Politicians to hear first-hand how Gonski resources boost results for Indigenous students



Federal MPs, including Education Minister Simon Birmingham, will hear first-hand today the success of needs-based Gonski funding in delivering better outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students when they meet with a delegation of educators, parents and students in Canberra.

AEU Federal President Correna Haythorpe said Gonski funding was delivering improved results and attendance for Indigenous students in States where funding was going directly to schools.

“With the Close the Gap report for this year to be released soon, we need the full six years of needs-based Gonski funding to fix the gaps in education which see Indigenous students two to three years behind the rest of Australia in school achievement.

“We cannot continue to tolerate a situation where 18 per cent of Indigenous students don’t meet minimum standards in reading and writing compared to 6 per cent of non-Indigenous students.

“Indigenous rates of completion for Year 12 are still far lower than for non-Indigenous students.

“Gonski funding delivers extra resources directly to the schools which educate high numbers of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students, allowing schools to invest in the support these students need to succeed.

“Delegates today will be sharing their stories with MPs. They will tell how investment in one-to-one support, literacy and numeracy programs, and engagement with local Indigenous communities has led to better results for students.

“We are seeing substantial improvements in literacy and numeracy results, rising attendance rates and Year 12 completion, and greater involvement of parents and communities in schooling.

“These schools need the Federal Government to commit to the full six years of Gonski funding to ensure that they get the full level of resources they need for their students.

“That’s why it is a concern that Malcolm Turnbull has no plan to continue with Gonski beyond 2017, just like Tony Abbott. Coalition talking points leaked to media yesterday show the Government is in confusion over what will happen and has no

commitment to needs-based funding.

“Not only will students miss out on an extra $4.5 billion in schools funding from the last two years of the Gonski agreements but they will face the prospect of cuts to Federal funding to schools in the majority of States,” Ms Haythorpe said.

“NSW, Queensland, Victoria, the Northern Territory and Tasmania will all receive less under the plan to give all States a flat rate of funding.

“In the States where Gonski funding is being delivered directly to schools, we are already seeing improved results.

“Students are getting more one-to-one support in classrooms and extra literacy and numeracy programs, and services like speech therapy. Students who are at risk of falling behind are getting the early intervention support they need.

“Every student who needs help at school should be able to get it. That’s why needs-based funding is essential.

“There is a strong link in Australia between disadvantage and poor outcomes at school. Targeted resources is our chance to break that link.

“We do not need a new funding system for schools, particularly one which will leave the majority of States worse off, we need the Turnbull Government to honour the full six years of the Gonski agreements.”

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