



AEU Parliamentary Brief

Australian Education Union
120 Clarendon Street
Southbank VIC 3006
Phone (03) 9693 1800
Fax (03) 9693 1805
Email: aeu@aeufederal.org.au
Website: www.aeufederal.org.au



Issue Number 21: November 2009

POLLING REVEALS SUPPORT FOR GOVERNMENT ACTION ON LEAGUE TABLES

In August the AEU commissioned Labor's pollster UMR to conduct research on public attitudes towards a ban on the creation and publication of school league tables. The research also looked at what the public believed the Federal Government's top priorities in education should be.

UMR's national telephone poll of 1,000 people, conducted between August 28 and August 31, found:

- Overall voters are happy with the Rudd Government's handling of education but voting intention is a major influence**

Q. Are you generally satisfied or dissatisfied with the Federal Labor Government's handling of schools and education?

	Satisfied	Dissatisfied	Unsure/ No opinion
All respondents	46%	36%	18%
Parents with school age children	52%	36%	11%
Labor	61%	24%	15%
Coalition	30%	51%	19%

- An overwhelming view that the Rudd Government's top priorities in education should be greater investment in teachers and public schools**

Q. As in other areas, the government needs to make choices about which issues to prioritize when it comes to education. The following are issues which the government may or may not prioritize, for each one, please tell me whether you think it should be a top priority, or not a top priority for the Rudd government?

	Top Priority	Not a Top Priority	Unsure/ No opinion
Investing more in teachers to ensure we can recruit and retain the best people for schools	93%	7%	1%
Investing more in public schools to lower class sizes and deliver more individual attention to students	90%	9%	1%
Upgrading public school facilities	86%	12%	2%
Introducing a national school curriculum	78%	19%	3%
Giving computers to all students in years nine to 12	54%	43%	3%
Publishing more information online comparing schools including national test results	34%	62%	4%
Investing more in private schools to lower class sizes and deliver more individual attention to students	26%	72%	3%
Upgrading private school facilities	18%	80%	2%

- **Strong opposition to the reproduction of school test results by the media with specific permission from the Federal Government**

Q. There is concern that the school test results could be taken from the (Federal Government's) new website by organizations such as newspapers and used to rank schools in league tables, identifying the highest scoring to the lowest scoring schools in public. However, organizations representing parents, teachers and principals say the data should not be publicly reproduced without written permission from the Federal Government. In your view, should newspapers and others be able to reproduce schools' test results without permission?

	Yes, they should	No, they shouldn't	Unsure
All respondents	25%	72%	3%
Parents with school age children	27%	72%	2%

- **Strong Support for the Federal Government to pass laws banning league tables**

Q. These same organisations representing parents, teachers and principals want the Federal Government to pass laws preventing newspapers from using the data on the national website to rank schools according to their test results, saying it will be damaging to students, schools and education. Do you think the Federal Government should pass laws preventing the construction of such league tables, or do you think it should not?

	Should	Should not	Unsure/ No opinion
All respondents	59%	34%	7%
Parents with school age children	63%	30%	5%

Authorised by: Susan Hopgood, Federal Secretary,
Australian Education Union,
120 Clarendon Street Southbank VIC 3006.