



## **Australian Education Union - Federal Office**

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### **AEU FEDERAL CONFERENCE CALLS FOR END TO ATTACK ON PUBLIC SCHOOLS**

The Australian Education Union has called for an end to the Howard Government's sustained attack on the public education system in the Union's 2007 Federal Conference Statement.

AEU Federal President Ms Pat Byrne said that since the Howard Government came to power it had reduced the share of federal funding for public education until schools were now receiving \$1 billion less per year than if funding levels had been maintained.

"While Australia now ranks only 18<sup>th</sup> out of 30 in terms of education spending according to OECD reports, the Australian Government is the third highest spender on private education," said Ms. Byrne.

"In the lead up to the Federal Election, we are calling on all political parties to recognise that the overwhelming majority of Australian children attend public schools and to develop education policies which give priority to public education."

"Government research shows public schools need at least \$2.9 billion in additional recurrent funding to be able to meet national standards."

"All political parties should commit to providing this funding to public education."

The AEU also called on political parties to immediately commit to:

- o prioritising Indigenous education by working with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander parents and their communities to develop and fund appropriate policies and ensure that all Indigenous children have access to a high quality public education, regardless of where they live;
- o properly funding TAFE to redress previous funding cuts and provide for new and emerging needs, including research and innovation;
- o working with the States and Territories to fund a 10 year national plan for early childhood education and care which ensures that all children have access to 2 years of free, high quality preschool education.

"The AEU also condemns the Howard Government's new industrial relations laws and their attempts to impose them on teachers by placing conditions on future funding of public education."

*For a copy of the AEU Federal Conference Statement please contact Erin Farley on 0409 510 879*

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