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IEU to call for funding certainty & transparency at Ministerial Reference Group Targeted funding must close the gap in student disadvantage & inequity

The IEU welcomes the opportunity to participate in the federal government's Ministerial Reference group announced earlier today. This Reference Group will play a key role developing the [National School Reform Agreement \(NSRA\)](#).

All Australian students must have access to a high quality and affordable education.

This is our chance to shape a stronger and fairer school system. Education funding is the basis of not only high-quality educational outcomes and student wellbeing, it also directly impacts wages and conditions in school workplaces currently in the midst of a national staffing crisis.

It's pleasing to see the government acknowledge in the review that the funding agreement will play an important part in how schools attract and retain teachers.

The IEU also welcomes the government's focus on students experiencing economic disadvantage, students with a disability and First Nations students. Minister Clare's commitment to tackle the growing educational gap for remote and regional children will be strongly supported by our union at the Reference Group.

Our teacher colleagues in state schools must be better resourced and supported by arrangements between federal, state and territory governments. 100% fully funded public schools are long overdue.

Our union will be highlighting a number of additional priority considerations to the Reference Group:

- Funding for students with identified learning needs must be delivered within an equitable and transparent mechanism that guarantees the funding actually reaches the class or area of need.
- Any reforms or projects proposed by the review must avoid more workload demands on staff. Teachers are already drowning in red tape, data overload and bureaucratic paperwork. Unsustainable workloads are a key contributor to current teacher shortages.
- School staff need job security and reliable incomes; however, short-term contracts plague the sector. Greater funding certainty and long-term commitments can help limit insecure work.
- Some schools refuse to negotiate wages and conditions with their employees. These schools continue to receive full government funding despite paying well below industry standard. Staff and parents are rightly asking for more accountability in this funding-to-wages discrepancy.

IEU members are ready to share their voice to help set the policy framework for our nation's schools.