



Australian Education Union - Federal Office

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Coalition Wrong on Students with Disabilities

The Australian Education Union said the Coalition was clearly blinded by ideology in education and had chosen the wrong approach in its new policy on students with a disability.

AEU Federal President Angelo Gavrielatos said that instead of a long-term strategy to provide adequate teaching resources and programs for students with a disability Mr Abbott would hand out individual vouchers to a tiny proportion of students.

“This is clearly a case of right problem, wrong approach. Funding for special education remains woefully inadequate,” Mr Gavrielatos said.

“Productivity Commission data shows that in 2008 eight out of ten students with disabilities and special needs attended public schools.

“What public schools need is a sustained increase in funding for additional teachers, extra training, student support services and programs that will improve the education of all students with a disability.

“Instead Tony Abbott has promised a per student voucher which would mean school funding would be cut or increased each year depending on the number of students.

“The plan is also woefully inadequate given only 6,000 out of the almost 160,000 students with disabilities will benefit.

“Vouchers in education are a failed right wing experiment from America. The Coalition has put ideology and the wishes of the private school lobby before the needs of students.

Mr Gavrielatos said the policy was the latest disappointment from the Coalition whose major commitment in education so far has been to cut \$3 billion in spending and cut the public school share of federal funding.

“Mr Abbott will make it harder for public schools to educate all children, including those with a disability,” he said.

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