

# Media Release

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Independent Schools  
Council of Australia

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## School Spending is an Investment in Future Prosperity

Whilst acknowledging the tight budgetary pressures on this week's Federal Budget, the Independent Schools Council of Australia (ISCA) argues that school funding should be seen as an incontestable investment in the future of our nation.

According to ISCA Executive Director, Dr Yvonne Luxford, "Budgetary Forward Estimates relying on the basic Consumer Price Index (CPI) post 2017 ignore the real costs of providing the quality of school education that our community does, and should, demand."

"Growing educational costs reflect the costs of attracting and retaining quality teachers and support staff, and ongoing investment in schools required by curriculum and technological change. Parents choosing non-government schools are continuing to make substantial financial commitments to meet the increase in the price of schooling their children, but we need to remember that this is a highly diverse sector with many parents limited in their capacity to contribute." Dr Luxford said.

"Higher needs students, especially students with disability, low English language proficiency and Indigenous students from remote areas, are enrolling in Independent schools up to three times the rate of general enrolment growth. The pre-Budget announcement of ongoing support for Indigenous boarding school students is a welcome recognition of the extra support required to improve educational outcomes in a supportive school environment."

"Meeting the needs of students with disability continues to be a challenge for all schools. Reinstatement of the *More Support for Students with Disabilities* program, along with ensuring funding for students with disability reaches those most in need such as special schools, would demonstrate an ongoing commitment to providing high quality, needs based education for all."

"Parents value choice in school selection, and seek the best possible schooling experience for their children. Independent schools help meet this demand for diversity in education delivery, especially in the growing provision of low and medium fee structures," Dr Luxford said.

"The Independent schools sector is still the fastest growing, with enrolments projected to expand by another 20 per cent or nearly 100,000 students by 2020. It comes as no surprise that escalating land and building costs are placing unprecedented financial pressure on school communities", she said.

"ISCA acknowledges the Australian Government's support of Independent schools and values its long term working relationship in developing efficient and effective policy seeking to achieve the highest quality of education for all students," she said.

"ISCA looks forward to working with the Australian Government and Education and Training Minister, the Hon Christopher Pyne MP, on future education expenditure priorities," Dr Luxford said.

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