Post COVID-19 funding for schools a critical need

An urgent investment in public school funding is required now more than ever to ensure students are not educationally disadvantaged as a result of COVID-19, the AEU has recommended in their prebudget submission.

AEU Federal President Correna Haythorpe described the forthcoming federal budget as a critical opportunity for the federal government to ensure all students have the opportunity to overcome any impacts the pandemic may have had on their learning.

“Public school principals, teachers and education support staff are still in urgent need of funding to help alleviate the challenges faced by schools and students during COVID-19,” she said.

“The pandemic has exacerbated existing inequalities in education, particularly for students with additional needs. The moment to address those inequalities is now.”

Results from the AEU’s State of our Schools Survey, conducted in October 2021, show that public school principals, teachers and education support staff need greater support and resources to support students impacted by the pandemic.

- Eighty per cent of all principals said they lacked necessary ongoing funds to support students who need extra help.
- Seventy-three per cent of all principals said they need additional funds for ICT equipment for students.
- Sixty-three per cent of all teachers said that student well-being has declined, with 36 per cent saying it has declined significantly.
- Sixty-nine per cent of all teachers said student engagement has declined, 25 per cent saying it has declined significantly.

“These statistics demonstrate the urgent need for the federal government to fund public schools to at least 100 per cent of the Schooling Resource Standard, as the AEU has recommended in its pre-budget submission,” Ms Haythorpe said.

“Without substantial investment in public school funding, buildings and equipment, education inequities experienced by students, particularly those from disadvantaged backgrounds will continue to exist.

“Not only do individual students stand to benefit from increased investment in school funding, but our whole community will benefit through the long term educational and economic gains.”

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