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Curriculum Board Must Be Done Properly

The Australian Education Union said today that the Labor plan to establish a National Curriculum Board was a potentially positive initiative.

AEU Federal President Ms Pat Byrne said it was critical, however, that any national curriculum approaches be developed and overseen by education professionals, particularly practising teachers, as is currently the case. "Extensive and ongoing consultation with all stakeholders is also essential".

"Establishing a National Curriculum Board to ensure there is greater consistency in our curriculum is worthwhile," Ms Byrne said. "But this must allow for local circumstances and diversity within the student population. National consistency must not result in standardisation and over-regulation."

"It must also be done without interference from politicians trying to dictate what students should and should not learn."

"The most pressing concern for parents and teachers is the quality of education that is delivered in our schools. While curriculum is an important part of that, it must be supported by adequate funding."

Ms Byrne said the AEU was now looking forward to Labor's plan to tackle the serious underfunding of public schools.

"The public school share of federal education funding has been cut from 42 per cent to 35 per cent under the Howard Government," she said.

"Government research shows public schools need at least an additional \$2.9 billion a year to ensure that all students achieve national schooling goals.

"If we are talking about national consistency the single most important factor is ensuring that every child wherever they go to school has the opportunity to get a high quality education."

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