

# ISCA SUBMISSION TO THE REVIEW OF THE LOW SES LOADING

## SUMMARY

- Only 33 schools in Australia are directly receiving the low socio-economic loading as per the *Australian Education Act 2013*.<sup>1</sup> The other 9,500 schools are either systemic schools or are in transition towards a loading
- The haste of implementation of the Schooling Resource Standard funding arrangements meant that data of a quality sufficiently robust to support a high stakes funding model was not available. The low socio-economic status loading is no exception.
- There are a number of significant problems with the low socio-economic status loading which are extensively detailed in this Submission.
- ISCA considers that the SEA quarters derived from ICSEA data are not an appropriate funding methodology for driving the current low socio-economic status loading as it is not a measure of low socio-economic status and the poor quality of data driving the loadings means that funding entitlements are not accurately reflecting the needs of educationally disadvantaged students in school communities.
- ISCA contends that while the concept of a loading to address socio-economic disadvantage is conceptually attractive, there are a number of reasons why limiting the Review to various permutations of a loading is not satisfactory.
- Formulating ISCA's response to the Review has been difficult as the Terms of Reference are extremely limiting and there is no information around the constraints under which the Review is conducted such as whether changes must be revenue neutral; whether legislative change is an option; the impact of proposed funding changes from 2018 and the Federation White Paper.
- It is ISCA's view that schools who are serving low SES communities should be provided with additional support to address the particular educational disadvantages faced by these students. Funding to support these students, however, needs to be based on reliable, robust, up-to-date data that cannot be subject to manipulation or interpretation. It should also be equitable across schools and schooling sectors.
- This Submission provides options to provide additional funding support for low socio-economic status students. However, these three options are not exhaustive and do not represent the preferred position of ISCA or its members. The options serve merely to highlight that there is an extensive range of options to address low socio-economic status disadvantage.

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<sup>1</sup> Australian Government Department of Education – July 2014 Payment - Funding Estimator