



## MEDIA RELEASE

### Education Unions Join Against Dutton's Attacks On Teachers

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The Australian Education Union (AEU), National Tertiary Education Union (NTEU), and Independent Education Union (IEU) have joined together against Opposition Leader Peter Dutton's claims of indoctrination in education and his attacks on the teaching profession.

With more than 285,000 members between them from early childhood, school, TAFE and university, the unions are calling on Peter Dutton and Coalition members to end the vilification of education and research workers and the teaching profession.

Across the nation, the teaching profession is giving 100% every day to ensure that every student has access to a high quality education and they need the full support of our communities to do their jobs well. This political interference would not be accepted in any other occupation. It will not be accepted by teachers.

Peter Dutton needs to stay out of the classroom and leave education to the qualified, professional teaching workforce.

All Politicians should have the highest respect for the teaching profession and for the professional autonomy of teachers, from early childhood, schools, TAFE and University.

#### **AEU Federal President Correna Haythorpe said:**

"Instead of releasing a genuine education policy, Peter Dutton has launched a destructive attack on teachers and schools, combined with broad threats to tie school funding to his ideology."

"Peter Dutton's claims of woke indoctrination in our schools are insulting and ignorant and show a complete lack of knowledge about the Australian education system and the role of teachers."

"The very curriculum that Peter Dutton and his team are calling "woke" is the Australian curriculum that was reviewed, endorsed and implemented by the Coalition Government in April 2022."

"This false claim of indoctrination is purely a way to demonise the profession and withhold money from public schools, just like the Trump agenda in the USA"

#### **NTEU National President Dr Alison Barnes said:**

“Let’s face it: Peter Dutton wouldn’t be even talking about unis, schools and TAFEs if his ideological stablemate Donald Trump wasn’t setting fire to the American Government’s education department.”

“The critical thinking skills needed by business, society and our democracy are undermined by this attack which seeks to demonise teaching and research academics to politically point-score. What are Peter Dutton’s qualifications in the fields of research and teaching in which he seeks to intervene? How is he qualified to define what should be taught?”

“We don’t want Trumpian politics here. Australians look at what is happening in the US with alarm.”

“We should all look at Peter Dutton’s background: the only Liberal frontbencher to walk out of Kevin Rudd’s 2008 apology to the stolen generations. What does that mean for the teaching of Indigenous studies?”

“We know the Coalition still has prominent members who deny climate change: does that mean climate scientists will be censored under a Dutton Government?”

“We have no idea how deep Dutton’s intervention will go.”

**IEU Federal Secretary Brad Hayes said:**

“The challenges in education require a professional dialogue free from partisan attacks and teacher bashing. Peter Dutton seems intent on igniting ugly cultural wars for political reasons, at the cost of well-considered education policies.”

“Repairs to the education system must continue. Positive changes already underway require adequate resourcing, both in schools and in the department overseeing the reforms. Undermining the department responsible for the programs on which schools, teachers, and students depend undermines the whole education system.”

“The Department of Education has the main responsibility for delivering funding to non-government schools, it equates to 80% of total school funding to the sector. The families, students and staff in these schools would be big losers if the department was to be cut back.”

**ENDS**

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