National Reform Summit supports needs-based schools funding

Today’s National Reform Summit has recognised the value of needs-based Gonski schools funding for Australia’s economic future, and the Abbott Government should follow its lead, the Australian Education Union has said.

AEU Federal President Correna Haythorpe, a participant in the summit, said it had seen business, community groups and unions express support for needs-based funding.

"There has been agreement that we need to invest in our school system on the basis of need so that all students can get an education which will allow them to participate in our economy," Ms Haythorpe said.

"The Summit’s ‘Action Plan’ includes a recommendation that Governments should: "Ensure all schools are operating at a resources standard that meets the needs of all students on the principle of needs based funding."

"Participants also pledged to: "Work together to ensure all schools are operating at a resources standard that meets the needs of all students."

"Needs-based funding and minimum resources for schools are the essence of the Gonski reforms, and it is a measure of their importance that they have found support from a diverse group of participants today.

"It is a recognition that Gonski is not just about social equity but about ensuring Australia’s economic strength for the future.

"If we continue to have one-in-seven students leaving school without the basic literacy and numeracy skills to find work, then we will struggle to compete economically with the rest of the world.

"The Abbott Government needs to commit to the full six years of the Gonski agreements, which is what is required to lift all schools to the resource level required to give all students a quality education.

"Its plan to end needs-based funding after 2017, scrapping the final two years when the bulk of Gonski funding was to be delivered, will short-change disadvantaged schools and their students."

"Investing in schools, in particular those that educate disadvantaged students, will lift our productivity and deliver economic benefits in the long-term.

"The fact that a Coalition Government in NSW has led the way in properly implementing the Gonski reforms shows that this should not be a partisan issue."

"Giving all our students the education they need, improves equity and also delivers us an economic benefit in the long-term."

Authorised by Sally Dennis, General Secretary, The State School Teachers' Union of W.A.
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