

Media Release

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Independent schools support the passage of funding reforms

The Independent Schools Council of Australia (ISCA) is today urging cross bench senators to pass the school funding reforms contained in the Australian Government's *Australian Education Amendment Bill 2017*.

ISCA Executive Director Colette Colman said that, "The Commonwealth's proposed funding reforms are an opportunity to take an important next-step towards a genuine needs-based sector-blind funding model that treats schools equitably across all sectors. The current funding arrangements are not consistently applied across schools and sectors and do not consistently direct funding to those schools most in need."

Ms Colman went on to say that, "Blocking the legislation would be a missed opportunity to address historical funding anomalies once and for all and open the way for future enhancements."

The Government's recent amendments to the Bill, as well as the assurances given to Parliament by Minister Birmingham mean that the Independent school sector is comfortable that the legislative changes are a positive development in school funding.

The move from a ten-year to six-year transition rate for the majority of Independent schools, which are transitioning up to 80% of their SRS entitlement, is a particularly positive outcome for the Independent sector.

These changes will have a positive impact on those Independent schools serving among the most educationally disadvantaged students in Australia. Independent special schools serving high need students with disability and majority-Indigenous schools will receive additional funding under the model, along with low-fee Independent schools serving low-SES communities.

Ms Colman also cautioned that Independent schools would be concerned at any delay to the legislation. "Given the lengthy lead times required for financial planning in schools, it is vital that Independent schools have a high degree of certainty about future funding arrangements," she said.

ENDS

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