

# MEDIA RELEASE

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## *Leadership standards the key to preparing better principals*

Australia must implement school leadership standards if it wants well-prepared principals, say experts from one of the world's leading educational research centres.

Dr Lawrence Ingvarson and Michelle Anderson, Research Fellows at the Australian Council for Educational Research (ACER), will present the findings of their international review of leadership standards to the ACER annual research conference on Monday.

Traditional methods for preparing school leaders do not stand up in the changing context within which school leaders work, characterised by increasing complexity in expectations of school leaders and greater demands for accountability, say the researchers.

They argue that the quality of school leadership has seldom mattered more, and yet it has been possible to gain school principal positions with little formal training in school leadership, because Australia has no systematic program for preparing school leaders across most states and territories.

"There are a lot and attempts being made in Australia, as elsewhere, to use standards to guide professional learning. What we question is how well the standards are linked to professional learning and whether the profession could play a stronger role. To this end, Australia must act urgently if it wants well-prepared principals," says Michelle Anderson.

"The teaching profession must play a strong role in not only developing, but operating, a national system for the professional development of its school leaders and principals. The system must be guided by profession-wide standards and it must provide a certification that holds respect and credibility with all education authorities as a valid indicator of a principal's demonstrated leadership abilities," says Dr Ingvarson.

Dr Lawrence Ingvarson is a Principal Research Fellow, and Michelle Anderson is a Senior Research Fellow, in the Teaching and Learning Program at the Australian Council for Education Research (ACER).

The ACER Research Conference 2007, on the theme *The Leadership Challenge: Improving Learning in Schools*, takes place in Melbourne from 12 to 14 August.

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