

# Media Statement

14 January 2016



Independent Schools  
Council of Australia

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## **Independent schools have a much greater diversity of fees than often portrayed**

The end of the January school holidays is a time when many financial institutions launch glossy marketing promotions to encourage parents to save for their children's future schooling by using education focused savings products.

The Independent Schools Council of Australia (ISCA) supports parents using sensible strategies to help provide for their children's schooling, but cautions them that some of the school fee estimates quoted in the marketing material of these products are not representative of the vast majority of Independent schools.

For example, last year education contribution fund provider Australian Scholarships Group (ASG), suggested the total cost of non-government schooling (K-Yr 12) for an average family could be up to \$1 million dollars.

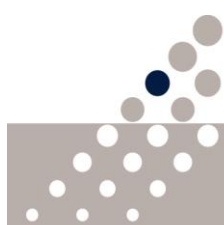
ISCA Executive Director Colette Colman said that "while ASG admit their school fee figures 'represent the upper ranges that parents can reasonably expect to pay,' they neglect to show just how small a proportion of Australia's Independent schools are actually charging the kind of fees that could contribute to those sort of cumulative costs."

"ASG also stated that in 2015 the national metropolitan upper-range figure parents could expect to pay in secondary school fees was \$19,014 per annum", she said. "However, our data shows that in 2014 the median Australian metropolitan Independent school fee was \$5,887 per annum. Nationally, nearly three quarters of metropolitan Independent schools are charging below \$10,000 per annum.

Ms Colman went on to say that "fees in Independent schools vary greatly, with the majority of them much more affordable than modelling like ASG's suggests. In addition, it is worth noting that there are numerous ways parents can save on costs; with many Independent schools offering scholarships, all-inclusive fees, and discounts for siblings or lump sum payments. We'd strongly urge parents to do their own research on the fees of schools that interest them."

ISCA's school fee information is derived from data of fees collected by Australian Independent schools in 2014, and reflects the great diversity that can be found across schools and between states and territories.

ASG state their school fee estimates have been derived from a 2013 survey (and CPI adjusted to 2015) of 7,000 of their parent members, which asked them to estimate various costs that they paid for their children's schooling. They state these are a guide only and do not guarantee that they will represent actual costs. Parents should take note of this.



## Australian Scholarships Group (ASG) Estimated metropolitan fees-only Independent school costs for 2015<sup>1</sup>

|           | National | NSW      | VIC      | QLD      | SA       | WA       | TAS      | NT  | ACT      |
|-----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|-----|----------|
| Primary   | \$10,837 | \$13,358 | \$11,757 | \$8,321  | \$8,071  | \$8,071  | \$8,321  | n/a | \$11,757 |
| Secondary | \$19,014 | \$22,280 | \$21,443 | \$14,619 | \$14,667 | \$15,492 | \$15,972 | n/a | \$15,972 |

## ISCA overview of fees charged by Australian metropolitan Independent schools in 2014

### Median<sup>2</sup> fee per student (Metro only)

|                     | National | NSW     | VIC     | QLD     | SA      | WA      | TAS     | NT                   | ACT     |
|---------------------|----------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|----------------------|---------|
| Median <sup>2</sup> | \$5,887  | \$5,590 | \$8,052 | \$5,658 | \$4,451 | \$5,229 | \$4,730 | \$2,581 <sup>3</sup> | \$6,733 |

### Ranges of metropolitan Independent school fees (including primary, secondary and combined schools) 2014<sup>4</sup>

|                     | National | NSW | VIC | QLD | SA  | WA  | TAS | NT               | ACT |
|---------------------|----------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|------------------|-----|
| \$20,000 and above  | 10%      | 12% | 17% | 2%  | 1%  | 10% | 0%  | 0% <sup>3</sup>  | 0%  |
| \$15,000 - \$19,999 | 9%       | 7%  | 15% | 6%  | 15% | 6%  | 0%  | 0% <sup>3</sup>  | 18% |
| \$10,000 - \$14,999 | 10%      | 11% | 11% | 12% | 6%  | 2%  | 33% | 0% <sup>3</sup>  | 6%  |
| \$5,000 - \$9,999   | 29%      | 25% | 26% | 37% | 21% | 35% | 17% | 19% <sup>3</sup> | 47% |
| \$0,000 - \$4,999   | 43%      | 45% | 30% | 44% | 57% | 46% | 50% | 81% <sup>3</sup> | 29% |

<sup>1</sup> The figures above present ASG's estimates specifically for school fees for 2015, and were taken from their website. They state that costs "represent the upper ranges that parents can reasonably expect to pay," and attribute the source of data to a member survey conducted in 2013 and adjusted by CPI to 2015 values.

<sup>2</sup> Median denotes the dollar value lying at the midpoint of the range of fees charged.

<sup>3</sup> For statistical purposes no Northern Territory schools are regarded as metropolitan. Therefore figures quoted here are for the entire North Territory.

<sup>4</sup> Percentages may not add up to 100 due to rounding.

ENDS

Contact: Barry Wallett 0411 278 612