



## MEDIA RELEASE

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### **The conversation we need to be having about school equity funding**

The announcement that the government is moving to target equity funding to students instead of schools is “really exciting stuff”, says NZSTA President Lorraine Kerr.

“The importance of this announcement cannot be overstated in terms of the mindshift it signals within the school sector. It’s only a small part of schools’ total budget, but it’s hugely important in terms of how we are seeing the education system evolve.

“The way we’ve provided equity funding until now has not been easy to reconcile with our ideals of being driven by the students’ needs. The work ahead of us over the next 12 to 18 months is to build and implement an equity funding process that provides the right balance of stability and flexibility, so that the extra support is in place for the students who need it, when they need it, whatever school they go to.

“Parents and communities will need to start looking at the actual educational progress students are making when they try to assess school quality, instead of the hoary old decile labels, which have been really misleading.”

“It is going to take everyone a while to really get their heads around it, because the real significance of this change is that we’re recognising that funding belongs with the students, and that schools are kaitiaki - caretakers of that funding,” she says. “It’s not ours as of right, it’s ours to use in the service of our students.

“Real change is hard work, and we all have some hard work ahead of us to ensure that the new system does not replicate the problems of labelling and superficial reporting that has dogged the decile system,” Lorraine says. “Under the new regime we’re not talking about ‘low-decile schools’ any more, we’re starting to talk about the students who need extra help and support, no matter what school they go to.

“At last! Hallelujah! This is the conversation we really need to be having.”

### **Ends**

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