

NEWS BY NUMBERS

* 86 per cent of 36,300 international students say they are satisfied with their educational experience in Australia.

* 78 per cent of respondents said Australia was their first country of choice for study.

* 37 per cent considered the reputation of the education system as the most important factor in choosing Australia as a place to study.

SOURCE: International Student Barometer Report, Universities Australia

* 83 per cent of 683 principals report that their first experience as an educational leader was in a rural school.

* 46 per cent say they had no preparation for leadership.

SOURCE: Rural principals survey, Flinders University

ONLINE | Parents' backgrounds, education on My School Website fuels funding fears

INDEPENDENT schools are becoming increasingly concerned financial data on the controversial My School 2.0 website will be used in a government review of public and private school funding.

Association of Independent Schools of South Australia executive director Garry Le Duff said schools were aware of comments made by politicians that financial data might be used for the next funding period which starts in 2014.

The revamped My School 2.0, controlled by the Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority, will

NIE
MANAGER
**MARTINA
SIMOS**



for the first time have details of a school's financial data and details of the education and occupations of its parent community.

The website, which goes live this Friday, will also allow the community to compare the progress of students in similar schools using data from the 2008-10 literacy and numeracy results.

"The schools are very sensitive that there's a school funding review going on and certainly some politicians are making reference to the fact the data on the website will inform the funding debate," Mr Le Duff said.

"Schools don't have confidence in ACARA's communication that says this data is valid and accurate... their perception is that there have been lots of problems with the data."

"But ACARA had given assurance... it's not being used as part of a funding formula."

He said feedback from schools showed they were

also concerned the new formula used to calculate the Index of Community Socio-Educational Advantage was not communicated properly to parents.

The ICSEA this year was calculated using information provided by parents when enrolling their students or during national literacy and numeracy tests - rather than Australian Census data.

"I would doubt that the majority of parents knew that their education and occupation background would be used (to calculate the ICSEA)," he said.

An ACARA spokesman

said it had communicated and worked "extensively" with independent schools to "collect and verify" data as well as details of the occupation and education of a school's parent community.

"This information is used for a number of purposes, including ACARA's development of ICSEA values, which are used to provide a fair and meaningful way to compare the performance of schools that serve students from similar backgrounds," he said. "This information has been used to calculate ICSEA values for schools that are more precise than those that

rely on Australian Census data alone."

SA Association of State School Organisations director David Knuckey said My School 2.0 would help parents track their child's progress and monitor funding in schools.

"Knowing how school funds are spent will empower parents and generate an accountability which has been lacking in our public education system," he said.

Schools Minister Peter Garrett said he wanted the site to include schools' assets such as term deposits and physical assets in the future.

Principal brought school back from the brink



CANDICE KELLER

STEPHEN Measday is seen as something of a saviour at Keightcot Farm Primary School.

When he took over as principal six years ago, enrolments were down and the school faced closure.

Now it is a hub of activity where students, staff and parents enjoy a vibrant school and bright future.

By offering specialist learning courses, restructuring the leadership team, and modernising facilities and policies, Mr Measday has revitalised the Wynn Vale site.

"I am a great believer that the culture of a school community shapes the outcomes for the students," he said. "We also place no limits on what might be possible."

This commitment has already

teachnow... 2011 SA PUBLIC TEACHING AWARDS

earned Mr Measday accolades through the National Excellence in Teaching Awards for Innovation.

Mr Measday has also set up international exchange opportunities, teacher training and sister school links, and drawn from international education programs.

"Students travel and communicate internationally and across Australia, and have a very broad range of learning opportunities that will support their learning for life," Mr Measday said.

The Advertiser and the State Government will celebrate educators through the 2011 SA Public Teaching Awards. Winners receive up to \$20,000 each in training and development.

Nomination details will be released soon. If you know an inspiring educator, email details to hoodl@theadvertiser.com.au

BRIGHT FUTURE: Inspirational head Stephen Measday with students at Keightcot Farm Primary.

Picture: CALUM ROBERTSON