents that the Howard Government does not care about the nearly 70% of Australian students who attend public schools.

Australian Education Union Federal President Pat Byrne said, "This budget just underlines the decade of neglect suffered by public schools under the Howard Government.

"Public schools need an extra \$2.9 billion in recurrent annual funding but there is no attempt in this budget to address the problems which have arisen as a result of that systematic under-funding.

"Instead this budget just has more of the same of ideologically driven initiatives like performance pay and literacy and numeracy vouchers.

"Tying funding to divisive programs like performance pay will only put a greater administrative burden on schools and won't help to improve student outcomes.

"The extension of the literacy voucher scheme means more money again being directed to private tutors who have little or no accountability for student outcomes. This is money which could and should be directed to schools where it is most needed.

"The \$549 million in wage top-ups for apprentices and apprentice training vouchers will help individuals but does nothing to build the infrastructure our TAFE system needs to properly address Australia's skills shortage.

"The Howard Government has decreased share of funding for public education from 42% to 35% since they came to power and this budget just continues that decline.

"By skewing funding away from public schools the Howard Government is denying thousands of Australian children this opportunity.

"Australia needs a government that puts a priority on public education."

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