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IPA WELCOMES GOVERNMENT REVIEW OF TEACHER EDUCATION AS A VICTORY FOR BACK-TO-BASICS TEACHING

“Federal Education Minister Christopher Pyne’s announcement to overhaul teacher education and strengthen standards is a victory for Australian students”, says Hannah Pandel, Research Fellow at free market think tank the Institute of Public Affairs.

The federal government’s review of teacher education, conducted by Australian Catholic University Vice-Chancellor Professor Greg Craven, was released today. The Review concluded that “some higher education providers and practitioners adopt teaching strategies that reflect populist thinking and have not been shown to provide positive outcomes to student learning”.

“The IPA welcomes the Review and the government’s response promising a return to back-to-basics teaching,” says Ms Pandel.

“The sad reality is that Australian universities are failing to equip teachers with the skills and practical experience they need to give our children the ability to succeed. And it is Australian students in classrooms across the country that suffer as a direct result,” says Ms Pandel.

A study into the literacy skills of graduate teachers, released in January this year by Edith Cowan University researcher Dr Brian Moon, found that no student was able to spell all twenty given words correctly. Some of these basic words included: definite, privilege, and professional.

“The fact that graduate teachers are walking into classrooms every year without knowing basic literacy skills is a fundamental failure of teacher education in this country,” says Ms Pandel.

“Minister Pyne’s announcement of a national literacy and numeracy test for teacher graduates from 2016 is long overdue. We must change the way we perceive the role of a teacher. A teacher with deep curriculum content knowledge has more to contribute than as a passive facilitator. Their ability matters.

“Minister Pyne must deliver on this plan to reform our teacher education system because Australian students deserve world-class teachers,” says Ms Pandel.

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