

EDITORIAL

The Review of Funding for Schooling released an emerging issues paper in December, following ‘a preliminary stakeholder listening tour’ during which the review panel heard submissions from more than 70 key educational groups in each state and territory. According to chair David Gonski, the paper aims not to set out any of the panel’s conclusions at this stage, but to ‘play a role in generating ideas and engaging all relevant parties in an informed debate on funding for schooling, and...to highlight particular areas that stakeholders and interested parties may wish to comment on.’ It would appear, however, that the panel has drawn one conclusion: ‘To provide a basis for discussion in the community, the panel feels it important to state its focus of’ – or should that be on? – ‘considerations of equity for the review. It believes that equity should ensure that differences in educational outcomes are not the result of differences in wealth, income, power or possessions. The panel does not intend it to mean that all students are the same or will achieve the same outcomes, but rather that they will not be prevented from achieving their maximum potential because of their background or family circumstances.’ The panel’s focus on equity will no doubt be welcomed across all schools, but whether it will lead the panel to recommend total retooling to build a fundamentally new needs-based funding model or a cosmetic rebadging of the existing model remains to be seen. What is certain is that it will need to address problems with the socioeconomic status funding model and the average government school recurrent costs measure. Submissions to the Review of Funding for Schooling are open until 31 March. The panel will provide its final report to the government later this year. **1**

FAST FACTS

Cardiovascular disease death rate in Chicago food deserts (areas with few supermarkets and many fast-food outlets): 11.07 per 1,000 people.
 In areas with many supermarkets and few fast-food outlets: 5.72 per 1,000 people.
 Cancer death rate in Chicago food deserts: 9.73 per 1,000 people.
 In areas with many supermarkets and few fast-food outlets: 6.68 per 1,000 people.
 Diabetes death rate in Chicago food deserts: 1.27 per 1,000 people.
 In areas with many supermarkets and few fast-food outlets: 0.56 per 1,000 people.
 Distance in Chicago food deserts: the nearest supermarket is roughly twice as far as the nearest fast-food venue.
 Demographics in Chicago food deserts: up to one in three residents are school students.
 Impact of food deserts: increased distance to a supermarket may contribute to obesity, lower quality of life and increased rates of premature death due to disease.

Source: Gallagher, M. (2006). Examining the Impact of Food Deserts on Public Health in Chicago. A research report sponsored by LaSalle Bank. Chicago, IL: Mari Gallagher Research & Consulting Group.

QUICK QUIZ

1. What are the six questions your students should answer as a way to enable their learning?
2. The National Assessment Program – ICT shows that students use computers most often for what purpose?
3. According to Joanne Orlando, there’s a major obstacle to computer-based learning. What is it?
4. Nathan Bailey says collaborative learning technologies spell the end of the traditional school. True or false?
5. Government schools can be granted charitable status for tax purposes. True or false?
6. Government schools can be granted deductible gift recipient status for a scholarship, school building or library fund. True or false?
7. When is the new national curriculum expected to be implemented?
8. Will the delayed new My School website report on school assets?
9. Who’s growing faster, Google or Facebook?
10. US internet traffic is dominated by video, peer-to-peer filesharing and the web, but what are the percentages?

Answers: 1. Do I feel accepted; am I comfortable; can I make mistakes; is this information useful to me; can I do this; and do I know what is expected? 2. social communications; 3. government-mandated pencil-and-paper tests; 4. false; 5. false; 6. true; 7. ‘substantially’ from the end of 2013 over three years; 8. no, only recurrent expenditure; 9. Facebook; 10. video accounts for 51 per cent, peer-to-peer filesharing for 23 per cent and the web for 23 per cent.

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