

INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS MATTER

Independent schools are a key part of the education landscape in Australia and sit alongside government and Catholic schools in contributing to Australian society and the safety, learning and wellbeing of Australian children.

Independent schools represent a significant number of families who demonstrate great confidence in the sector.

- 667,259 students attend an Independent school – that is one in six Australian school students and more than one in five secondary students.
- Independent school enrolments have grown by 20 percent, or more than 105,000 students, in the last ten years - the highest growth rate of any school sector.
- In 2021, Independent school enrolments increased by 3.1% (19,888 students).
- An overwhelming 82% of Independent school parents said their school had adjusted well to the pandemic.

The Independent sector represents families at all income levels.

- Almost half of Independent schools charge fees of \$5,000 or less.
- Only 10 percent of Independent schools charge fees above \$20,000.
- Growth in the Independent sector is greatest in low-fee schools.

The independent sector makes a significant financial contribution to the Australian economy.

- Parents contribute \$7.65 billion annually through school fees.
- Nearly 90 percent of all capital development in Independent schools is funded by parents.

To maintain the standard of choice, diversity and contribution offered by the Independent schools, the sector is seeking additional support.

Support for wellbeing

- Ensuring that the wellbeing and mental health needs of staff and students and the impacts of COVID-19, are addressed in low-fee schools.
- Making schools COVID-safe places for students and staff by investing in capital upgrades.

Support for Reform

- Enabling Independent schools to implement existing and new national education reforms.

Support for Choice

- Ensuring schools hard hit by changes to funding methodologies remain accessible to families through a manageable transition to agreed funding levels.
- Strengthening education by increasing funding to regional, rural and remote schools, focusing on boarding and particularly indigenous boarding schools.
- Supporting growth in low-fee schools by contributing to capital funding.

Australian government investment in these areas will help ensure the ongoing provision of quality education and the safety, wellbeing and success of Australian students through a resilient and diverse Independent school sector.