



# MEDIA RELEASE

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## GOVERNMENT MUST RULE OUT PARENT TAX CHANGE

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Independent Schools Australia (ISA) has welcomed comments confirming that the Federal Government is not considering a tax change that would punish parents and school communities and families who want to donate towards new classrooms and support scholarships.

Assistant Education Minister Anthony Chisholm told Senate Estimates that the Productivity Commission's recommendation to remove deductible gift recipient (DGR) status from school philanthropy was "not government policy" and "not something we are considering".

DGR status allows people to claim school building fund contributions as a tax deduction.

"Independent schools rely on communities and parents to fund the building of classrooms and scholarships to those in need," ISA Chief Executive Officer Graham Catt said. "While we welcome the comments from Assistant Minister Chisholm, thousands of schools and families need the government to go one step further and categorically rule this proposal out."

Two-thirds of Independent schools, which educate one in six Australian students, receive no government funding for capital expenditure. These schools, most of which charge annual fees less than \$5,500, need to expand to meet a growing number of students.

"More Australian parents are choosing Independent schools to meet their child's needs," Mr Catt said. "If the government does not pay for their buildings, they should continue to support the community, alumni and parents who step in to do so."

"The Productivity Commission's draft recommendation makes absolutely no sense and has created a great deal of uncertainty and anxiety for our school communities. The government should take it off the table."

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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