



Australian Education Union - Federal Office

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Flawed Schools Funding System Must Be Scrapped

Despite a record injection of funds into public schools by the Federal Government private schools will still receive billions more in federal funding by 2013, new research to be released today has found.

The research by senior academic, Dr Jim McMorrow said the funding imbalance was due to an "unfair and dysfunctional" funding system put in place by the Howard Government that should be scrapped.

The McMorrow report reveals:

- By the end of the current schools funding agreement in 2012/13, private schools will have received \$47 billion and public schools \$35 billion from the Rudd Government for building works, new equipment and running schools.
- Despite teaching over two-thirds of all students, the public school share of federal funding will be back to 36 per cent in 2012/13. An extra investment of \$1.5 billion a year in public schools would be required to return their share of education funding to the level it was under the last Labor Government (43 per cent).
- Public schools are not receiving a fair share of funding for computers in schools and trades training facilities and would be getting \$500 million extra if the money was distributed on the basis of need.

AEU Federal President, Angelo Gavrielatos will release the research today on the first day of the union's Annual Federal Conference in Melbourne.

Mr Gavrielatos said the report showed the Labor Government had taken significant and welcome steps to redress the under-funding of public schools by John Howard.

"But the fact remains the Federal Government has retained the Liberal's funding system which the report shows is continuing to deliver levels of funding to private schools that cannot be justified on educational or equity grounds," he said.

"This system is so flawed that private schools are given huge increases every year regardless of their wealth or income while public schools are being denied the chance to expand the educational opportunities of students.

"True equity in education can only exist when government schools set the standard for high quality education.

"Australia cannot afford to keep a flawed funding system that puts the interests of private school students ahead of students in public schools.

“The funding system is so flawed that 50 per cent of all private schools receive more than they are entitled to. Millions are directed to the wealthiest private schools in the nation.

“We need a new way of funding schools that delivers on Labor’s core principle that the primary obligation of the Commonwealth is to properly and adequately fund public schools.

“The Federal Government has said it will review schools funding this year. That review needs to begin as a matter of urgency to allow for a proper public debate on where school funding should be directed and for what purpose.”

Mr Gavrielatos also called for the Federal Government to review its spending allocations for new computers in schools and trades training facilities in light of the findings of the McMorrow report that public schools were being short-changed.

“This funding should reflect the higher level of enrolments in public schools in vocational educational and training programs and the greater need in public schools for computers and infrastructure,” he said.

The McMorrow report can be downloaded at:

www.aeufederal.org.au/Publications/2010/JMcMorrowreport2010.pdf

Media Note: The AEU Annual Federal Conference is being held at 120 Clarendon Street, Southbank in Melbourne. The opening address by Mr Gavrielatos at 10.15am will be open to the media. He will also be available for interview after the speech at approximately 10.45am.

The keynote address by Professor Alan Reid from the University of South Australia – *Assessing the Rudd Government’s Two Years in Office* – will be delivered at 11.15am.

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