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**MEDIA RELEASE: Inquiry into literacy an opportunity to debunk myths**

The AEU ACT Branch welcomes an independent inquiry into literacy teaching which is expected to be passed by the ACT Legislative Assembly today.

Branch President Angela Burroughs said, “It’s encouraging to see so much passionate engagement in the media for public schools to be as effective as possible. Every AEU member strives to give the best quality education to our ACT students every day. They do so in sometimes incredibly difficult circumstances, and we welcome every opportunity to get teachers the time and resourcing they need to be able to teach.”

“All teachers want their students to achieve the highest standard of literacy accomplishment. If this inquiry can assist a high performing system do better, that’s a good thing,” Ms Burroughs said.

Ms Burroughs said that an independent inquiry is also an opportunity to debunk myths around literacy teaching in ACT public schools.

“There are some myths that emerge when we talk about literacy teaching in the ACT. The first is that literacy outcomes in the ACT are in crisis and that we are sliding backwards. The evidence shows the ACT to be high performing, but this doesn’t mean we don’t aspire to do better.”

“The second myth is that education policy in the ACT prohibits the teaching of phonics and that the Education Directorate sets down rules that make explicit instruction take a back seat to inquiry-based learning. This is not true.”

Ms Burroughs said, “the opportunity to debunk these myths will be welcomed by our members who can be unnecessarily distracted and stressed in needing to explain the facts to parents.”

“The Education Directorate has a role to play here in providing clarity to parents on these issues,” Ms Burroughs said. “Our members want to teach, not spend time debunking myths about their expertise and practice.”

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