AEU: Statement on public education funding

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Every child has the right to a high quality education, delivered by qualified and professional teachers in their local neighbourhood. It is Australia's public education system and its dedicated workforce that upholds this right.

But a decade of chronic underfunding of public schools has put this right at risk.

The vision of the 2011 Gonski Review, in which all schools would be funded on the basis of student need to a minimum of a Schooling Resource Standard plus additional loadings for disadvantage, has never been realised in public education. And, in 2017 the previous Coalition Government stopped making any contribution to public school capital works and entrenched inequitable funding arrangements for public schools.

At the last election, Federal Labor promised to deliver a pathway to full and fair funding for public schools. To achieve this, a minimum of 100 per cent of the SRS must be delivered.

Resources delayed are resources denied.

Today's announcement of the extension of the current National School Reform Agreements for 12 months, delays and therefore denies students in public schools the funding they need, particularly children with a disadvantaged background.

There has now been a generation of children who have been denied full and fair funding for their entire school lives. This can no longer continue.

The review of funding that will be conducted in 2023 must deliver on Federal Labor's commitment to full and fair funding for public schools and confirm the responsibility of all governments to ensure public schools are funded to a minimum of 100 percent of the SRS from 2024.

The Australian Education Union, as the voice of public school principals, teachers and education support staff, will accept nothing less.

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