



MEDIA RELEASE

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TEACHING SCHOLARSHIPS MUST SUPPORT ALL SCHOOLS

Independent Schools Australia (ISA) said the Albanese Government's commitment to addressing Australia's teacher shortage through the \$160 million Commonwealth Teaching Scholarships Program is step in the right direction but doesn't go far enough.

ISA strongly urges the government to ensure that these scholarships are sector-blind and accessible to all schools, including Independent and Catholic schools, to ensure all students benefit from high-quality teachers.

ISA CEO Graham Catt said that while investing in the teaching workforce is essential, excluding Independent schools from this program is short-sighted and fails to address teacher shortages across the entire education system.

"This is a positive initiative to attract more people into teaching, and we fully support efforts to strengthen the workforce. But restricting these scholarships to government schools ignores the fact that teacher shortages impact all sectors, government, Independent, and Catholic," Mr. Catt said.

"Independent schools educate more than 716,000 students across Australia, including 140,000 in regional and remote areas, where teacher shortages are particularly severe. Many of these schools serve students with disability, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students, and disadvantaged communities. Every school sector must have access to well-trained, high-quality teachers."

Mr. Catt emphasised that addressing teacher shortages should not be about dividing school sectors but about ensuring every child, in every school, has access to excellent teachers.

"We recognise the important role that government schools play in our education system, and we support their need for strong teaching staff. But Independent and Catholic schools also contribute significantly to Australia's education landscape, and policies like this must be designed to strengthen the entire system, not create unnecessary division," he said.

"The government must ensure that all schools, regardless of sector, can benefit from this program. We need to encourage more people into teaching across the board, not limit their opportunities."

ISA's School Choice Counts campaign continues to call for a sector-blind, needs-based approach to national education policy that strengthens all schools and supports all students.

“We urge the government to work with all education sectors on a fair and inclusive approach to teacher workforce challenges. Australia’s students deserve nothing less,” Mr. Catt said.

Visit - schoolchoicecounts.isa.edu.au

ISA is the national peak body representing 1,216 Independent schools with close to 720,000 enrolled students, accounting for approximately 17 per cent of Australian school enrolments and a workforce of 122,000 people. Independent schools are diverse, serving a range of different communities across Australia.

For more information – www.isa.edu.au

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