



18 January 2008

NATIONAL STUDY NEEDED TO ASSESS NUMBER OF INDIGENOUS CHILDREN MISSING OUT ON SCHOOL

The Australian Education Union has called on the Rudd Government to undertake an urgent assessment of access to schooling for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children.

AEU Federal President-elect Angelo Gavrielatos said a national strategy for Indigenous Education needed to be an urgent priority for the Rudd Government.

“We call on the Rudd Government to undertake a mapping exercise to ascertain the state of access, attendance and outcomes for Indigenous children with a view to developing local and national strategies to address shortcomings,” said Mr. Gavrielatos.

“It is an appalling situation when we don’t even know how many kids are missing out on school or where they live.

“An interrogation of census data last year found up to 7500 students are missing out on access to education, pre school to secondary, in the Northern Territory alone.

“We calculated that at least \$1.7 billion over five years in additional funding is needed to ensure a high quality education is available to all NT children.

Senior Yirrkala community school teacher Yalmay Yunupingu said schools were still feeling the impact of the federal intervention.

“Kevin Rudd said that he would be Prime Minister for all Australians, including Indigenous people. The Rudd Government now has a responsibility to make sure all schools are given enough resources to be able to educate every Indigenous child,” said Ms. Yunupingu.

Former Cherbourg Principal and Executive Director of the Indigenous Education Leadership Institute Dr. Chris Sarra said experience showed that outcomes for Indigenous students could improve dramatically when school resources followed community consultation.

“If Kevin Rudd is serious about the Education Revolution then Aboriginal students deserve a piece of it too. We know that Aboriginal students succeed when schools have enough resources to work with local communities to promote an expectation of high standards,” said Mr. Sarra.

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