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8 February 2010

Federal Government Misleading on Funding

The Education Minister Julia Gillard is trying to cover the flaws in the My School website by misrepresenting the union's position on school funding, the Australian Education Union said today.

AEU Federal President Angelo Gavrielatos said the union had welcomed the \$11 million in new funding for 110 schools announced yesterday.

"The amount of funding announced yesterday, while welcome, is inadequate given Julia Gillard and Kevin Rudd have said themselves that you need to spend \$500,000 a year to make a difference in an average sized school," Mr Gavrielatos said.

"What we questioned is why this \$11 million could only be allocated after the My School website went live.

"There is a wealth of data on school performance and student background collected by state and territory governments.

"Already much of the \$2 billion promised by the Federal Government is being distributed on the basis of that data.

"The only difference the My School website has made is to introduce an index which produces like school comparisons which are clearly misleading and wrong.

"Elite private schools with selective entry policies are being compared with local public schools – some with school populations of as few as one student.

"Public schools in western Sydney are being compared with schools of the air in outback areas or those on remote islands.

"How can those flawed comparisons help in determining which schools need more money?"

"The Federal Government even admitted yesterday that the index used to create the comparisons was being reviewed following numerous complaints from schools.

"The Federal Government would be better off fixing the My School mess it has created rather than trying to mislead people over the union's position on funding."

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