



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

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### **Clear Evidence of the Need for Greater Investment in Public Schools**

The Australian Education Union said today that independent research commissioned by the Gonski Review confirmed the need for a fundamental overhaul of school funding and a greater investment in public schools.

Releasing the union's final submission to the federal review of school funding, AEU Federal President Angelo Gavrielatos said:

"The independent research presents a compelling case for change in the way that our schools are funded.

"A new school funding system should be underpinned by a commitment to fairness, equity and excellent outcomes for all students.

"The existing federal funding system is everything that it shouldn't be. It is inequitable and unsustainable and fails to deliver an adequate share of resources to public schools.

"The research clearly shows that the current funding system has contributed to a growing inequity in outcomes and a widening of the resource gaps between public and private schools.

"What we see in schools is increasing division along socioeconomic lines and a concentration of disadvantage in the public sector. The research shows public schools are educating the vast majority of students with higher needs and yet they receive only around one third of federal funding.

"Teachers strongly support the findings in the ACER and NOUS Group research papers that there needs to be a substantial injection of funds into public schools to help overcome the effects of disadvantage.

"We also support the development of a national resources standard to replace the current inequitable system that sees private schools funded according to the average costs of educating students in public schools.

"However, a resources standard must take into account the fundamental differences in purpose and obligation between the public and private school sectors and the wealth and resources at the disposal of private schools.

"Only public schools are open to all, in every community and they must be resourced to ensure they can meet the future needs of every child.

"A return to means-testing private school funding would ensure that the money is going to where it is needed the most and not just boosting the profits of private schools. We should be aiming to reduce resource gaps between schools, not widen them.

“We strongly support the conclusions in the research that private school funding should no longer be indexed against movements in the average increases in public school costs – a system that has seen them receive increases far in excess of changes in their costs.

“Putting in place a resources standard also presents an opportunity to end the current blame-shifting and buck-passing in education between state and territory governments and the Commonwealth.

“At the very least we need a new agreement between the Commonwealth and the state and territory governments around the educational goals we want to achieve and how schools will be resourced to achieve them.

Mr Gavrielatos said the union was disappointed that the research undertaken for the review had not looked at the need for a greater investment in public schools to assist in the education of students with disabilities.

“Public schools educate 80 per cent of students with disabilities and there is a clear connection between resourcing levels and outcomes for these students,” he said.

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