

Pyne's Indigenous Boarding Can't Compensate For Gonski



Education Minister Christopher Pyne's announcement of an increase in funding for Indigenous boarding students is a poor substitute for the hundreds of millions of dollars he will rip out of needs-based Gonski funding, the AEU said today.

AEU Federal President Correna Haythorpe said the key to improving Indigenous students' education results was investing resources in the schools they attended.

"Indigenous students will suffer disproportionately from the Abbott Government's decision to abandon the last two years of Gonski funding agreements with the States," Ms Haythorpe said.

"These agreements would have delivered extra resources to the most disadvantaged schools in Australia including those with high Indigenous populations.

"That equates to hundreds of teachers, support staff, speech pathologists and other specialists as well as literacy and numeracy programs that won't be delivered to Indigenous students.

"We need to focus on delivering a quality education to all Indigenous students in their own communities, with input from those communities, and needs-based Gonski funding must be part of that.

"Boarding schools are not a universal solution, nor a substitute for educating Indigenous students in their home towns and communities.

"It is also a concern that this funding is not available to public schools who may wish to partner with Indigenous organisations to offer boarding programs in regional areas.

"The Abbott Government has no strategy to improve outcomes for Indigenous students, because it will not admit the damage that scrapping funding agreements will do.

"The 2015 Closing the Gap report found that there has been 'limited progress' in Indigenous educational results between 2008 and 2014, with significant declines in some areas.

"We cannot tolerate a situation where a majority of Indigenous students still fail to complete