



AUSTRALIAN GOVERNMENT PRIMARY PRINCIPALS ASSOCIATION
Promoting and Advocating for Government Primary Schools

Discussion Paper: GONSKI Review of Funding for Schooling National Education Resourcing Agreement - Unfinished business

The Gonski Review of Funding for Schooling (December 2011) was the most comprehensive investigation of the way our schools are funded in almost 40 years. The review recommended that schools be funded according to identified needs of their student populations. It also identified what level of funding was required to educate each one of them, no matter what their individual circumstances, to a high standard. It was based on the premise that each school would receive a base level of Commonwealth and state funding, plus additional money or loadings to take into account the school's size and location and the individual needs of students.

The review identified that government schools have the majority of students with high levels of educational need. However, it also recognised that within all sectors there are schools serving very disadvantaged students that will benefit from additional funding. The intent of the Gonski Review was that schools and sectors with the highest level of need should receive the most support.

Support loadings were to be provided for:

- Students from low socio-economic backgrounds.
- Students with disabilities.
- Students from Indigenous backgrounds.
- Students who need help with English.
- Schools that are disadvantaged by their size or remoteness.

The noble intent of the Gonski Review of Funding for Schooling has not yet been realised in all state jurisdictions. New South Wales has passed on the additional federal funding along with the state co-contribution. Queensland (which did not sign up for the entire model) has provided additional federal funding direct to schools with certainty of funding until 2017. Some jurisdictions have had no apparent change to school funding processes to address student need.

National education funding must be a key point of focus during the next federal election – for all political parties. The voice of education must be heard because the future of our nation depends on quality education for all, regardless of circumstances or background. All schools, particularly government schools, need to share the message with parents.

This can, and will make a difference. This important work cannot all be left until the election campaign. It will require work to be done in all state jurisdictions and is not just the responsibility of Associations such as AGPPA and APPA. To achieve the intent of the Gonski Review of Funding for Schooling, AGPPA urgently calls on State and Federal governments to undertake the following actions:

- Commit to a fully resourced, needs-based funding model which meets the criteria set by the Gonski Review
- Commit to long-term funding certainty for schools into the future to enable contextual solutions to address local needs
- Commit to a bipartisan approach to education funding at all levels of government which recognises the importance of education in building this nation's future.

This is a once in a generation opportunity to make a difference for all learners – particularly primary students – we can't afford to miss it!

AGPPA Position 10 November, 2015