

Call to end school divide

Primary principals want end to lower funding regime

PRIMARY school students must attract the same amount of funding as their secondary counterparts, the peak primary principals group says.

In the Gonski Review, the base funding allocation for primary school students was set at \$8000 - \$2500 less than high school students.

The Australian Government Primary Principals Association president Gabrielle Leigh said principals want all students to receive the same base funding allocation.

EDUCATION
EDITOR

SHERADYN
HOLDERHEAD



"I think lower funding for primary students has been historical," she said.

"We believe systems in the world that are really performing well, such as some provinces in Canada, have taken up this model.

"What's coming out of research from all over the world is if you intervene early and get the structures right you don't have the commensurate problems later on.

"Just because funding has always been done one way, it does not always mean it's the right way to do it in the future." Other AGPPA recommendations included:

RECEPTION to Year 2 students should attract a 20 per cent loading based on importance of the early years.

THE loading range for indigenous students should be between 30 per cent and 100 per cent rather than 40 per cent and 100 per cent.

A LOADING must, however, be created to acknowledge the needs of Indigenous students in schools where those students make up less than 5 per cent of all students.

STUDENTS who frequently move schools should attract a loading of between 15 per cent and 25 per cent based on a student who en-

rolled in three or more schools in a six-year period would attract a 15 per cent loading.

"You could have 20 Indigenous students out of 500 at one school and those students wouldn't attract the extra funding," Ms Leigh said.

"We dropped the range because we figured it would save money on one but make sure every child had access."

Principals also believed there should be a loading for students who frequently

moved schools for resources to help them adjust.

"We're conscious a number of students have high levels of mobility and there should be a loading attached because every time students start a new setting it's a settling-in process," Ms Leigh said.

The other loadings were to support low socio-economic students and those with limited English language proficiency - as was the creation of universal loadings for students with a disability.