



MEDIA RELEASE

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FOCUS ON EDUCATION, DIVISION

With the review of the National School Reform Agreement underway, the national peak body for Independent schools is calling for a focus on education and collaboration following recent publicity about school funding.

Independent Schools Australia (ISA) Chief Executive Officer, Graham Catt said, “We fully support the Government’s objective of full implementation of the current funding model to ensure that all schools are funded to 100 per cent of the Schooling Resource Standard.

“There are 670,000 students, their families, and 115,000 passionate educators in our sector. They don’t understand why their schools seem to be under attack when we should be focused on ensuring all Australian children receive the best education our nation can deliver.

“Working collaboratively across school sectors and with governments is the only way we will find solutions to the challenges we collectively face and improve our education system overall.

“Recent public commentary about non-government schools being overfunded by \$3.2 billion is unhelpful and misleading. There are 367 Independent schools out of 1209 (about 30 per cent) still receiving funding above their SRS this year in the funding methodology, and they are all in the process of transitioning down to their entitlement.

“\$3.2 billion reflects the total reduction in funding to all non-government schools transitioning down over nine years from 2020 to 2029. Funding to these schools will reduce by \$326 million in 2023, by another \$282 million in 2024 and by 2029 all non-government schools will have completed the transition process.

“This situation arose because of the changes in the way that schools’ funding allocations – in all school sectors – changed. Some schools were funded below their SRS entitlement and funding needed to go up, and some schools were funded above their SRS entitlement and their funding needed to go down.

“The Government provided a transition period to help schools manage tough decisions about staffing and fees as they adjusted to their reduced funding levels and to minimise negative impacts on students’ education and teachers.”

Non-government schools are an integral part of Australia’s education system and educate more than a third of Australia’s four million students.

Half of the schools in the Independent sector charge annual average fees less than \$5,300. There are many that charge no fees at all and serve highly-disadvantaged groups including

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities, people with disability and those at risk of disengaging from education altogether.

“We fully support the objectives of the National School Reform Agreement review, and we look forward to a constructive national conversation about how to provide all Australian families with choice and improve education for all students,” said Mr Catt

ISA Media Contact: Anne Walker, M 0419 505889, E comms@isa.edu.au