



Australian Education Union - Federal Office

Ground Floor, 120 Clarendon Street, Southbank, Victoria, 3006
Phone : +61 (0)3 9693 1800 Fax : +61 (0)3 9693 1805
Email : aeu@aeufederal.org.au Website : www.aeufederal.org.au

2 May, 2011

Bonus Scheme No Solution

The Australian Education Union today called on the Gillard Government to rethink its bonus pay scheme saying it would not fix teacher shortages or help retain the most experienced teachers in the classroom.

AEU Federal President Angelo Gavrielatos said the Government was correct in identifying the need to invest more in the profession but was misguided in thinking a one-off bonus pay scheme was the right approach.

"We cannot wait until 2014 to start addressing the pressing issues of teacher shortages and the growing difficulty we have in keeping our most experienced teachers in the classroom," Mr Gavrielatos said.

"We need a comprehensive approach aimed at attracting and retaining teachers and we need competitive professional salaries.

"Beyond that we should further recognise and reward our experienced teachers who demonstrate high quality teaching knowledge, skills and practice. Our biggest problem is that teachers currently reach the top of the pay scale within nine to ten years and then have to leave the classroom if they want to earn a higher income.

"Governments across Australia in February adopted national professional standards which would help to address this problem by introducing two new career paths for highly accomplished teachers.

"However there has been no funding from the Federal Government to recognise and reward the teachers who are judged to meet these exacting standards.

"Paying a small number of teachers one-off bonuses is counterproductive and divisive. It is not a long term solution to the problems we have."

"There are clearly some within the Government's ranks who share a fascination with a corporate approach to education that has been experimented in the United States.

"But the facts are that it has failed spectacularly and there has been no greater failure than in cash for grades teacher pay schemes. We should be looking to the highest performing nations for new policy approaches, not a nation that on any measure performs far below Australia."

For more information contact:

Angelo Gavrielatos
AEU Federal President
0488 012 045

Mark Robinson
Communications & Campaign Coordinator
0403 043 151