

Morrison's budget a deplorable failure for public education



The Morrison Government has once again failed public school, preschool and TAFE staff, students and parents across the nation with this year's Federal Budget.

"The 2022-23 Federal Budget has put public education last," said Australian Education Union Federal President Correna Haythorpe.

"This budget is incredibly disappointing, but not surprising given the blatant preference for private schools and private VET providers that the Morrison Government continues to show at the expense of public schools and TAFEs."

The federal budget delivered by Treasurer Josh Frydenberg today contains the following:

- Funding for public schools has been reduced by \$559 million over the next three years.
- Funding for private schools has increased by \$2.6 billion over the forward estimates.
- No funding has been allocated for capital works in public schools.
- No additional funding has been allocated for preschools.

"Year after year, Prime Minister Morrison has failed to deliver the funding needed for public schools for additional teachers, support staff, small class sizes and learning programs for students. Unfortunately, this year is no different with his government handing out billions of extra dollars in unwarranted and unneeded funds for private schools.

"It is public schools that are witnessing booming enrolment growth and have the greatest need for capital spending on new buildings and state of the art facilities and yet the Morrison Government has failed to deliver that funding.

"Australia's national skills pipeline is in complete disarray after a decade of funding cuts to VET. Yet the Morrison Government does not see the nation's worsening skills crisis as a priority with the federal budget failing to mention TAFE at all.

"Instead, the newly announced Australian Apprentices Incentives Program will do absolutely nothing to address the structural challenges with the national skills pipeline and certainly does not prioritise TAFE.

"Since 2013, TAFE has suffered \$8 billion in cumulative funding cuts. This year's budget should have addressed those funding cuts but Scott Morrison only sees TAFE as a high vis photo op.

"The early education of our children is critically important, and this budget has failed to deliver on Universal Access of preschool for the two years before school.

"PM Morrison has shown yet again his preference for privatisation at the expense of Australia's excellent public education system.

The next federal government must urgently address the following recommendations made by the AEU in its pre-budget

submission:

- A minimum 70 per cent of all government VET funding to TAFE
- A minimum of 100 per cent of the Schooling Resource Standard for public schools
- Establishment of a capital fund for public schools to help meet rising enrolment growth and infrastructure needs.
- Universal access to preschool for the two years before school for our children.



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