

# Independent Education Union

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16 April 2020

The Hon Scott Morrison MP  
Prime Minister  
PO Box 6022  
House of Representatives  
Parliament House  
Canberra ACT 2600

Dear Prime Minister

I write to you on behalf of the members of the Independent Education Union of Australia.

Since the beginning of the COVID-19 crisis our members have worked hard to ensure the schools played their part in responding to the quickly evolving situation.

As the crisis developed IEUA members took appropriate measures to support the ongoing education of the children of essential workers and vulnerable children still required to attend schools, while at the same time adjusting the delivery model of instruction to cater for the large numbers of students who embarked on studying from home.

These actions were in the interests of the education of students and the on-going viability of schools in the non-government sector.

However, there are actions that only government can do to protect the viability of schools and secure the continuity of education for students.

As a matter of urgency we would request the following assurances and commitments:

- Abstudy funding for all school students be maintained irrespective of modes of education delivery

- Schools be eligible as employers to make application for JobKeeper based upon demonstration of a 15% loss of revenue instead of 30%
- Arrangements to ensure that all early childhood education providers are supported to ensure their continued viability during the crisis
- Systemic arrangements for the availability of appropriate PPE and enhanced levels of cleaning. As of this moment schools are experiencing severe shortages of appropriate PPE equipment across the board.

We also seek an affirmation and recognition that remote and online education are valuable learning opportunities for both students who are staying at home and those who will need to attend school grounds.

Employees in schools rightly have concerns regarding their health and safety and most are bewildered with the mixed message that social distancing in the general community should be the norm but in schools large numbers of people can be in close proximity as a matter of course.

I would therefore request publication of the relevant modelling and details of the mortalities among children, their parents, carers and extended families, and their teachers and support staff, as a result of the re-opening of schools. Such advice should make clear whether the modelling is based on the notion that social distancing was or was not implemented in schools.

You will appreciate that the advice we give to our members with respect to the issue of schools re-opening at a future point is dependent on timely and detailed responses to the above.

We restate the willingness and resolve of all teachers and support staff working in schools to be part of the response and solution to this crisis. All we are asking is to be afforded the professional respect and courtesy to be involved in the decision making processes to ensure successful outcomes.

We look forward to your urgent reply.

Yours sincerely



A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Chris Watt', is enclosed in a thin rectangular border. The signature is stylized and cursive.

**CHRIS WATT**

**Federal Secretary**

cc State Premiers, Territory Chief Ministers  
cc Education Ministers