



## **Australian Education Union - Federal Office**

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27 August 2008

### **PUBLIC SCHOOL FUNDING TO BE CUT WITHOUT NEW INVESTMENT: REPORT**

A new report finds that without urgent action Federal Government public school funding will be cut in real terms within three years based on current budget projections.

*Reviewing the evidence: Issues in Commonwealth funding of government and non-government schools in the Howard and Rudd years* by education policy and funding expert Dr. Jim McMorro recommends an immediate investment of at least \$1.5 billion to restore federal public school funding to 1996 levels in order to ensure equality of opportunity.

Australian Education Union Federal President, Angelo Gavrielatos said it was time for the Rudd Government to give certainty to over 2 million public school students and their families.

"All the evidence tells us that public schools need more funding, not less, to ensure a high quality education for all children," said Mr. Gavrielatos.

"With greater investment, public schools could reduce class sizes, increase individual attention for students who need it and provide better and more modern facilities.

"Dr. McMorro's report makes it clear that the policies of the Howard Government have created a system of gross inequity that if continued will result in a cut in real terms for the school system that educates the majority of Australian children.

"The drafting of new federal school funding legislation provides the opportunity to redress years of neglect. There will be no education revolution without a substantial funding increase for public schools.

"Prime Minister Rudd has acknowledged that *"the Commonwealth has a prime obligation to adequately and properly fund government schools."* Now is the time to fund our schools so that they give every child an equal opportunity for success.

"Public schools are the basis of Australia's fair society. As a nation we cannot afford to turn our backs on them."

*Key points from the study:*

- Howard Government policies benefited non-government schools by almost \$3 billion in real terms, a funding advantage of around \$2.5 billion over the real increases provided for government schools.
- Without added investment, the impact of projected Federal Government funding would be a reduction of more than 1,000 teaching staff in public schools by 2012.
- Government Schools' share of Commonwealth funding for schools declined from 43 percent to 35 per cent in the Howard years and this share is projected to fall further to just under 34 per cent by 2011-12.

The full report can be found at: <http://www.aeufederal.org.au/Publications/2008/JMcMorropaper.pdf>

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