



MEDIA RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

DATE: DECEMBER 2023

'IMPROVING OUTCOMES FOR ALL' WILL NEED GENUINE COMMITMENT TO SUPPORTING ALL SCHOOLS

National peak body Independent Schools Australia (ISA) has welcomed the release of 'Improving Outcomes for All: The Report of the Independent Expert Panel's Review to Inform a Better and Fairer Education System.'

ISA Chief Executive Officer, Graham Catt said, "Now this report has been released, we hope to see the public discourse move on from misrepresentations of Independent schools – and their students and parents – to a genuine dialogue about how we can all deliver the best education outcomes for every Australian school student, regardless of background or sector.

"Independent schools are an integral part of Australia's education system, educating almost 690,000 students, (17 per cent of all school students nationally) and employing 115,000 passionate educators."

Half of the schools in the Independent sector charge annual average fees of 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, students with disability and those at risk of disengaging from education altogether.

"The Expert Panel visited 92 schools while conducting their review and we were pleased to see the report highlight the outstanding achievements of Independent schools in addressing some of the greatest challenges in school education," said Mr Catt.

ISA's submission recommended that the primary focus should be on what supports schools put in place to support students, more than targets, and we remain concerned that a detrimental 'one size fits all' approach will be adopted to the measurement of learning and outcomes. The report recommends several new data collections that would be challenging to implement and have a significant impact on the workload of teachers as well concerns as to how data may be used.

"We continue to support the Commonwealth Government's objective of full implementation of the current funding model to ensure that all schools – regardless of sector – are funded to 100 per cent of the Schooling Resource Standard," said Mr Catt.

As negotiations commence on the next National School Reform Agreement, we urge all education ministers to remember that national educational reform of this scale will only succeed if it engages, involves, and provides resources to all school sectors.

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