



INDEPENDENT EDUCATION UNION OF AUSTRALIA – QUEENSLAND AND NORTHERN TERRITORY BRANCH



MEDIA RELEASE

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National Curriculum Draft still has a Long Way to Go

The 'back to the basics' focus of the national curriculum draft means students may miss out on being 21st – century learners.

While the curriculum focus of maths, science, history and English are imperative to learners, the draft falls short of including crucial issues such as politics, economics, multiculturalism, citizenship, the impact of a technological world, adolescent health and welfare issues, our place in the Asia-Pacific region and geographical issues that impact the modern world.

Independent Education Union of Australia – Queensland and Northern Territory (IEUA-QNT) Branch Secretary Terry Burke said, many of these areas which are a major concern and interest to Australian students do not fit easily into the draft.

“Curriculum needs to be flexible and future orientated but unfortunately the federal government still has a long way to go if they want to achieve this,” Mr Burke said.

“To be informed citizens of the modern world students need a ‘big picture’ curriculum that addresses issues affecting their contemporary society so they can develop the skills and knowledge needed to think and respond critically.”

Although a long supporter of a national curriculum, the IEUA-QNT has consistently urged for mechanisms which would ensure that its development and implementation were well conceived, developed and supported.

“The IEUA-QNT understands the concerns of teachers across the country regarding the shortfalls of the narrowly constructed draft and we have always advocated that in order for it to be a success the input of teachers is needed,” Mr Burke said.

“However, we have always been concerned over the limited timeline for consultation and the restricted nature placed on teacher input.”

“If the federal government wants a “world class national curriculum,” then they need to slow down the process and draw on teacher expertise.”

“Ultimately, curriculum must be flexible enough to allow teachers to exercise their professional judgments to meet student learning needs and to assist students to relate their learning to their experiences in the 21st century,” Mr Burke said.

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“The Queensland Independent Education Union represents nearly 15,000 non-government education sector employees including teachers, principals, school support staff, grounds and maintenance staff, early childhood education staff and employees in business, international and English language colleges.”