AEU bans implementation of the national reform agreement

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The Australian Education Union (AEU) has placed an immediate ban on the implementation of the *Better and Fairer Schools Agreement*.

Federal President Correna Haythorpe said: “The AEU Federal Executive has placed an immediate nation-wide ban on the implementation of the *Better and Fairer Schools Agreement*, particularly initiatives which are unfunded and that will increase the workload of the overstretched and under-resourced teaching profession.

“This ban will remain in place until such time as the AEU Federal Executive determines that there is a genuine pathway for all public schools across the nation to achieve the minimum 100 per cent of the Schooling Resource Standard (SRS).

“We have made our position very clear. After more than a decade of inequality and endless promises by governments, we cannot stand by while another generation of students miss out on the resources that they need for their education. And we cannot accept a reform agenda that will be rolled out from next year while the status of funding for NSW, VIC, QLD, SA and the ACT remains unclear and increasingly looks as if it will be status quo.

“This is a national issue. While claims of ‘full and fair funding’ have been made by the Albanese Government, our members in WA, NT and TAS know that a deal which falls four per cent short of 100 per cent is not full and fair funding. Further, the shift to a 10-year timeframe, means that public schools are now facing a prolonged pathway to 100 per cent.

“The situation is untenable. In public schools today, we have chronic funding shortfalls, workforce shortages, increased workloads and students who need extra learning support. The failure to fund our schools properly impacts deeply on the teaching and learning conditions for teachers, education support staff and for students.”

The AEU Executive has resolved that:

1. The *Better and Fairer Schools Agreement* has as a core purpose, a commitment from the parties to “commit to

actions that will support full and fair funding for schools, build a world class education system for all students, and encourage and support every student to be the very best they can be, no matter where they live or what kind of learning challenges they face.

2. Such actions as outlined under the three pillars of A) Equity and Excellence B) Wellbeing for Learning and Engagement and C) A Strong and Sustainable Workforce are embedded in a national reform agreement which is the vehicle for the Commonwealth government to deliver funding to jurisdictions based on the SRS and associated loadings.
3. The ongoing negotiations between the Commonwealth and State and Territory governments have failed to deliver a full and genuine pathway to 100 per cent of the SRS due to the Albanese Government's offer failing to provide a full 25 per cent Commonwealth share of the SRS and failing to deliver on the removal of the four per cent depreciation tax from the state and territory SRS share.
4. The implementation of any government reform agenda without the essential funding that is required to meet the needs of the public school system, places an increased workload burden on the teaching profession, while at the same time denying schools the resources needed to achieve high quality teaching and learning outcomes for their students.
5. The AEU Federal Executive determines to place an immediate nation-wide ban on the implementation of the Better and Fairer Schools Agreement, particularly initiatives which are unfunded and that will increase the workload of the overstretched and under-resourced teaching profession.
6. This ban will remain in place until such time as the AEU Federal Executive determines that there is a genuine pathway for all public schools across the nation to achieve the minimum 100 per cent of the SRS.

"As we issue this nationwide ban, we are once again renewing calls on the Albanese Government to urgently resume school funding negotiations with the state and territory governments to achieve five-year bilateral agreements which deliver the minimum 100 per cent SRS for all public schools," Ms Haythorpe said.

"The Albanese Government cannot implement reforms without providing proper funding to pay for them. Under the current circumstances the *Better and Fairer Schools Agreement* is not better and it is not fairer for teachers and students. If it is implemented without the full resources needed for public schools, it will increase the workload of the already stretched teaching profession.

"In the lead up to the last federal election Prime Minister Albanese promised to ensure that every public school was on the pathway to 100 per cent full funding. As we rapidly head towards another federal election it is critical that the Albanese Government makes good on that promise for the future of our children and the future prosperity of our nation.

"The Albanese government has the power to resolve this by increasing their share to 25 per cent and ensuring that state and territory governments commit to 75 per cent. Make no mistake, we will commit the full resources of our union to achieving full funding for all public schools and their students."

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