AEU welcomes funding commitment

Students will benefit the most from federal education minister Jason Clare's renewed commitment to get every school on a path to 100 per cent of its fair funding level, according to the AEU.

The Minister repeated the 2022 election promise while announcing the membership and terms of reference for an expert panel to advise on the best way to achieve fair education funding.

He announced Dr Lisa O'Brien would chair the expert panel that will advise state education ministers on the key targets and specific reforms that should be tied to funding in the next National School Reform Agreement (NSRA).

Dr O'Brien is the Chair of the Australian Education Research Organisation and former CEO of the Smith Family.--

She will be joined by others with significant and diverse experience in school education, including:

- Lisa Paul, former chair of the Quality Initial Teacher Education Review.
- Professor Stephen Lamb, Centre for International Research on Education Systems at Victoria University.
- Grattan Institute School Education Program Director Dr Jordana Hunter.
- Dyonne Anderson, President of the National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Principals Association and Principal at Cabbage Tree Island Public School.
- University of Melbourne Professor of Educational Leadership Pasi Sahlberg.

The expert panel will deliver its report to Education Ministers by 31 October 2023. Meanwhile the current NSRA will be extended for 12 months to 31 December 2024.

AEU Federal President Correna Haythorpe welcomed the federal government's commitment to consulting with the teaching profession as an essential part of the process.

"If Australian public schools had 100 per cent of their fair funding level, students from every background would benefit from smaller class sizes, additional teachers and more resources," she said.

"We welcome the Federal Government's focus on students who experience disadvantage, including students with disability, from regional and remote areas, First Nations' students and students from a language background other than English.

"As we said when the Government announced the review process late last year, funding delayed is funding denied. We have a cohort of students in year 12 this year who have never attended a fully funded public school.

"We need to see a clear timeline and pathway to delivery of full funding for every public school and for the students in public school classrooms as soon as possible.

"Public education is a joint responsibility between the Federal and State and Territory Governments, and all governments must play a role in the delivery of that fair funding for public school students."

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