



Australian Education Union - Federal Office

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SURVEY SHOWS LOCAL SCHOOLS FUNDRAISING TO PAY FOR BASIC RESOURCES

Media opportunity

The AEU will take new survey findings and funding analysis to the electorate office of Federal Liberal Member for Kingston Kym Richardson today.

When: 10:30am, Thursday 18th October

Where: 232 Main South Road, Morphett Vale

A survey of public school principals in the marginal federal electorate of Kingston conducted by the Australian Education Union reveals local schools are fund-raising to pay for basic resources including computers, buildings and general budget.

At the same time analysis by the AEU of Productivity Commission figures shows that schools in Kingston would have received an additional \$53,439,128 last year if they had received the same level of federal government funding as private schools.

69% of respondents in the selected survey of 16 principals in the electorate rate school fundraising as important or very important to their school budget. Principals rely on voluntary contributions and fund-raising to pay for computers, audio visual equipment, buildings, grounds and general budget. 73% say their school needs a major upgrade for facilities or equipment.

Other key findings of the survey include:

- The top priorities for additional funding include lowering class sizes, building and maintenance, heating and cooling and improving classrooms.
- 75% of principals have experienced problems with teacher supply.
- 71% don't have enough resources to deal with violent and disruptive students.
- 86% believe anti-bullying strategies are not adequately funded.
- 63% rate the Federal Government's performance in relation to public education as poor or very poor
- 94% oppose the Federal Government's performance pay proposal
- 81% felt the Federal Government's literacy and numeracy vouchers were poorly targeted to the needs of their school.

AEU Federal President Ms Pat Byrne says the Federal Government's failure to adequately fund public schools is making things harder for students.

"Public school principals are telling us that they don't have enough resources to maintain facilities properly or to give students with special needs the attention they deserve."

"That means parents and school communities are doing the hard fundraising work to pay for basic school services.

"Schools across Australia are now getting \$1 billion less per year than they would have been if the funding share for public education had been maintained at 1996 levels."

“This is creating an unequal and unfair system for Australian public school students.”

“Government research shows that our public schools need \$2.9 billion per year in additional recurrent funding in order to meet national goals for schooling.”

“That funding would help to provide schools with extra teachers and other resources they need to ensure every Australian student gets the opportunity to reach their full potential.”

AEU SA President Andrew Gohl says the Howard Government’s systematic attack on public education resources has damaged its standing in key South Australian marginal seats.

“The education community is rightly aggrieved by the Howard Government’s callous disregard for public schools. In the Kingston electorate, 63% of principals rated the Federal Government’s performance as poor or very poor.

“Public schools think the Howard Government is significantly out of touch, there being no better example than its flawed funding model which is so inequitable that it fails to deliver public schools the funding required even to meet National Resource Standards.

“Australia needs a government that will stand up for public schools,” concluded Mr. Gohl.

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