



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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Federal Budget: Indigenous Education Funding Boost Must Follow National Apology

The Australian Education Union is calling for the Rudd Government's first budget to significantly increase funding for Indigenous education in the Northern Territory.

Speaking at the annual AEU Northern Territory conference tomorrow, AEU Federal President Angelo Gavrielatos will highlight how initiatives announced by NT Government Minister Marion Scrymgour will fall well short of current funding needs.

"Kevin Rudd made Indigenous education a priority in his national apology to the Stolen Generations," says Mr. Gavrielatos.

"This first federal budget must include funding to prove he is serious about closing the gap between Indigenous and non-Indigenous education outcomes.

"We are particularly concerned that the Government acts to back up its promise to provide access to at least 15 hours of preschool by qualified teachers for 4 year old Indigenous students in remote communities.

"Whilst welcome, new funding announced by the NT Government for 10 extra teachers and 16 assistant teachers will be nowhere near enough.

"Even combined with Federal Government funding for an additional 200 teachers over four years, beginning with 50 this year, it falls well short of what is required.

"We know that as many as 7500 Indigenous children in the Northern Territory are missing out on pre-school, school or vocational education.

"To teach these kids we need at least 1360 extra teachers, and up to 585 additional school staff, including bilingual Indigenous Assistant teachers.

"A massive building program is also required to cope with increased student and staffing levels.

"Research conducted by the AEU found that at least \$1.7 billion over five years in additional funding is needed to deliver a high quality education to all NT children."

AEU Federal President Angelo Gavrielatos will speak at the annual AEU NT conference at Stokes Hill Wharf at 9:30am Saturday 3rd May.

For further information, please contact:

Angelo Gavrielatos
Federal President
0488 012 045

Nadine Williams
AEU NT President
0419 836 576

Erin Farley
Media
0409 510 879