

# Media Release

10 February 2017



Independent Schools  
Council of Australia

## **Time is Running Out for School Funding Certainty**

With the 2017 school year already well underway, the Independent Schools Council of Australia (ISCA) is increasingly alarmed that the Government has yet to provide any clarity on school funding arrangements for 2018.

ISCA Executive Director Colette Colman today said that, “The Commonwealth Government has made public assurances that the Independent school sector would be consulted on proposed changes to current school funding arrangements, yet with less than 12 months until the Government’s current funding commitment ends and potential new arrangements are due to take effect, we have not seen any details.”

Ms Colman also said that at a meeting in Canberra this week, Heads of Associations of Independent Schools from each state and territory highlighted the negative impact on schools and students the current uncertainty around future funding is having. “Parents make a commitment to enrolling their children in an Independent school based on an expectation of a predictable funding commitment by Government. Stand-alone Independent schools are highly vulnerable to funding changes as they do not have systemic backup. Sudden alterations to funding would affect schools’ capacity to plan their operations going forward with confidence.”

“Independent schools call on the Government to urgently resolve this issue.”

Students attending Independent schools receive significantly less government funding than government school students. On average almost 60 percent of Independent school funding is contributed by parents and the school community. This after-tax private contribution saves the Australian taxpayer more than \$4.3 billion every year.

Independent schools reflect the social, economic and ethnic diversity of Australia. In fact, 90 percent of Australian Independent schools are low to medium fee establishments, with the median fee of an Independent school being less than \$4,900. Independent schools also cater to specific groups of disadvantaged students including: high needs students with disability attending special schools; Indigenous students attending remote 100 percent Indigenous schools in Western Australia and the Northern Territory; and highly disadvantaged youth who have been excluded from both government and non-government schools attending Independent special assistance schools.

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