Labor’s plan to increase specialist teachers a good start



Labor’s plan to increase specialist teachers a good start, but we need full Gonski funding.

The AEU has welcomed Labor’s plans to increase the number of specialist teachers in Australian schools, but warns that these measures are no substitute for full needsbased funding of schools.

AEU Federal President Correna Haythorpe said Opposition Leader Bill Shorten’s announcement that a Labor Government would boost the skills of 25,000 primary and secondary school teachers and train 25,000 new teachers who are science and technology graduates, could help ease shortages of specialist teachers.

"It is positive that Labor has recognised the growing problem of shortages of specialist teachers and the fact that we need workforce planning to address this," Ms Haythorpe said.

"The current situation where 40 per cent of Years 7 to 10 maths classes are taught by non-specialist teachers is not acceptable.

"But we need more than one-off policies to lift outcomes in Australian schools, we need a commitment to needs-based funding and putting extra resources into schools.

"We need a commitment to the full six years of needs-based Gonski funding to ensure all Australian children can attend properly-resourced schools.

"Previous Labor Governments developed the Gonski agreements, and any future Labor government should continue that legacy.

"The Abbott Government plans to deliver a real cut to per student funding for schools from 2018, when it abandons the last two years of the Gonski agreements. We hope that Labor recognises that properly-funding schools so all students can get a decent education is an investment in Australia’s future."

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