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National Principals Committee to Meet in Canberra

Principals from around Australia will meet and lobby politicians in Canberra today, calling on all political parties to make a commitment to providing proper levels of funding for public schools.

Chair of the AEU National Principals Committee, Neil Free said the lobbying formed part of the AEU's public education campaign, which claims an additional \$2.9 billion must be spent on public education to ensure that all students have access to a high standard of education.

"The principals will raise a number of key issues today, including the Howard Government's neglect of public education over the past 11 years.

"Despite the fact that 70 per cent of students in Australia attend public schools, the Federal Government has cut the percentage of money it spends on public education from 43 per cent to 35 per cent," Mr. Free said.

"It is becoming increasingly difficult each year for principals to do their job when they do not have the resources they require.

"\$2.9 billion would provide school principals with the adequate level of money to fund school improvements, extra teachers and other resources they need to ensure all schools meet the national standard set by the Federal Government itself," Mr. Free said.

"The principals will also today raise the growing workload in schools and the danger of introducing new league tables and national testing, without conducting a proper assessment of the impact of these measures on students and school communities.

"Once school curriculum becomes dominated by tests, we are left with a superficial and narrow quality of education for our students, which inevitably impacts on overall education outcomes," Mr. Free said.

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