

NAPLAN results show the need to proceed with Gonski not axe it



AEU

The Australian Education Union today said the latest NAPLAN results could not be used by the Turnbull Government as justification for its plan to abandon Gonski needs-based funding.

AEU Federal President Correna Haythorpe said the results showed some significant gains over the past eight years but progress was inconsistent and it was clear more needed to be done.

“The lesson we must learn from the schools that are achieving outstanding results with Gonski funding is that properly resourcing schools is a prerequisite for lifting performance,” she said.

“For the Turnbull Government to use these results to justify the decision Tony Abbott took in 2013 to abandon Gonski funding shows again it is prepared to put politics before the interests of the nation’s children.

“What the Coalition is planning to do is to deny schools and students the vital resources necessary to lift results and instead go back to a system where funding was not delivered according to need.

“The Coalition’s own budget shows it plans to cut funding to public schools in the NT and Tasmania where student needs are greatest.

“Education Minister Simon Birmingham knows no Gonski funding was delivered to public schools in Victoria, WA and the NT during the two years before these NAPLAN tests. In other states the investment represented a tiny fraction of the money spent on schools.

“In NSW for example where over \$11 billion a year is spent on public schools the additional Gonski funding given to public schools in 2014 and 2015 was \$200 million.

“It will take many years to unwind the inequity of funding policies of the past and properly resource public schools. In the period 2009 to 2014 government funding to private schools increased at twice the rate it did to public schools.

“If the Coalition wants to talk about evidence they can start with their signature initiative Independent Public Schools which the WA Government admits has not achieved better results in six years and has led to a more inequitable two tier education

system.

“The single biggest problem in Australian education remains the unacceptable gaps in achievement between students from different backgrounds and locations.

“The evidence shows that delivering the full Gonski funding is our best chance to ensure all schools are properly resourced to meet the needs of all kids and address these achievement gaps.

“No-one in their right mind thinks that denying schools the resources needed to meet the needs of all students is a strategy that will lead to better results. You can’t end inequitable outcomes in education with inequitable funding.”

Authorised by Mary Franklyn, General Secretary, The State School Teachers' Union of W.A.

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