



Australian Education Union - Federal Office

Ground Floor, 120 Clarendon Street, Southbank, Victoria, 3006
Phone : +61 (0)3 9693 1800 Fax : +61 (0)3 9693 1805
Email : aeu@aeufederal.org.au Website : www.aeufederal.org.au

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PARENTS URGED TO VOTE ON EDUCATION

The Australian Education Union urged parents to remember the Howard Government as the worst government in history on public education funding when they go to the polls this Saturday.

"There is a clear choice for parents and teachers at this election," said AEU Federal President Pat Byrne.

"If re-elected, the Coalition Government will not only continue to neglect public schools and TAFE as it has done for 11 years, but actively undermine both.

"The Howard Government has reduced the share of funding for public education until now only 35% of federal funding is directed to public schools which educate nearly 70% of students.

"The current Federal Government has also cut funding to TAFE by 26% over the last 11 years denying access to up to 40,000 students per year because of the resulting shortage of places.

"In their election campaign the Coalition has continued an 11 year trend of refusing to invest in public education infrastructure.

"Their announcements include:

- Not one cent of direct funding announced for public schools.
- A new non-means tested tax rebate that will not put any extra funding into the public education system and can be used for private school fees. The rebate will cost \$6.3 billion which could have been much better spent on additional teachers or resources for schools.
- 100 more Australian Technical Colleges, which are costing \$55,000 per student compared with an average of \$2235 per TAFE student. It is a requirement that AWA's must be offered in ATCs.

"While the investments announced by the Australian Labor Party do not meet the current funding shortfall of \$2.9 billion per year, they are a first step.

"Public schools cannot afford another term being undermined by the Coalition Government."

For further information, please contact:

Pat Byrne
AEU Federal President
0411 693 244

Erin Farley
Media
0409 510 879