



Independent Schools
Council of Australia

Strategic Plan 2014 - 2016

The Independent Schools Council of Australia (ISCA) is the peak national body covering the independent schools sector. It comprises the State and Territory Associations of Independent Schools (AIS). Through these Associations it represents a sector with 1,100 schools and some 560,000 students accounting for some 15 per cent of Australian school enrolments. Independent schools are diverse in nature and serve a wide range of communities.

Our Vision

That ISCA is a strong, effective representative of independent schools, working closely with member associations to promote choice, diversity and partnership in education and advocating for the provision of ongoing, sustainable levels of Australian Government support.

Our Mission

ISCA serves and supports its members and through them independent schools by:

- being the leading national advocate of independent schooling in Australia
- providing strong and effective representation of the independent schooling sector to Government and other stakeholders
- promoting choice, diversity and autonomy
- highlighting the contribution of independent schools to Australia through quality education and innovation
- securing the appropriate level of Australian Government support for students in independent schools

Strategic Priorities

Strategic Priority 1: Be an influential participant in the national education agenda

Key Strategies

- Influence policy development and public understanding of independent schools by providing credible, well-researched and considered advice and advocacy
- Influence the implementation of new Australian Government funding arrangements to ensure the interests of independent schools are protected and enhanced
- Highlight to government and officials the complexity of the new funding arrangements and the significance of changed funding arrangements for stand-alone independent schools
- Engage with the Australian Government as it examines options for refining school funding arrangements, including through effective participation in key reviews
- Heighten awareness of the circumstances of independent schools to government and officials to influence policy outcomes during the initial phases of the new Government, including any policy changes to the Students First Support Fund
- Provide strong sector advocacy on Australian Government policy proposals
- Participate in national curriculum development and support sector implementation
- Ensure students with special needs are a focus in policy debates
- Undertake strategic research that supports the independent schools sector

Strategic Priority 2: Build effective relationships with key education stakeholders

Key Strategies

- Maintain positive and proactive relationships with Australian Government Ministers, shadow Ministers and their staff, and key parliamentary committee members
- Engage regularly with Australian Government departments and national agencies
- Work in consultation with AISs to represent them and their member schools to strengthen the sector's national influence
- Promote a positive and balanced coverage of independent schools by the media
- Engage with other national organisations
- Communicate the independent sector's policy positions widely

Strategic Priority 3: Promote independent sector sustainability

Key Strategies

- Ensure the sector is prominently engaged throughout any funding review
- Establish agreed sector policy positions
- Prepare relevant and persuasive submissions and interventions on matters impacting on sustainability and growth
- Enhance public understanding of the contribution of independent schools

Strategic Priority 4: Engage in the political process on behalf of the sector

Key Strategies

- Participate in national education policy debates
- Seek bi-partisan support for the sustainability of the independent schools sector
- Build and maintain positive pro-active relationships with politicians and political parties
- Communicate the views of the sector to political opinion leaders
- Respond to the education policies of political parties or other stakeholders

Strategic Priority 5: Follow good practice in governance and management

Key Strategies

- Engage the Board of Management and AISs in the development of ISCA policies
- Create an efficient and productive working environment
- Report and account for organisational outcomes in a formal and transparent framework
- Embrace new technologies as a means to achieving organisational outcomes