

New federal campaign set to make public education funding a top election issue

March 23, 2021

Teachers and principals have had enough of federal political parties failing to take their share of responsibility for public school funding and intend to make it a major issue at the next election, Federation President Angelo Gavrielatos said today.

The Australian Education Union (AEU) has launched its Every school. Every child campaign, seeking funding commitments from political parties that ensure every school receives the resources it needs so that every child can reach their potential.

A nationwide YouGov poll of more than 1200 voters found:

- 83 per cent believe increasing public school funding should be a priority issue at the federal election
- 57 percent of voters with children currently attending a public school said increasing funding to public schools should be the top issue at the election
- 77 per cent felt the Federal Government was responsible for ensuring every school is funded to 100 per cent of the Schooling Resource Standard
- 54 per cent said the Federal Government's share of funding for public schools is currently too low.



Support staff, parents and community members will be asked to join with teachers and principals to ensure the voting public knows what's at stake if federal funding policies don't change.

The Commonwealth Government contributes up to just 20 percent of the Schooling Resource Standard (SRS) — an objective measure to indicate how much funding each school required to meet the needs of all of its students — for public schools.

By 2023 less than half of all public schools will reach even 95 percent of the SRS.

Public schools will be underfunded by \$2.7 billion over the next four years, economist Adam Rorris calculates in a recently released report.

The *Funding and capital investment in public schools in Australia: Summary of reports examining recurrent funding and capital investment* report also shows there is a significant need for increased capital expenditure to build more schools and classrooms and to invest in modern infrastructure.

The Federal Government provides zero capital funding to public schools.

The cumulative capital investment gap between public and private schools was \$21.5 billion from 2013 to 2018.

“Anyone can see that the current funding model is unjust and needs a radical overhaul,” Mr Gavrielatos said.

“History has taught us, to achieve funding improvements will require members’ active commitment to the campaign; helping to explain the current, unjust state of affairs to their local community, so they will be willing to add their voices to call for change.”