



# MEDIA RELEASE

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## COMMONWEALTH TEACHING BURSARIES SHOULD BE AVAILABLE TO TEACHERS IN ALL SCHOOL SECTORS

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The Commonwealth Government's new teaching bursary program is a welcome investment in addressing teacher shortages, but Independent Schools Australia (ISA) has called on the Commonwealth Government to review the decision to exclude teachers who find employment in non-government schools around the country.

Nearly one third of schools in Australia are non-government schools.

ISA Chief Executive Officer Mr Graham Catt said today, "The intent of the bursaries is to help address the critical teacher shortages across Australia, and those shortages exist in every school sector.

"Excluding graduate teachers who go on to work at a non-government school favours one sector over another, instead of supporting all students and schools according to need."

"Independent schools serve some of the most disadvantaged families and communities in Australia and they are crying out for more teachers.

"In many communities, an Independent school is the only real educational option for families," he said.

Examples include Majority Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander schools, remote, special and special assistance schools.

Limiting the scholarship program only to government schools limits the opportunity to develop teachers that will assist in meeting high levels of need in schools that serve highly educationally disadvantaged students.

"The challenges schools face are common across all school sectors, and policy initiatives to address them should be sector neutral," said Mr Catt.

ISA is the national peak body representing 1,209 Independent schools with 688,638 enrolled students (full time equivalent), accounting for approximately 17 per cent of Australian school enrolments and a workforce of 115,090 people.

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