



Australian Education Union - Federal Office

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HOWARD GOVERNMENT FAILS OECD TEST

Cuts by the Howard Government have left Australia ranked the 3rd lowest nation on public education spending according to latest OECD figures.

The Australian Education Union said today that the funding policies of the Howard Government had left public schools worse off.

"These figures show that while Australia is now ranked far behind in public education spending, we are now double the OECD average on private education spending," said AEU Federal President Ms Pat Byrne.

"The Howard Government is responsible for this collapse in education spending. Since elected, the Howard Government has reduced the share of funding going to public schools until it is now only 35% of federal government spending on schools.

"The OECD figures also show that Australian teachers are paid less than the mean at the top of the salary scale, despite teaching larger classes for longer hours than in most other OECD nations.

"Australia is now lagging badly behind much of the first world on the importance we place on funding the education of the next generation.

"Established by MCEETYA, the Schools Resource Taskforce has calculated that public schools require an additional \$2.9 billion in recurrent funding to achieve the National Goals of Schooling.

"The \$2.9 billion dollars grossly underestimates the true level of funding required as the SRT has not yet calculated costs associated with capital, or specific costs associated with special education or with assuring quality teaching for all students.

"John Howard has been the Prime Minister for private schools. These figures show that Australia desperately needs a government that will properly fund public education."

Media opportunity

What: Media conference with Pat Byrne.
Where: State Schools Teachers Union Western Australia office
150 Adelaide Tce, East Perth
When: 11am, Wednesday 19 September 2007.

For further information, please contact:

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