



Friday, December 16, 2016

Birmingham has no plan for schools, just cuts to Gonski

States and territories must use today's meeting of education ministers in Melbourne to continue to resist the Federal Government's plan to end needs-based Gonski funding, the AEU said today.

Ending Gonski after 2017 would deny schools \$3.8 billion in extra resources in 2018 and 2019 alone.

AEU Deputy Federal President Maurie Mulheron said Federal Education Minister Simon Birmingham had no plan for schools beyond cuts.

"Most state education ministers have already spoken out against ending Gonski funding, because they know the difference it is beginning to make in their schools," Mr Mulheron said.

"If schools don't get the full six years of Gonski funding, it will be disadvantaged students who miss out on the extra help they need to achieve at school.

"The Federal Government has still not presented state and territory ministers with a concrete funding proposal – despite repeated assurances that he will negotiate a post-2017 funding deal with the states by early next year,

"We know that Minister Birmingham's plan will see schools lose out on \$3.8 billion in extra resources and effectively end needs-based funding.

"But we still have no idea of how funding is to be distributed and which states will lose even more under Minister Birmingham's proposed 'redistribution'.

"Public school systems in every state are below the Schooling Resource Standard set by the Gonski panel, and the Coalition's funding policy will see them stay there

"Shifting money from one under-resourced public school system to another won't lift results and it won't provide any extra support in schools for students who need it.

Mr Mulheron said Minister Birmingham's other proposed reforms ignored the key issue of resourcing.

"Teachers' unions and state governments are already supporting the creation of Highly Accomplished Teacher or Lead Teacher categorisations which recognise expertise in the classroom.

"What we need is for the Federal Government to follow the lead of NSW and Victoria and impose minimum entry standards to teaching degrees, to ensure future teachers have the academic ability they need.

"We currently have a surplus of teaching graduates, but shortages of qualified maths and science teachers. We need proper workforce planning, led by the Federal Government, to fix this.

"This Federal Government has done nothing to address the chronic under-funding of students with disability, despite promising to do so, and has not even released the Nationally Consistent Collection of Data on Disability, despite it being completed in 2015.

"What is the point of introducing yet another literacy test for Year 1 students, if there is no funding to support the students who are struggling? Teachers have the assessment evidence, so we already know the students and their schools that need the additional literacy support.

“We have a minister with no plan for schools, just cuts to resources that will hit disadvantaged students the hardest.”

Media Contact: Ben Ruse 0437 971 291

Media Release

Media Release

Media Release