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Federal Budget: Teachers call for detailed funding measures

The Australian Education Union today called on the Federal Government to outline funding measures for the *Compact with Young Australians and National Youth Participation Requirement* in tomorrow's Budget.

"We welcome the Federal Government's commitments to provide guaranteed education and training places for all young Australians under the age of 25, and the establishment of targets to lift year 12 retention rates.

"However, what the Federal Budget must provide is funding measures to give real meaning to these important initiatives," AEU Federal President, Angelo Gavrielatos said.

"The global financial crisis creates an even greater need for young people to have the skills to maximise their employment opportunities, to pursue fulfilling careers and for the development of Australia's skills base for the future.

"It is crucially important that these initiatives are fully funded and of high quality.

"To ensure quality training and access, increased funding must be made available to TAFE to provide the additional training places and support services.

"Furthermore, it is imperative that the costs of education and training for young people are not put back on individual students and their families, and that sufficient levels of income support are provided to young Australians while they are training to ensure a decent standard of living.

"The AEU supports the Federal Government's target of achieving a 90% retention rate to year 12 or its equivalent by 2015, which is an important national priority.

"However, it requires additional targeted funding – MCEETYA research indicates that public schools nationwide require in the order of \$1.4 billion per annum to implement proven programs aimed at lifting retention rates to 90 per cent," Mr Gavrielatos said.

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