

RECOMMENDATIONS

INDEPENDENT EDUCATION UNION'S SUBMISSION TO THE INQUIRY INTO THE EDUCATION OF BOYS

RECOMMENDATION 1

That the Inquiry recommend the establishment of local community education planning bodies which would involve school communities, including parents, school staffs, students and other local community agencies. These committees should look at the cooperative use of resources and access to services, and examine models of support such as "full service schooling."

RECOMMENDATION 2

That in its report to Government, this Inquiry gives priority to the research and policy approach around 'which boys and which girls' in terms of student participation in education and learning outcomes.

The Inquiry's recommendations should seek to better inform the community and the public debate on these issues beyond the simplistic 'it's the boys turn'.

That the Inquiry report include a compendium of best practice case study strategies which have been developed and implemented in schools to assist educationally at risk students, which can then inform other education professionals and school communities on ways to address differential learning outcomes of boys and girls in different educational settings.

RECOMMENDATION 3

- That in its report to Government, the Inquiry gives weight to the multitude of reports from Australian and international research and other government Inquiries.
- That given the investment already made by Australia's education community (at both the tertiary and school level) to the issues germane to this Inquiry, in particular the differential needs of disadvantaged boys and girls, that governments and education authorities give urgent attention to resourcing the development and implementation of action plans which address these issues. Particular attention should be given to socioeconomic disadvantage, aboriginality, rurality, disability etc.
- It is essential that programs and interventionist strategies should also target the early years of schooling.

RECOMMENDATION 4

The IEU urges this Inquiry to take account of this research particularly in relation to the developmental and learning needs of all students across the middle years – years 5 to 10. The IEU believes that designated funding, staffing and professional development

should be focussed on curriculum and pedagogical strategies and flexible work place structures. These would include approaches such as:

- Teaming, with fewer teachers working with groups of students which can allow for the development of more personalised counselling and teaching and learning programs
- integrated curriculum delivery with efforts to ensure that the school culture focuses more on cooperation rather than competition and acknowledges and rewards effort and participation not just ability
- stronger community links including involvement with the parent community, and the development of cluster relationships with local primary and secondary schools which provide the opportunity to share and rethink curricular programs and delivery, student support approaches, and school organisation issues.

RECOMMENDATION 5

That the Inquiry recommend to government that programs and strategies are developed which:

- encourage boys and girls to know and understand the breadth of curriculum choices in the post compulsory years of schooling and their implications for further education and training, employment opportunities and career paths, as well as for their personal interest and their social and emotional growth. This is particularly in the context of the differential pattern of choices made by boys and girls and how it potentially affects their participation and success at school and later.
- provide professional development to school staff about the changing nature of the labour market, the likely impact of globalisation on employment, training and skills development and the consequent impact of these changes on school curriculum, pedagogy and student subject choice.
- assist teachers and support staff develop pedagogical and curriculum approaches to positively engage those students in learning who are alienated and hostile about their school experience.

RECOMMENDATION 6

That the Inquiry recommend to government the development of funded programs which schools can access for the implementation of alternative models of educational provision to individual students who are disaffected with school and are at risk of dropping out from schooling altogether.

RECOMMENDATION 7

That the Inquiry recommend to the Government that it fund a well resourced national advertising campaign which celebrates the work of teachers and the essential contribution they make to the Australian economy and the nation's social fabric.