Budget cuts fail students and don't deliver Gonski



This year's Federal Budget has confirmed Malcolm Turnbull is walking away from needs-based Gonski funding, disadvantaged schools and their students.

AEU Federal President Correna Haythorpe said the Budget had confirmed schools will be $22 billion worse off over the next ten years than they would be under the Gonski agreements.

“This budget is hard on students and soft on big business. Schools can’t close student achievement gaps with cuts to funding – it’s that simple,” Ms Haythorpe.

“In 2018 and 2019 alone schools will miss out on $3.2 billion in extra resources which they would be getting under the current Gonski Agreements.

“Malcolm Turnbull is trying to sell his agenda but parents can see through it. Cuts are cuts, it doesn’t matter how the Government spins it.

“We know Malcolm Turnbull’s plan will only widen the gap of disadvantage by locking public schools into an inherently flawed model. If we go down this path, 84 per cent of public schools will be below the minimum Schooling Resource Standard by 2027 – this means children will be left behind.

“Turnbull’s Plan will not deliver genuine needs-based funding. State governments have done the numbers and have taken a strong position of opposition to this plan.

“How can Malcolm Turnbull justify a $48 billion cut to company tax, but not find the money to give all students a quality education?

ON DISABILITY:

“We know 268,000 students with disability are not being funded adequately to get support at school. This Budget has failed to address key funding gaps to deliver support at school for every student with disability.”

“Every student deserves to reach their full potential at school. We need to know exactly how the federal government will deliver funding outcomes to ensure every student with disability can get the programs they need.

ON TAFES:

“This Budget has not delivered on vocational education and contains nothing to reverse the damaging decline in public funding for TAFEs. The neglect of TAFE and vocational education continues with deep cuts in funding.

“Government investment in TAFEs has been in free fall in recent years and we need the Federal Government to properly fund TAFEs by reinstating National Partnership funding.

“Privatisation policies have failed and we need all governments to ensure a minimum of 70 per cent of public funding is reserved for TAFEs so they can continue providing quality, accessible vocational education for all Australians.

“Reducing the threshold for repayments of student debt will disproportionately affect TAFE students,” said Ms Haythorpe.

ON PRESCHOOLS:

“The decision to extend National Partnerships funding for four-year old preschool for just one year provides short-term relief for the sector. However, it doesn’t end the funding uncertainty for early-childhood education and makes it harder for educators to plan for new programs and population growth.

“All the evidence shows quality preschool sets students up to succeed in the years beyond school. We need the federal government to provide ongoing, permanent funding to preschools, not put them in a situation where they have to keep fighting for it year after year,” said Ms Haythorpe.

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