

# You can't compare, claims Year 4 teacher

LAUREN NOVAK

YEAR 4 teacher Kathy Lloyd does not want her school or her performance as a teacher directly compared with others.

The Linden Park Primary School acting deputy principal said it was unfair to compare schools from different economic or social backgrounds.

"There's too many factors to consider ... it could give the wrong message," she said.

"It would also be very detrimental to students' self-esteem to be compared to other schools."

Ms Lloyd said top teachers already could apply through a special program for increased pay based on their work and experience.

"The concern I have with the concept of performance-based pay is if you're paid according to how your students achieve. Naturally if you're in some of the more affluent schools ... that's not fair for someone who's just as skilled in another (less affluent) area," she said.

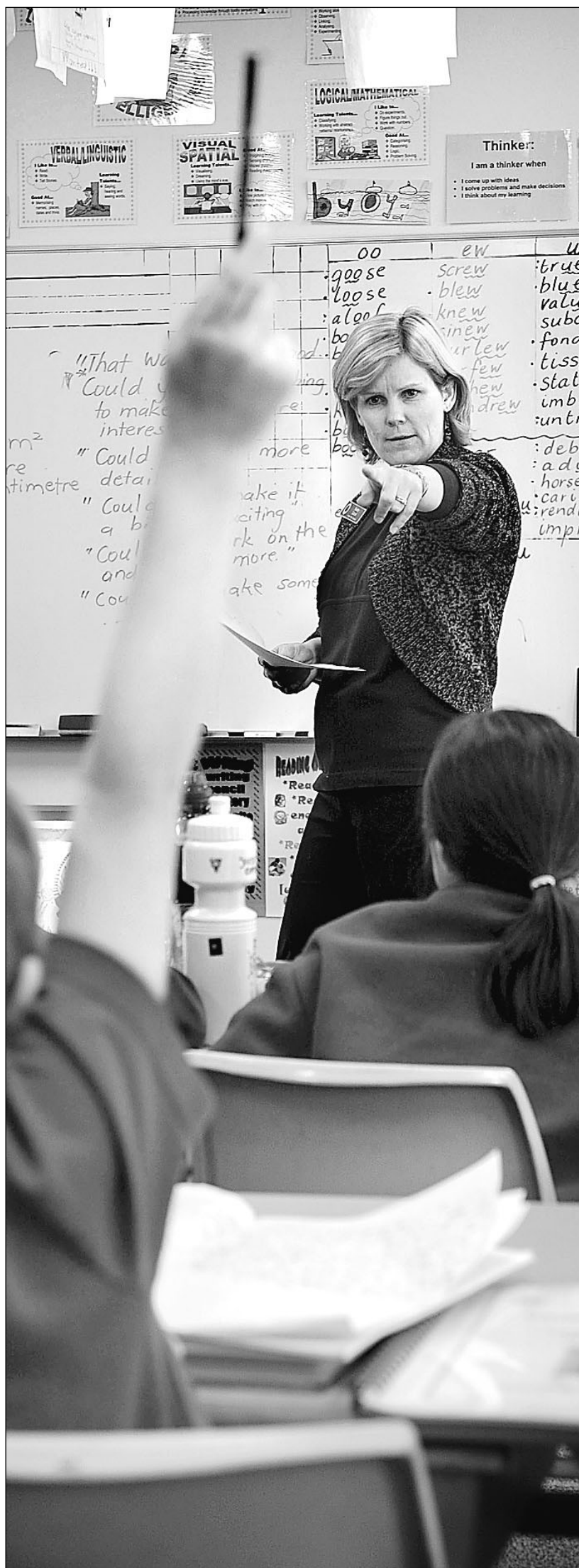
The state's peak primary school body meanwhile says no history subjects and limited science subjects should be taught in the first three years of schooling under a national curriculum.

In its submission to the Federal Government's National Curriculum Board, the Australian Primary Principals Association says teachers' focus should be on English and mathematics in a child's early learning years.

Achievements expected of students in history and science subjects from reception to Year 2 also should be "less substantial" than those expected in English and mathematics.

The association represents more than 7200 public, Catholic and independent primary schools.

The Rudd Government has committed to introducing a uniform national curriculum in English, maths, the sciences and history.



**POINTING FINGER:** Linden Park Primary School's acting deputy primary principal Kathy Lloyd in the classroom yesterday. Picture: ALICE PROKOPEC

# Ranking us 'just isn't fair'

LAUREN NOVAK  
EDUCATION REPORTER

PUBLIC reporting of schools' performances should not be used to rank institutions, South Australian teacher and parent groups say.

While they have welcomed the Rudd Government's plans to make information on schools' performance more transparent - announced yesterday - there are calls to avoid a "league table" system and ensure a broad range of criteria are presented.

These could include grades, attendance and retention rates, but should be put into context with socio-economic factors, number of students and the amount of money spent on each student.

However, the state branch of the Australian Education Union has warned comparing schools' performance would be like "comparing apples with pineapples".

Earlier this year, Federal Education Minister Julia Gillard visited New York where school report cards offer parents graded comparisons of schools.

While Ms Gillard said that Australia could introduce something

similar, she did not go so far as advocating ranking of schools.

In his address to the National Press Club yesterday, Prime Minister Kevin Rudd revealed plans to introduce performance-based pay for teachers and principals.

The union does not support this, but the South Australian Primary and Secondary Principals Associations and the SA Association of State School Organisations have welcomed the move towards incentive pay.

SAASSO executive director David Knuckey said it was "absolutely essential" to retaining quality teachers and recruiting promising new staff.

However, teachers should not be pitted against each other or judged only by their students' grades either, Mr Knuckey said.

Public school students are graded using an A to E system made compulsory for grade 1 to 10 in 2007.

SAPSPA president Steve Portlock said pay should be set on factors such as improvement in students, knowledge of the curriculum, community contribution and, to an extent, experience.

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## WHAT YOU TOLD ADELAIDENOW

I agree with Rudd. If a company performs badly who is held accountable? The boss. So if a school is performing badly, whose head should be on the chopping block? The principal. Principals get it way too easy. They need to run the show, not just turn up and get paid!

Posted by: John of Paradise

Great plan. So instead of giving students the grades they deserve, everyone will just get a pass so the principal looks good on paper. I could understand if there was some sort of independent state/national test that had to be done every year. Then you could look at holding the principal responsible.

Posted by: Dave of Adelaide

The majority of principals would do a great job in all areas. But let's be fair, it's hard to do a good job when you are not allowed to hire or fire your own staff, run your own finances (and have your bank account interest pinched) and have to put up with the bungling fools that run our education system in this state.

Posted by: Peter Grizzwold of Adelaide

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