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AEU Calls for Action on Teacher Education

The Australian Education Union today welcomed the findings of a parliamentary inquiry into teacher education.

AEU federal president Pat Byrne said the House of Representatives committee had produced a positive report which acknowledged the real problems facing teacher education.

"The committee has correctly identified the teaching practicum is an issue and the AEU fully supports the recommendation that there be increased federal government funding for universities to enable them to expand the practicum time (practical teaching) for students training to be teachers," she said.

"We also support the recommendation for a properly funded, structured induction to the profession for graduates to smooth the transition between university and school.

"We believe there is great merit in having reduced face to face teaching loads as part of that induction to enable further professional learning opportunities and appropriate, trained mentors to fulfil this role.

"The AEU has consistently called for reforms to teacher education and improved support for beginning teachers.

"A recent survey of beginning teachers by the union highlighted the extent of the problem of retaining teachers in the profession.

"Only half of the teachers surveyed said they expected to be teaching in 10 years time.

"Implementing the recommendations of this inquiry would help ensure more teachers remain in the profession.

"The AEU also supports the inquiry's call for greater consistency of teacher education courses - achieved through a national framework. Work towards this has commenced through the Australasian Forum of Teacher Registration and Accreditation Authorities (AFTRAA).

"This recommendation flies in the face of Education Minister Julie Bishop's recent comment about allowing unqualified teachers into Australian classrooms."

"The AEU is committed to the maintenance of high quality teaching standards and will work towards the accreditation of courses within the national framework.

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