

**Monday 30 April, 2018**

## **ASG supports education reform but urges government to listen to Gonski critics**

ASG will closely observe how state and territory governments will work together to deliver a better education system for Australian students, teachers and families.

Businessman, David Gonski, delivered the findings of his second major review into Australia's education system, which highlights a declining and widespread fall in academic performance across the country.

In the report, Gonski 2.0, he says "Australian education has failed a generation of Australian school children by not enabling them to reach their full learning potential.

"Dealing with this situation requires a significant shift in aspirations, approach, and practice, to focus on and accelerate individual learning growth for all students, whether they are lower performers, middle ranking or academically advanced," said Mr Gonski.

ASG CEO Tim Mitchell-Adams says improved education outcomes are necessary, however, the government should consider all stakeholder views before implementing the report recommendations.

"The federal government has been quick to come off the block agreeing to implement all of the report recommendations, and is urging state and territory governments to back the reforms.

"There's been saturated media coverage, most of it echoing the key messages from the Gonski report, however, critics like Dr Jennifer Buckingham from the Centre for Independent Studies, point out the proposals 'completely misdiagnose the problems ailing our schools'. She also states the report ignored the educational evidence on how children learn and how best to teach them and fails to meet the terms of reference in several ways.

"It's universal that parents want the best for their children, so they have lots of opportunities and choice heading into the future, but fundamental to this is ensuring our education system delivers quality learning, a competitive and demand-driven curriculum and teachers who are supported to navigate change and encourage critical thinking."

In the report, Mr Gonski recommends a radical reform and outlines 23 recommendations.

They include:

- Changing the curriculum to set out learning progressions in each subject and tailoring student learning, replacing the A-E grading scale.
- Setting up a national inquiry to review Year 11 and Year 12 student assessment to ensure they have the skills they need for the future
- Schools prioritising teaching of critical thinking, creativity and social skills
- Creating an online tool for teachers to regularly assess where each student is at and how they are progressing
- Giving students a special student number to track their growth
- Allowing students to have a voice and provide feedback about their own education
- Implementing greater principal autonomy
- Providing more rewards for high-performing teachers
- Establishing a national educational research institute

Mr Mitchell-Adams adds some of the recommendations do echo key findings from the ASG Parents Report Card.

“The 2017 ASG Parents Report Card found that 69 percent of parents believe schools should do more to teach their child about building social skills. This is becoming an increasingly important element in education, shifting from home to school responsibility as perceptions of what equals academic success also change.

“If the government does forge ahead and develop a new national schooling agreement based on the Gonski report, parents will also want to make sure that they’re getting a return on their child’s education. In the last decade, education costs have soared by 61 percent and some parents can spend more than \$475,000 to send their child to a private school from k-12 in metropolitan Australia as revealed in the 2018 ASG Planning for Education Index”.

Mr Gonski will brief education ministers at a special COAG meeting this Friday.

Access the [full report](#) for more information.

Ends.

To arrange interview with ASG CEO Tim Mitchell-Adams please contact:

ASG Communications  
03 9276 7520 / 0448 167 578  
[ASGCommunications@asg.com.au](mailto:ASGCommunications@asg.com.au)

### **Editor’s notes**

ASG offers a range of education scholarship plans, which provide families with a tax effective means of saving for future education costs. ASG also offers families with a payment service that takes the financial pressure off parents, families and guardians. It allows them to pay school fees, and other education related expenses as billed by the school in manageable instalments over the year.

ASG is a member owned organisation, helping to create educational opportunities for children. ASG has been helping families for more than 40 years. During this time, more than 540,000 children have been enrolled with ASG and more than \$2.8 billion in education benefits and scholarship payments returned to members. For more information visit: [www.asg.com.au](http://www.asg.com.au)