



# APC Review

THE NATIONAL PUBLICATION OF  
AUSTRALIAN PARENTS COUNCIL INCORPORATED  
Print Post Approved No PP241613/00074

VOL. XLVIV NO 3  
October 2019  
Fourth School Term

## Contents

PAGE

Addressing anti-parent rhetoric	3
Parents and schools working together - Better!	4 - 5
Parents and teachers need to get along in the best interests of children	6 - 7
Review of disability loadings	7
Coalition responses to APC election questions	8 - 10
Consultation on draft religious freedom legislation	11
Review of NAPLAN reporting recommends focus on student improvement	12 - 13
<i>The Hunting</i> drama highlights image-based abuse issues for parents and schools	14 - 15
Attracting high achievers to teaching	15
School funding in five easy steps (no, really!)	16

**Editor:** Sharon Leifer

**Contributing writers:** Jo Lonergan AM, DCSG and Sharon Leifer

Editorial enquiries should be directed to [media@austparents.edu.au](mailto:media@austparents.edu.au)

The material printed in this publication may only be reproduced with permission of the editor.

APC Review is available via annual subscription, with discounts for multiple subscriptions. For annual subscription enquiries and other correspondence please contact the APC office:

**Email:** [admin@austparents.edu.au](mailto:admin@austparents.edu.au)

**Post:** PO Box 5011, Launceston, Tasmania 7520

**Telephone:** (03) 6334 8886

**Street address:** Holyman House, 52-54 Brisbane Street, Launceston, Tasmania, 7250

**Website:** [austparents.edu.au](http://austparents.edu.au)

## Australian Parents Council Incorporated

**President:** Shelley Hill, WA

**Treasurer:** Michael Hangan, Tas

**Vice Presidents:** Eveline Jona, Vic; Hugh Boulter, ACT

**Secretary:** David Williams

**Communications Manager:** Sharon Leifer

Further information about APC, including our affiliate member organisations around Australia, is available on our website: [austparents.edu.au](http://austparents.edu.au)

The Australian Parents Council is assisted by funding from the Australian Government through the Department of Education and Training.

*APC Review is prepared for publication and printed by **Bokprint**,  
69 Boland Street, Launceston, Tasmania 7250*



# Addressing anti-parent rhetoric

**Understanding how to achieve a productive and positive working home-school relationship has always been one of the main driving forces behind the Australian Parents Council. There is no end of evidence to support the real benefits for students that result from engaging parents in children's learning. There is also no doubt that working harmoniously together has clear advantages for all the other stakeholders in education.**

There are many examples of positive and effective home school co-operation, with teachers, schools, parents and carers working together to support students and help them achieve their best.

But the prevailing narrative, with criticism of parents dominating recent media stories, is a worrying turn of events.

While inappropriate behaviour is unacceptable, labelling parents as 'the problem' in schools devalues an important relationship. This is explained in detail in Kelly-Ann Allen's article 'Parents and children need to get along in the best interests of children', included in this APC Review.

APC is actively trying to address this wave of anti-parent rhetoric and move the debate beyond a blame game. We are supporting a more considered, mature and productive analysis and lobbying for practical measures to be introduced to improve communication

and co-operation between two of the most important figures in most children's lives...parents and teachers.

APC has called for greater recognition of the relationship between home and school in our recent joint submission with the Australian Council of State School Organisations (ACSSO) to the Melbourne Declaration Review panel saying 'the benefit of respectful and authentic parent-school partnerships to be highlighted and expanded. There is now unequivocal evidence that shows strong and robust relationships between school, teacher and family significantly improves the education and wellbeing of our children. It is a shared responsibility with the broader community.'

APC, ACSSO and Catholic School Parents Australia wrote a joint letter (included in this APC Review) calling on the federal government and education leaders to commit to improving the relationship between home and school.

APC has also launched a national parent survey about how schools, teachers and parents communicate and share information, and what is working and not working for parents. The survey, which is open to all parents in Australia and is anonymous, will help gauge the parent experience.

The survey looks at how open and welcoming schools are to families and is seeking specific feedback on parent teacher interviews, a parent-school charter and training for teachers.



Shelley Hill, APC President

Parents and carers are being asked to share their experiences, views and ideas as comments. The survey closes at the end of November.

Parents are not by-standers in children's education, and it is important their role is recognised and that they are part of this current public debate. There is a lot to be gained from making the important home-school dynamic function well, especially for the students, and that puts parents and teachers on the same page.

**APC 2019 Parent Survey -  
[www.surveymonkey.com/r/QFW999L](http://www.surveymonkey.com/r/QFW999L)**

#### Sources:

*Joint submission to the Melbourne Declaration Review panel [austparents.edu.au/wp-content/uploads/2019/03/Melbourne-Declaration-.pdf](http://austparents.edu.au/wp-content/uploads/2019/03/Melbourne-Declaration-.pdf)*

*[austparents.edu.au/wp-content/uploads/2019/09/APC-Media-Statement-National-Parent-Survey-2019-.pdf](http://austparents.edu.au/wp-content/uploads/2019/09/APC-Media-Statement-National-Parent-Survey-2019-.pdf)*



# Parents and schools working together – Better!



**The Australian Parents Council (APC) expressed concern about parents as the as a problem for schools and asked how collaboration and communication can be promoted between parents and schools in a joint media release with the Australian Council of State School Organisations (ACSSO) and Catholic School Parents Australia (CSPA) on 14 May 2019.**

They said:

‘We are extremely concerned about the impact of recent media statements portraying parents as aggressive, violent and the cause of stress for principals and teachers.

Violent or threatening behaviour by anyone is totally unacceptable and can never be condoned. We know that parents are involved in 5% of these kinds of incidents against staff in schools, and that is 5% too many.

But the recent media reports have exacerbated tension between two of the most significant parties in a young person’s school life – parents and teachers.

Instead, as leading organisations for parents and communities in our nation’s schools we ask how we can foster

and support good communication and collaboration, for the benefit of everyone invested in children’s education.

All parents and teachers, along with other selected professionals, have a shared responsibility for the wellbeing and development of young people.

Every day, parents and grandparents entrust their precious children to teachers and other school staff. In most cases, a child leaves their parent’s care by 9am and returns to their side around 3pm with little communication or knowledge of what happens in the hours between.

For many reasons, teachers often only communicate with parents for the first time when there is an issue. This is not a good place to begin such an important relationship.

We have long argued for more time and resources to be invested in engaging families.

The 50 years of research clearly proves that student outcomes improve and relationships between home and school are far more positive when schools invest in authentic family engagement.

This is why we believe it is time to invest

more in measures that would positively impact the relationships between teachers and parents and we expect the next Education Minister to take steps to do this.

We realise this isn’t going to happen overnight but we must work towards a future where school communities form strong partnerships with families and work together for the benefit of young people. Schools and parents need to be able to share each other’s knowledge of the strengths and challenges of each child.

Schools and parents need to talk openly and clearly about children, so they can respond effectively to any issues long before they become a concern.

We believe this would build trust, reduce frustration, and ultimately minimise unacceptable behaviour.

Violence is not just a school issue. It is a community issue. We need to deal with it through a community approach. Our parent organisations would welcome the opportunity to collaborate with principal and teacher organisations, as well as education departments and other education authorities to improve family engagement.’

## What the Education Minister might consider...

### Building Family/School Partnerships

As an essential ingredient of their plan to improve schooling outcomes the new government should consider a whole of government approach to building family/school partnerships.

The APC believes and research has demonstrated that schools where children and families engage with and support the school’s vision and mission for optimal learning outcomes and student well-being are fundamental to Australia’s thrust towards better schooling outcomes.

### Key propositions for a family/school partnership strategy:

Parents are the first educators of their children.

To fulfil their role as first educators parents need to:

- know that they have a key role to play in their children’s learning
- understand and be supported in that role throughout their children’s early years and their years of formal schooling
- be confident that they can make a difference.

Parents guide their children through crucial learning experiences in their early years.

Parents are the first and most important influence on a child’s attitudes and values and research shows that this influence continues beyond early

childhood into adulthood.

Schools are communities comprising staff, students and the parents of its students.

Principals, teachers and school staff must have a deep understanding of the relevant research regarding the role of students’ parents in supporting and enhancing their learning experiences and outcomes.

Principals and teachers must actively pursue the engagement of parents in the teaching and learning mission of the school to lift and support expectations of students and student outcomes and to enhance parent support of the teachers’ role.



Initial teacher training and ongoing professional development must include parent engagement research and strategies.

Parent engagement is a whole of school endeavour, led by school executives who are prepared to investigate the needs of their parents and students and to initiate and sustain those parent engagement processes which best suit their school community.

### The role of the Australian Government

The Australian Government has nominated *Engaging parents in education* as one of the four pillars of its policy which seeks to put students first to improve their education outcomes and Australia's schools.

The Australian Government can engage parents in education by investing in these areas:

#### The early years

Promoting the parental role as first educator at the earliest stages of parenthood. This is a particular priority for parents in disadvantaged communities, such as Indigenous parents, parents in low SES communities and parents of newly arrived families. Parents Australia's Indigenous Parent Factor and Successful Learning programs are particularly deserving of support as they can strengthen participation in and sustainability of parental engagement with established programs such as HiPPY (Home Interaction Program for Parents and Youngsters)

These programs are best delivered through community-based approaches where conversations between parents are facilitated by other parents – this

is more successful than programs delivered by professional 'experts' from outside.

#### The schooling years

Research into the sustainability of parent engagement strategies found that investment in school-based parent liaison officers was the most sustainable approach for school-based parent engagement initiatives.

A commitment to and investment in improving the pre-training and professional development of teachers and school leaders is required to equip them to engage meaningfully with parents in a spirit of partnership in the education enterprise.

The above strategies require an investment that is significant enough to lead to a change in the culture of schools to put parents at the core of the schooling enterprise.

#### Outcomes beyond Schooling

Research also shows that whether and how parents are engaged in the education of their children can build social capital, promote social inclusion, and boost participation in the economy and add to productivity.

Research showed that:

- Programs that engage parents and communities ought not be assessed only in terms of their effects on student outcomes. These programs have wider and lasting benefits for parents and the community which can feed directly into improvements in the life quality and economic wellbeing of individuals, the social capital of communities and the fortunes of the economy generally.

- Research into parent engagement programs in Australia show that they have the capacity to not only engage parents in the education of their children, but to build self-esteem, raise skills, open pathways and in some cases lead directly to employment for parents. It is in these ways that they lead not only to improved educational outcomes for children, but generate the wider benefits described above.
- Parental engagement thus generates effects in two directions: towards outcomes for individual students, and towards developing social capital in communities.

These findings indicate that a whole of government approach to parent engagement in education is warranted.

Source:

[www.familyschool.org.au/files/9413/7955/4757/framework.pdf](http://www.familyschool.org.au/files/9413/7955/4757/framework.pdf)

**Parent engagement is a whole of school endeavour, led by school executives who are prepared to investigate the needs of their parents and students and to initiate and sustain those parent engagement processes which best suit their school community.**



# Parents and teachers need to get along in the best interests of children



*Kelly-Ann Allen, Senior Lecturer, Educational Psychology and Inclusion Education, at Monash University*

**Kelly-Ann Allen, a Senior Lecturer, Educational Psychology and Inclusion Education, at Monash University, addressed the recent negative media coverage of the role of parents in an article published in the Monash Lens.**

She wrote:

'Last year, the principal of a Sydney school communicated to the parent<sup>1</sup> body in, perhaps, unusually clear terms that they needed to "chill out".

It illustrates the widening gulf between parents, teachers and the school system, which is at breaking point, and the urgent need for policies to be put in place to prevent irreparable damage to the sector – not least children's learning outcomes.

Parents are emotional creatures – especially when it comes to the performance of their children at school. As a group, they're just as diverse as students within a typical classroom. So why are we surprised when parent-teacher conflicts arise?

Recent stories of parents' aggression towards teachers and principals<sup>2</sup> highlight a common concern for many school staff that is often cited as a reason for teachers leaving the profession<sup>3</sup>. It's been established, for quite some time, that the cumulative effects of negative social interactions can cause distress, trauma, and have long-term implications for psychological functioning and wellbeing.

Labelling parents is neither constructive nor a solution to the problem. Already we read about 'helicopter'<sup>4</sup> and 'lawnmower'<sup>5</sup> parents, who are over-involved in their children's lives, undermining schools in their pursuit of the best possible outcomes for the students. We see similar criticisms of parents reported in the university<sup>6</sup> context, even once their children have crossed the threshold into adulthood.

Labelling parents in this way undermines parent interest and involvement. It devalues their expertise

in knowing their own child, and it further generalises parents into the one group.

Labelling parents can also become an obstructive force – "parents" become something to manage; to be wary of; to avoid. School staff may feel hopeless in their ability to help children "with those parents".

Schools can become hesitant to invite parents into their grounds to participate in school life in meaningful ways, yet this is to the detriment of the child, who ultimately benefits from parental involvement, and teachers and parents working as collaborative partners.

Not all parents are difficult. Many just want the best outcomes for their children, but don't always have the skills needed to communicate this in a nuanced manner; however, we all agree that any form of aggressive and violent behaviour is unacceptable.

School staff need to have sufficient training and professional development to ensure they're able to manage challenging parents and raise the alarm when parent behaviours may cross boundaries. When a relationship between a parent and a teacher is significantly broken, mediation services may be considered. However, at this point, there's much that can be done to prevent such scenarios from occurring.

Schools can show leadership by being preventative, ensuring their school staff communicate contact procedures with parents at the start of each year so that boundaries and expectations are established early. It's important that boundaries are communicated to allow parents to know acceptable ways to contact staff, and what are reasonable expectations of teachers.

When teachers communicate to parents, have them consider: Do messages that are going home ever communicate positives, or do the parents only hear from me when there is a problem? Achieving a balance in communication can help teachers reinforce to parents that they want to work with, not against them.

School staff should also have awareness that parents, like children, can come from myriad backgrounds. If a parent's experience with their own schooling was negative, this can impact on how they may interact with a school. Parents who are anxious, for example, may have been anxious well before they became parents, and being responsible for the welfare of others is a new source of worry.

When parents hear about how hard it's going to be for their children to own their own home<sup>7</sup> and cope with ever-increasing cost-of-living pressures, as well as the impacts of AI<sup>8</sup> and the automation of industry, it may increase concern about whether their children will do well enough in school. We need to remember that anxiety can look like many things, anger included, and many parents agonise about their kids' future.

Ultimately, schools must not lose sight of the fact parents are ideal collaborative partners for teachers, working in unison towards positive and shared goals in the best interests of the children they have in common.

The 2006 Family-Schools Partnership Project<sup>9</sup>, led by Dennis Muller, identified several elements of best practice in developing these partnerships. Among these were the need to be "sensitive to parents' sensibilities", as well as "realistic, patient, and a bit brave". Being on the front foot in creating a school culture of best practice in parent engagement could well pave the way to more harmonious relationships between home and school.

School leaders, together with teachers, could also consider meaningful ways for parents to participate in the classroom or school. This may involve harnessing the unique skills, abilities and qualifications a parent may bring to enhance school life for all students. Opportunities for teachers to get to know parents, and vice-versa, may work towards breaking down barriers in communication and prevent an "us and them" dynamic forming.



Understanding that parents bring their own experiences, expectations and worries into this collaboration means that we need to consider what might be behind a parent's behaviour. School staff need to be astute in both managing difficult behaviours and identifying when more support is required.

Not all parents are difficult; they may just be eager, and with time become a valuable educational resource within the wider school community.'

*Kelly-Ann Allen is educational and developmental psychologist whose research interests are concerned with school belonging and belonging more generally, and for the translation of this research to educational contexts. This article was co-authored with Sally Kenney, educational and developmental psychologist, Kilvington Grammar School, and honorary fellow, Graduate School of Education, University of Melbourne. It was first published in the Monash Lens: [lens.monash.edu/education/2019/06/05/1375263/parents-and-teachers-need-to-get-along](http://lens.monash.edu/education/2019/06/05/1375263/parents-and-teachers-need-to-get-along)*

<sup>1</sup> St Andrew's Cathedral School principal warns parents over aggression towards teachers [www.abc.net.au/news/2018-07-02/st-andrews-cathedral-school-principal-warns-of-parentaggression/9929004](http://www.abc.net.au/news/2018-07-02/st-andrews-cathedral-school-principal-warns-of-parentaggression/9929004)

<sup>2</sup> The new school bullies aren't children – they're parents [www.smh.com.au/national/the-new-school-bullies-arent-children-they-re-parents-20190416-p51ej1.html](http://www.smh.com.au/national/the-new-school-bullies-arent-children-they-re-parents-20190416-p51ej1.html)

<sup>3</sup> Australian teachers are 'at the end of their tethers' and abandoning the profession, sparking a crisis [www.news.com.au/finance/work/at-work/australian-teachers-are-at-the-end-of-their-tethersand-abandoning-the-profession-sparking-a-crisis/news-story/43c1948d6def66e0351433463d76fcd4](http://www.news.com.au/finance/work/at-work/australian-teachers-are-at-the-end-of-their-tethersand-abandoning-the-profession-sparking-a-crisis/news-story/43c1948d6def66e0351433463d76fcd4)

<sup>4</sup> Helicopter parents stalking and bullying teachers [www.news.com.au/lifestyle/parenting/school-life/helicopter-parents-stalking-and-bullyingteachers/news-story/e588c91fd4e46a051998a96329d833c2](http://www.news.com.au/lifestyle/parenting/school-life/helicopter-parents-stalking-and-bullyingteachers/news-story/e588c91fd4e46a051998a96329d833c2)

<sup>5</sup> 'Lawnmower parents' are the new

'helicopter mums' [www.news.com.au/lifestyle/parenting/kids/lawnmower-parents-are-the-new-helicopter-mums/news-story/d9a361c4adfdf1a663c2987cbe5c040](http://www.news.com.au/lifestyle/parenting/kids/lawnmower-parents-are-the-new-helicopter-mums/news-story/d9a361c4adfdf1a663c2987cbe5c040)

<sup>6</sup> The rise of the helicopter parent at Australian universities [www.smh.com.au/education/the-rise-of-the-helicopter-parent-at-australian-universities-20190427-p51hrt.html?fbclid=IwAR3nifiGsyC1E0C8szXBLdyKETI-pmlPEOUtY2HmJqUXsmOdAVyof-r5\\_1Y](http://www.smh.com.au/education/the-rise-of-the-helicopter-parent-at-australian-universities-20190427-p51hrt.html?fbclid=IwAR3nifiGsyC1E0C8szXBLdyKETI-pmlPEOUtY2HmJqUXsmOdAVyof-r5_1Y)

<sup>7</sup> The psychological effect of never owning your own home [www.domain.com.au/news/the-psychological-effect-of-never-owning-your-own-home-20170410-gvgnts/](http://www.domain.com.au/news/the-psychological-effect-of-never-owning-your-own-home-20170410-gvgnts/)

<sup>8</sup> Automation artificial intelligence and the future of work [www.theaustralian.com.au/business/technology/automation-artificial-intelligence-and-the-future-of-work/news-story/5bd344f70e25c3ddf0169c592c3c7d9b](http://www.theaustralian.com.au/business/technology/automation-artificial-intelligence-and-the-future-of-work/news-story/5bd344f70e25c3ddf0169c592c3c7d9b)

<sup>9</sup> Family-Schools Partnership Project [familyschool.org.au/files/6613/7955/4781/muller.pdf](http://familyschool.org.au/files/6613/7955/4781/muller.pdf)

## Review of disability loadings

**The National School Resourcing Board is reviewing the Commonwealth Schooling Resource Standard (SRS) settings for the student with disability loading. Under the Australian Education Act 2013 school funding is calculated using the Schooling Resource Standard (SRS) as the base amount for each student supplemented by six loadings for students and schools with educational disadvantage, one of which is a loading to support students with disability.**

Under the new arrangements, including transitional arrangements, in place from 2018, the loading for students with disability is based on the categories of educational adjustments under the Nationally Consistent Collection of Data on School Students with Disability (NCCD) - supplementary, substantial and extensive. The loading is expressed as a percentage of the base student amount which is currently \$10,953 for primary students and \$13,764 for secondary students.

### Scope

The Board will consider, provide findings and make recommendations relating to the current settings for the loadings for the top three NCCD levels of adjustment, taking into consideration:

- previous research on funding for students with disability, including

work commissioned for the Joint Working Group (JWG)

- the level of resources used to support students with disability at each level of adjustment under the NCCD
- the level of funding for educational adjustment provided by approved system authorities to member schools for students with disability under each system's needs-based funding arrangements
- any significant variations related to school setting or context.

The focus of the review is primarily on the Commonwealth SRS settings for the student with disability loading. State and territory allocations will only be used to inform the assessment of Commonwealth settings for the purpose of the review.

The Board will also consider, and where appropriate provide recommendations on, Commonwealth assurance processes (having regard to the work of the JWG) undertaken to support the accuracy of information provided to calculate a school's Commonwealth funding entitlement relating to students with disability, including the accountability of approved authorities for accurate reporting.

Any support provided under the National Disability Insurance Scheme or the

provision of personal care in schools will not be examined in this review.

In providing recommendations to Government, the Board will consider the financial impact on governments of its collective recommendations and provide at least one budget neutral option for any changes to the settings for the loadings for students with disability. The Board will consider the impact of any change on schools and education authorities.

### Consultation

In undertaking its review, the Board will consult with stakeholders from both the government and non-government sector, including the JWG, and invite submissions from relevant parties.

### Timing

The Board will provide its final report to the Australian Government Minister for Education by December 2019.

The Minister will invite the Chair of the Board to present the final report to Education Council.

Source: [www.directory.gov.au/portfolios/education/coag-education-council/joint-working-group-provide-advice-reform-students-disability-docs.education.gov.au/node/52937](http://www.directory.gov.au/portfolios/education/coag-education-council/joint-working-group-provide-advice-reform-students-disability-docs.education.gov.au/node/52937)



# Coalition responses to APC election questions

**APC asked the Coalition a series of questions prior to the election on their way forward for school education. APC put the same questions to Labor, but did not receive a response. Here are the Coalition's responses.**

## **Question 1: What actions will you take to improve the quality of teaching in schools?**

Through the Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership (AITSL), our Government is implementing the reforms recommended by the 2014 Teacher Education Ministerial Advisory Group (TEMAG). These reforms are being delivered in collaboration with states and territories, higher education providers, teacher regulators and the non-government sector.

We are ensuring the next generation of teachers will be better prepared to provide a top class education from day one, regardless of where they teach. Before they can graduate, every teaching student must now pass a test that puts them in the top 30 per cent of the adult population for literacy and numeracy. Starting this year, trainee teachers will also be required to pass a teaching performance assessment before they graduate.

The Government's TEMAG reforms are lifting standards across the board. Our Government has also started the process of reviewing Australia's education goals as set out in the Melbourne Declaration. The review will consider life-long education for all Australians - from early childhood, primary and secondary schools, through to higher education, vocational training and beyond.

## **Question 2: What will you do to assist parents to improve their capacity and capability to prepare their children for formal schooling and to continue this throughout their education?**

The Morrison Government funds a number of initiatives to support families and their child to prepare for school and to engage in their children's education.

The Learning Potential app and website for all ages includes a dedicated early years section. It is designed to help parents and carers become more positively involved in their children's learning and development by providing practical tips and information on their child's learning 'from the high chair to high school', including current content to assist parents improve their capacity

and capability to prepare their children for formal schooling. The project will continue to expand to include more early years content.

The Home Interaction Program for Parents and Youngsters (HIPPY) program specifically targets school readiness and is a two year, home-based parenting and early learning program targeted to families with 4 and 5 year-old children. HIPPY is delivered to 100 vulnerable communities in inner cities, rural towns and remote or very remote areas. The program provides a structured curriculum of learning activities whereby participating families spend 10-15 minutes per day, five days a week, undertaking educational activities that support school readiness

The Continuity of Learning research is a resource to support effective transition to school and school age care and it is available to every family via the website 'The research was conducted by Charles Sturt University's Educational Transitions team'.

The Morrison Government also funds a number of national parent bodies. These bodies develop and disseminate information to their members and affiliates. This information includes supporting student wellbeing and supporting parents and carers to transition their children from early childhood settings to primary school and beyond and is available for all families at their websites.

The organisations are:

- Australian Council of State School Organisations, representing parents in the government schooling sector;
- Australian Parents Council, representing parents in the non-government schooling sector;
- Catholic Schools Parents Association, representing parents in the Catholic system;
- Isolated Children's Parents' Association, representing regional, rural and remote parents.

As part of their funding, these bodies develop and disseminate information to their members and affiliates. This information includes supporting student wellbeing and supporting parents and carers to transition their children from early childhood settings to primary school and beyond.

A re-elected Morrison Government will

invest \$10.8 million to provide a Year 1 voluntary phonics health check for parents and teachers to ensure their children are not falling behind.

## **Question 3. What are your plans for funding non-government schools?**

- **Will you commit to continuing the funding model recently negotiated with the states and territories and non-government sector?**
- **How are you going to take into account the needs of specific groups of children - eg indigenous, rural and remote children, students with disabilities and special educational needs - to ensure equality and opportunity for all?**

The Morrison Government believes that parents should be able to choose the school that best meets the needs of their child. We are delivering on our commitment, by providing a record \$310 billion in recurrent funding to all schools over the coming decade. This is in recognition of the longstanding position of the Government as majority funder of non-government schools and the states and territories as the majority funder of government schools. Our record funding provides 62 per cent more funding per student, on average, a total of an extra \$37 billion in funding over the decade. In the 2019-20 Budget, the Morrison Government delivered a record \$21.4 billion for schools for the 2020 school year, an increase of \$8.5 billion since 2013.

The Coalition is backing our commitment to parental choice, by providing a \$1.2 billion Choice and Affordability Fund over the next 10 years as schools transition to new funding arrangements. The Fund helps non-government schools and school systems to invest in their schools in ways that support parental choice, which can include keeping schools affordable, improving student wellbeing and support, lifting student performance, assisting schools in regional and remote areas and in drought affected areas, and providing assistance to help schools to transition to needs-based funding.

In addition to providing record funding, we have legislated funding for schools that is truly needs-based, ending Labor's 27 special deals which gave students more because of the state in which they lived.

## **Indigenous Students**

The Morrison Government is providing



record funding to all schools, including an additional

\$5.2 billion for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students to 2029. In 2019, this Additional funding is expected to benefit around 223,000 students. The Morrison Government is leading work through the Study Away Review to address issues in the boarding space and support students to have a more successful boarding experience. Since the commencement of the Indigenous Advancement Strategy in July 2014, the Coalition has committed over \$1.6 billion under the Children and Schooling Program to support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people from their early childhood years, through primary and secondary education, to post-school qualifications and into the workforce.

This includes \$128.1 million for the Remote School Attendance Strategy between 1 January 2014 and 31 December 2018, which is currently delivered across 78 schools. The Government also provided an additional \$78.5 million over ten years to the Northern Territory as part of our needs-based funding plan, including for Indigenous students.

### Rural and Remote Students

The Morrison Government will provide an estimated \$6.8 billion for remote loading to 2029 - the more remote a school, the higher the loading. Total Commonwealth funding for students in regional and remote Australia will increase by 62 per cent. This money will benefit more than 3,357 schools that attract remoteness loading.

The Morrison Government supports the High Achieving Teachers Program by funding employment-based pathways into teaching for high achieving individuals, committed to pursuing a career in the teaching profession. Over 40 per cent of the placements have been in regional, rural and remote communities, while the remainder were placed in disadvantaged metropolitan schools. In addition to strong growth in funding, we know that it is important that schools in rural and regional areas, and with disadvantaged students, can attract high quality teachers.

We are also incentivising teachers to make a commitment to live and teach in remote schools by removing all or part of an individual's Higher Education Loan Program (HELP) debt from their accumulated HELP debt after they have been engaged in work as a teacher for four years in a school in a very remote location in Australia. This could apply to teachers at 292 schools in Australia currently listed as 'very remote schools', and their surrounds.

### Students with a Disability

The Morrison Government is increasing the students with disability (SWD) loading from an estimated \$1.7 billion in 2018 to \$3.0 billion in 2029. The Morrison Government will provide an estimated \$28.8 billion to all Australian schools in the SWD Loading between 2018 and 2029, with average growth in funding of 5.1 per cent a year.

The number of students with disability that attracted Commonwealth funding through the new loading more than doubled between 2017 (approximately 219,000 students) and 2018 (approximately 501,000 students).

By using the Nationally Consistent Collection of Data on School Students with a Disability, we are ensuring that the same students are receiving the same support. Previously, under the different definitions applied by states and territories, a student with a disability in one state could receive funding, whilst a student with the same disability in another state did not.

The Morrison Government has asked the National School Resourcing Board to review the student with disability loading to ensure that we are doing our best to support these students. Terms of reference for the review were announced on 15 November 2018 with the Board to provide its final report to the Government by December 2019.

### Question 4. How are you going to address the increasing problem of mental health issues in children and young people, and more specifically, in schools?

The Morrison Government's \$503.1 million youth Mental Health and suicide Prevention Plan is the largest suicide prevention strategy in Australia's history. It will ensure that government activities are coordinated, services are delivered to young Australians at risk and support is available for friends and families.

Our Plan focuses on:

- Strengthening the headspace network,
- Indigenous suicide Prevention,
- Early childhood and parenting support.

A new school-based mental health program that aims to give teachers the tools to help students manage their mental health was launched on 1 November 2018 following a \$98.6 million investment from the Morrison Government.

The program Be You will be delivered by beyondblue in partnership with headspace and Early Childhood Australia. The program will provide

Australian teachers with the skills and resources to be able to teach students how to manage their mental health and wellbeing, build resilience, and support the mental wellbeing of other students. The program will be rolled-out by beyondblue in 6,000 schools and 2,000 early learning services in 2019.

Teachers can use the Australian Student Wellbeing Framework to find the best resources to help kids deal with bullying and cyberbullying. Parents want to know that schools and teachers have the best tools to deal with bullying and the Framework will provide practical ways to do that.

### Question 5. What are your plans on improving digital literacy, digital citizenship and equity of access to technology for children and young people?

The Morrison Government has allocated over \$64 million under the inspiring all Australians in Digital Literacy and STEM measure of the National Innovation and Science Agenda for initiatives to improve the teaching and learning of STEM in schools and preschools.

The Morrison Government is taking action to support parents and keep Australian children safe online with a \$17 million online safety package. Keeping our Children Safe Online package announced in December 2018 includes an education campaign to help Australian parents, carers and teachers keep children and young people safe online.

The package also includes new resources for parents and carers, an online safety research program and the development of an online Safety Charter for digital platforms. These latest measures will be rolled out in early 2019 and are part of the Government's ongoing commitment of more than \$100 million over the next four years to improving online safety. A re-elected Morrison Government will also work with state and territory governments on best practice policies on mobile phone use in classrooms.

### Question 6. What are you going to do to promote positive relationships and communication between parents and teachers and schools?

The Morrison Government supports parent, teacher and principal relationships based on mutual respect. Although the Federal Government does not directly run schools, it provides significant funding and policy leadership in the schools' sector.

The Morrison Government provides a range of resources for parents to use to support them with their child's school education. The Learning Potential app and website provides useful tips and information for parents on how they can be more involved in their child's learning at school. Managing school refusal is just one of the many topics covered.

The Government launched in October 2018 the Australian Student Wellbeing Framework. Parents and teachers can use the Framework to work together to find the best resources to help children deal with bullying and cyberbullying. The Framework provides practical ways to work through issues that students face.

The Morrison Government is also taking action to support parents and keep Australian children safe online with a \$17 million online safety package. The Keeping our Children Safe Online package announced in December 2018 includes an education campaign to help Australian parents, carers and teachers keep children and young people safe online. These measures were rolled out in early 2019 and are part of the Government's ongoing commitment of more than \$100 million over the next four years to improving online safety.

#### **Question 7. What are your plans for early childhood education?**

The Morrison Government will provide more than \$440 million for preschool in 2019 and over \$450 million in 2020, under the National Partnership with states and territories on universal Access to Early Childhood Education. This extension takes our overall investment in preschool to \$2.8 billion since elected.

This year's Budget also includes funding to develop and implement strategies to increase preschool attendance rates amongst vulnerable, disadvantaged and Indigenous four year old children.

The Government will also review the National Partnership to ensure future funding is set up to achieve the best possible preschool outcomes.

The extension of the National Partnership will ensure almost 350,000 children in Australia have access to 15 hours of quality early learning a week, or 600 hours a year, in the year before school.

The Morrison Government also provides subsidies to improve the affordability of childcare for families who depend upon it. The 2019-20 Budget provides a record \$8.6 billion for child care, including \$8.3 billion for the Child Care Subsidy.

#### **Question 8. What are your plans for post school education?**

The Morrison Government supports Australians to get a job, and get a better job, by investing over \$3 billion a year into vocational education and training (VET). The Morrison Government is investing \$585 million in a package of measures which includes boosting incentives for employers to hire 80,000 new apprentices over the next five years.

We have strengthened the reputation of the VET sector, and replaced Labor's failed VET FEE-HELP scheme, which ripped off vulnerable students and taxpayers, with VET Student Loans, which provide financial support for students to undertake high quality training linked to real workplace needs.

The Morrison Government believes our universities should be places of learning that set students on the path to rewarding careers. This is why we are investing record funding into universities and record funding into assisting students who would not otherwise have access.

We have increased funding for universities by 19 per cent since we were elected. By 2022 the increase will be 28 per cent. We believe that you should be able to attend university whether you are from a regional community or from a capital city. Yet if you are from regional Australia, you are half as likely to attend a tertiary institution. That is why the Morrison Government has invested over \$490 million to help fix this gap, through greater access to Youth Allowance for regional students, and has increased funding for regional scholarships.

We have invested in making sure regional students can also study in the communities in which they live. We have committed to creating Regional Study Hubs in 22 different locations and created the Destination Australia scholarships to support students to study in regional Australia.

#### **Question 9. How are you going to ensure that the education system in Australia is going to adequately prepare children for life beyond school?**

The Morrison Government is committed to providing choice and quality in our schools. That's why the government has provided record funding for Government, catholic and independent schools.

Under the Morrison Government's plan, backed by the work carried out by David Gonski, the government will lift student outcomes so that every child can fulfil their potential. To get this done the government has secured the agreement from every state and territory to lift student results.

The Morrison Government believes that record school funding has to be matched

with a plan on how to spend that money to get the best student outcomes. As part of the National School Reform Agreements, the states and territories have also committed to implementing the reforms recommended by David Gonski in the Review to Achieve Educational Excellence in Australian Schools.

The three key areas of responsibility for the Commonwealth Government are:

- Enhancing the Australian Curriculum so that teachers can identify each individual student's learning needs;
- Creating a unique student identifier; and
- Establishing a new national evidence institute to drive improvements in teaching practice, school systems and policies.

The Morrison Government, through Education Council, is also undertaking a review of the 2008 Melbourne Declaration of education goals for young Australians. The review will update the current Declaration to create a nationally consistent future direction for Australian schooling for the next decade. On 16 April 2019 a discussion paper was released for public submission, which will close at midnight on Friday 14 June 2019.

The Morrison Government believes that learning through a vocational education is just as important as through a university degree. That is why we commissioned a comprehensive review of the VET system by former New Zealand Minister for Tertiary Education, Skills and Employment, Steven Joyce to review how Australia's VET system can better deliver, including for young Australian jobseekers.

The Review suggested immediate steps and a longer-term roadmap to strengthen the VET sector to ensure that all Australians have the skills they need to succeed in a changing workplace, and businesses have a pipeline of qualified workers to grow and prosper.

One particular measure to help transition young people from schools to work is the establishment of 10 pilot Industry Training Hubs to address the challenge of high youth unemployment in regional areas. The Hubs will create better connections between local industry and schools to improve outcomes for students, employers and the VET sector. They will be an on-the-ground presence where new approaches are needed to help students transition from school to training and work. These hubs will be supported by VET scholarships.

# Consultation on draft religious freedom legislation



**The Australian Government has published a draft package of legislative reforms on religious freedom designed ‘to protect against discrimination on the basis of religious belief or activity in key areas of life’ including in schools.**

It is now open to further community consultation, but the short time frame has been criticised by opposition parties and some school organisations.

Attorney-General Christian Porter said the draft legislation would form the basis of ‘extensive consultation’ and expected a final draft Bill to be presented to Federal Parliament in October.

He said: ‘The Bill would make it unlawful to discriminate on the basis of religious belief or activity in key areas of public life. The Bill does not create a positive right to freedom of religion.

‘Whilst there will always be competing views on issues such as this, the government considers the draft Bill presented today strikes the right balance in the interests of all Australians... Consultation has already been undertaken through my office and the office of the Prime Minister with a range of stakeholder groups, including religious organisations.

‘Further consultation with a wide range of stakeholders will now follow.’

In April 2019, the Attorney General also asked the Australian Law Reform Commission (ALRC) to examine ‘whether religious exemptions could be removed from anti-discrimination laws while also guaranteeing the rights of religious institutions to conduct their affairs in accordance with their ethos.’ The broad terms of reference for that review have now been narrowed so that the ALRC does not encroach on the consultation processes for the draft package of legislation. The ALRC will issue a discussion paper on the amended terms of reference early in 2020 with a final report in December 2020.

Mark Dreyfus, Shadow Attorney-General, called on the government to allow more time for community consultation.

‘Religious discrimination legislation affects all Australians, not just the Liberal Party room, and the Morrison Government must ensure there is time to ensure all Australians are properly consulted about this important bill.

‘The whole community should be given the chance to properly scrutinise what’s being proposed, and not have this rushed through Parliament because of the Government’s internal divisions.

‘The Liberals have been arguing about this issue for more than two years but now want to give the rest of the country just weeks to debate this important bill,’ he said.

Christian Schools Australia said it was worried that the time frame would be too tight to consider the impact on schools. Their briefing states that ‘CSA is concerned that this will not allow appropriate consultation on the complete package of reforms affecting Christian and other faith-based schools.

‘We have raised this with the Attorney-General’s office and will continue to advocate for a more coordinated response to both aspects of the whole package.’

The draft bills are part of the Government’s response to the Review of Religious Freedom, released in December 2018, conducted by the Expert Panel led by the Hon. Philip Ruddock.

According to the government statement: ‘The Religious Discrimination Bill 2019 prohibits discrimination on the ground of religious belief or activity in key areas of public life. It also creates the new office of the Freedom of Religion Commissioner in the Australian Human Rights Commission.

‘The Human Rights Legislation Amendment (Freedom of Religion) Bill

2019 amends existing Commonwealth legislation to better protect the right to freedom of religion. These amendments will bring certainty to charities, religious educational institutions, and the community at large.’

The government invited submissions on the:

- Religious Discrimination Bill 2019
- Religious Discrimination (Consequential Amendments) Bill 2019
- Human Rights Legislation Amendment (Freedom of Religion) Bill 2019

The draft Bills are available on the Attorney-General’s Department website [www.ag.gov.au/Consultations/Pages/religious-freedom-bills.aspx](http://www.ag.gov.au/Consultations/Pages/religious-freedom-bills.aspx).

Sources: [www.ag.gov.au/Consultations/Documents/religious-freedom-bills/summary-document-religious-freedom-reforms.pdf](http://www.ag.gov.au/Consultations/Documents/religious-freedom-bills/summary-document-religious-freedom-reforms.pdf)

[www.attorneygeneral.gov.au/Media/Pages/morrison-government-delivers-on-religious-reforms-29-august-2019.aspx](http://www.attorneygeneral.gov.au/Media/Pages/morrison-government-delivers-on-religious-reforms-29-august-2019.aspx)

[www.alrc.gov.au/wp-content/uploads/2019/08/alrc\\_media\\_release\\_29\\_augusta.pdf](http://www.alrc.gov.au/wp-content/uploads/2019/08/alrc_media_release_29_augusta.pdf)

[markdreyfus.nationbuilder.com/government\\_needs\\_to\\_consult\\_all\\_australians\\_on\\_religious\\_freedom](http://markdreyfus.nationbuilder.com/government_needs_to_consult_all_australians_on_religious_freedom)

[csa.edu.au/religious-freedom-legislation-package-released/](http://csa.edu.au/religious-freedom-legislation-package-released/)

[www.attorneygeneral.gov.au/Media/Pages/Review-into-the-Framework-of-Religious-Exemptions-in-Anti-discrimination-Legislation-10-april-19.aspx](http://www.attorneygeneral.gov.au/Media/Pages/Review-into-the-Framework-of-Religious-Exemptions-in-Anti-discrimination-Legislation-10-april-19.aspx)

[alrc.gov.au](http://alrc.gov.au)



# Review of NAPLAN reporting recommends focus on student improvement

**Student improvement rather than school comparisons should be the focus of the My School website, according to the review of NAPLAN reporting by Emeritus Professor of Education Bill Louden.**

The review, commissioned by state and federal education ministers from the COAG Education Council, also called for simplification of the ways NAPLAN data is presented on the site, and more explanation of what it means.

APC made one of the submissions to the review, arguing that NAPLAN was a valuable way to check student progress, but that improvements were needed to the way the data was presented to make it fairer and easier for parents to understand.

The report detailed key points from the submissions. Below are extracts of the evidence submitted by parent organisations.

## Parents' and principals' associations

'Among the parents' associations, the Australian Parents Council was a strong supporter of the current approach to presentation of school-level NAPLAN data of the My School website. Recognising the possibility of misuse of the data in league tables, their submission noted that "APC supports the access to and publication of NAPLAN data provided that it is done under strict and agreed guidelines" (p. 2). Their submission argued that "it is better to manage the use of the data than to deprive parents of information about their child's school" (p. 2).

Catholic School Parents Australia's submission acknowledged that "a key use of the My School data is a check on a child's school for overall performance and a comparison with other schools" (p. 1).

The submission from one of CSPA's state-based affiliates was more equivocal about the question of balance. Catholic School Parents Victoria noted that NAPLAN "has provided some transparency" and "provided a catalyst for parents to have higher expectations of our teachers and of schools to do something about it" (p. 6). They note, however, that the use of the My School website to

compare schools "has in many ways created a skewed view in how parents interpret the quality of a school and the progress of student learning" (p. 6).

Conversations with representatives of ACSSO's state-based affiliates revealed some diversity of opinion. The Parents and Citizens Queensland argued that "No NAPLAN data should ever be used in My School website." In contrast, the ACT Council of Parents and Citizens Associations reported that: *ACT parents and carers have repeatedly called for NAPLAN and My School data to remain available, providing transparency and public accountability for public expenditure. Parents and carers consider NAPLAN and My School essential measures of both school and education system performance for government and the broader community.*

## Statistically Similar School Comparisons

A range of views were expressed about the quality of the explanatory material on similar schools.

Notes provided by ACSSO included the ACT Council of Parents & Citizens Association's comment that "Council considers that 'statistically similar schools' is well understood and allows for reasonable comparison between like schools"....

The Australian Parents Council, on the other hand, said that statistically similar schools were "not well explained for parents" and the information that is available on My School "is difficult to find" (p. 2).

Catholic School Parents Australia's submission noted that there is "no general understanding of what a 'like school' is for parents" (p. 2).

## NAPLAN, My School and school improvement

Principals and parents' groups often commented on the limitations of NAPLAN, characterising it as "one source of some useful information which is added to everything else a school might collect", "a snapshot of achievement", "a small part of the overall picture of a student's learning journey", "just one piece of the puzzle", or "a moment in time".

## Whole population assessment and school improvement

Diversity of opinion among principals was echoed among parents' associations. Catholic School Parents Australia suggested that a suite of assessments made available to schools through ACARA, from which a sample of schools' results could be examined for state and national accountability purposes. Several of the state affiliates of ACSSO were in favour of moving to sample testing, but APC's view was that: "Most parents understand the value of whole-population assessment data and expect that it would drive changes in teaching and pedagogy to achieve growth for the students in their school, and at a system level" (p. 3).

## Communication with parents and the community

Individual student reports are provided to parents of all children undertaking NAPLAN tests. Many stakeholders confirmed that these results are discussed with teachers in the context of parent-teacher meetings and that NAPLAN results may be mentioned in school newsletters.

The quality of communication materials and approaches designed for parents and the wider community was raised in several submissions. The Smith Family, for example, noted that it was difficult for parents to use NAPLAN information understand their children's progress. They also noted that, given the level of discussion of NAPLAN in the community, "there is also a need for a wider group of stakeholders to be better informed on NAPLAN" (p. 6)....

The APC, The Smith Family and the QCEC submissions raised the possibility of improving feedback to parents about students' progress over time, from Years 3-9, on a single report, with several noting that this would require a national unique student identifier.

## NAPLAN, My School and school choice

Submissions and stakeholder conversations on parents' use of the NAPLAN data on My School most often focused on the issue of school choice....

Survey data included in the submissions suggested that relatively few parents use My School to inform school choice. The APC submission reported that according to their 2018 survey, “Only 5% of parents in APC’s 2018 national survey reported using NAPLAN results when choosing a school for their child.”

A somewhat higher estimate is provided by ISQ’s 2018 What Parents Want survey which reported that only 18% of parents identified My School among their top three sources of information. Much more common sources of information were family, friends and colleagues; other parents with children at the school; school open days; school websites and social media; and family members attending the school.

### Students and NAPLAN reporting

One parent submission noted that reporting of NAPLAN information to students “six months after testing takes place is highly unlikely to be of any benefit to their education” and another suggested that younger students should only be given NAPLAN performance information in consultation with their parents.’

### Further Review

The governments of NSW, Victoria and Queensland have now released their terms of reference for a full scale review of NAPLAN. Their expert panel includes Professor Bill Loudon. The Review will make an interim report to the Education Council meeting in December 2019 and a final report in June 2020. The proposal for a full scale review, put forward by NSW, was rejected at the June Education Council meeting with Minister Tehan saying ‘It would be appropriate to consider a full review of NAPLAN once it has fully and successfully transitioned to online.’

Source:

[www.educationcouncil.edu.au/EC-Reports-and-Publications.aspx](http://www.educationcouncil.edu.au/EC-Reports-and-Publications.aspx)

### Terms of Reference

The review, was commissioned by the Education Council of the Council of Australian Governments in September 2018, had four Terms of Reference:

1. Perceptions of NAPLAN and My School data, including the potential for misinterpretation or misuse of data;
2. How My School and NAPLAN reporting contribute to understanding of student progress and achievement;

3. How schools use achievement data, including NAPLAN, to inform teaching; and
4. How My School and NAPLAN data are reported to students and parents.

### Recommendations

Recommendation 1:

That the number of NAPLAN displays on My School be reduced.

Recommendation 2:

That the focus of NAPLAN displays on My School should be student gain, not statistically similar school comparisons.

Recommendation 3:

That a technical review of ICSEA be undertaken.

Recommendation 4:

That the national priority initiatives on

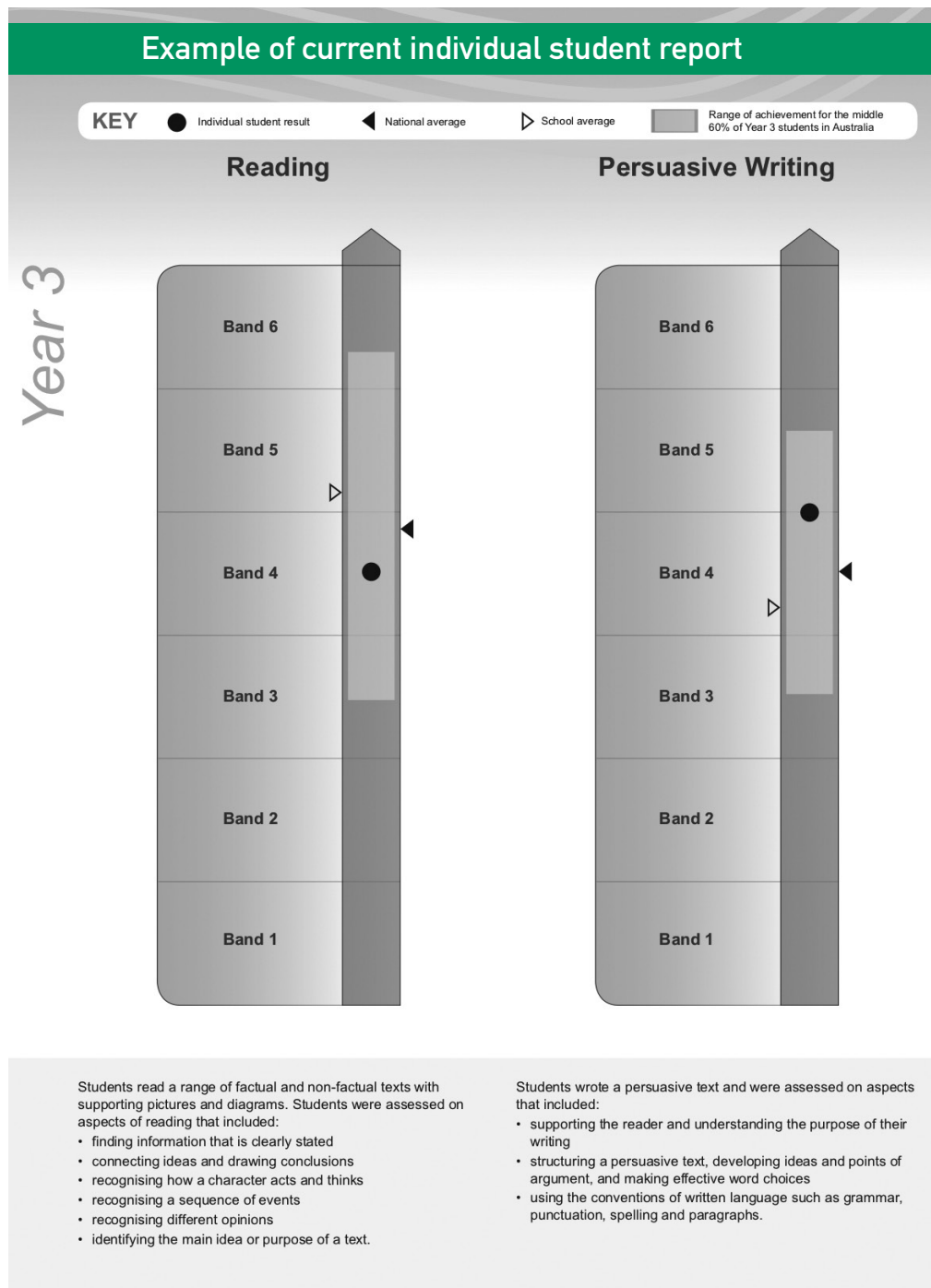
learning progressions and formative assessment tools be pursued, in order to improve the timeliness and diagnostic quality of assessments available to schools.

Recommendation 5:

That school systems publish school-level NAPLAN data in ways that reduce the likelihood that third-party NAPLAN-based school league tables will be produced.

Recommendation 6:

That in order to reduce the risk of misuse of NAPLAN data, clear guidance be provided to schools, the public and students about the purposes and proper uses of NAPLAN and My School.



# The Hunting drama highlights image-based abuse issues for parents and schools



E-Safety Commissioner,  
Julie Inman Grant

**The SBS drama, *The Hunting*, has highlighted image based abuse amongst school students, and the challenges facing parents and schools in dealing with this issue.**

The Office of the e-Safety Commissioner and SBS have produced some guidance and resources for both families and educators, in response.

E-Safety Commissioner Julie Inman Grant, addressed the issue and gave advice in a blog: 'Spotlight on nude photo sharing: helping parents and teachers respond'. She wrote:

'A new Australian drama, SBS's *The Hunting* is highlighting one of the big issues faced by young people, families and school communities today: the sharing of intimate images or videos without consent.

Sadly, variations of this form of image-based abuse are unfolding across Australia — and the highly anticipated series accurately depicts in its storyline the community-wide fall out of a teen nude photo scandal, where the collision of technology and sexual exploration can be devastating.

It's a reality that we cannot afford to shy away from.

Supporting young people to use digital devices and online services in safe, informed, respectful and responsible ways is a shared responsibility.

So, *The Hunting* provides a timely opportunity for both parents and teachers to start age-appropriate conversations about acceptable and

harmful online behaviours with young people. To help them do this, eSafety has collaborated with SBS to develop education resources that have practical information about how to handle image sharing and cyberbullying – and importantly, how to talk with young people about respect and consent online. (*The Hunting* educational resources are available via the SBS Learn Hub - [www.sbs.com.au/learn/the-hunting](http://www.sbs.com.au/learn/the-hunting).)

## **"It was meant just for you"**

*The Hunting* acknowledges that the sexual development of young people is a delicate and vulnerable time. It also highlights the uncomfortable realisation that often the practice of non-consensual image-sharing is less about sexual curiosity and exploration, and more about exhibiting power over peers. With girls and young women much more likely to have their image shared without consent, there is no denying that image-based abuse is also a gendered issue.

The series reminds viewers that there is always a choice between calling out harmful and disrespectful behaviour or feeding into it. So much of this comes down to helping young people stand-up to friendship pressures with conviction and to challenge the status quo of stereotypical, sexist behaviours.

## **"What kind of man do you want our son to become?"**

As parents and carers, we have the opportunity to positively influence our children's sexual exploration and to help bolster both their safety and their ability to develop and navigate healthy, respectful and consenting intimate relationships.

We can also play an active role in shaping the values, attitudes and expectations of our children online. This is important, because what they see and do online is difficult to predict or control.

Exposure to sexually explicit material can desensitise young people and normalise inappropriate behaviours, so it's essential to have these delicate conversations about the reality — or fictitiousness — of pornography, sooner rather than later.

Co-viewing the series with your teens

also presents an opportunity to point out that portrayals of male dominance and female subservience, often made to seem normal and common place, are neither healthy nor something to aim for. As adults, we can guide young people to understand that intimacy should be founded in respect, trust, empathy and clear consent.

"I don't want to be a fire fighter, I want to affect real change."

Just as parents are prompted to examine their own attitudes towards sexuality, *The Hunting* asks Australian schools to examine their systemic preparedness for preventing and responding to the sharing of intimate images.

Schools should be ready for when the issue arises, not if. Questions need to be asked about how incidents involving explicit imagery will be handled and by whom?

Curriculum is also an important consideration — content that explores age and stage appropriate themes of privacy, respect, intimacy and consent as they play out in all contexts, including online, should be scaffolded across K-12 and embedded within all subject areas.

School leaders also play a critical role in ensuring their staff are equipped and confident to have conversations about what healthy, respectful, trusting relationships look like, so they become part of practice for every teacher, every day.

Students tend to be more responsive to these sensitive subjects when they are delivered by prepared and assured teachers. So, there is no better time for principals to be investing in the capacity building of their staff with sound, evidence based professional learning on digital well-being ([www.esafety.gov.au/education-resources/outreach/teacher-professional-learning-program](http://www.esafety.gov.au/education-resources/outreach/teacher-professional-learning-program)).

## **"We have to work together..."**

More broadly, we all need to challenge and reject attitudes that allow anyone to think the non-consensual sharing of intimate images is harmless, funny or even justified – whether we come across it at home, while socialising, at sporting clubs or in our workplaces.



We need to help our children (and each other) understand that while technology can be used to express sexuality or share intimacy with someone, it's not without risk, responsibility and potentially devastating impacts.

We are all responsible for being aware that when a nude is shared without consent, it's a serious breach of trust that can be felt by the victim for a lifetime.

eSafety is here to help. We are committed to providing all Australians with information and advice about image-based abuse and other online

safety issues, as well as through curriculum-aligned .

We are also here to support Australians who have experienced the sharing of intimate images without consent – including the threat to share nude images or videos - by providing reporting options, support and resources for victims and those close to them. We have helped more than 1,300 Australians remove such images from public view – with a 90% success rate – and we are exercising new civil powers targeting individual perpetrators and content hosts.

Please visit eSafety's image-based abuse portal for more information or to report at: [www.esafety.gov.au/iba](http://www.esafety.gov.au/iba).

Information specifically for parents is available via: [www.esafety.gov.au/parents/big-issues/sending-nudes-sexting](http://www.esafety.gov.au/parents/big-issues/sending-nudes-sexting)

Download 'The Hunting' educational resources from SBS Learn Hub: [www.sbs.com.au/learn/the-hunting](http://www.sbs.com.au/learn/the-hunting)

For information and advice on all e-safety visit: [www.esafety.gov.au/esafety-information/esafety-issues](http://www.esafety.gov.au/esafety-information/esafety-issues)

## Attracting high achievers to teaching

**The keys to raising the status of teachers in the community and attracting high achievers to the profession are higher pay and better recognition of expertise, according to a Grattan Institute report.**

Their media release states that, 'With this higher-achieving teacher workforce, the typical Australian student would gain an extra six to 12 months of learning by Year 9.'

'Australia needs more high achievers in teaching, because great teachers are the key to better student performance,' said the lead author of the report, Grattan Institute School Education Program Director Peter Goss.

'The low status of teaching in Australia has become self-reinforcing, putting off high achievers who might otherwise want to teach. By contrast, high-performing countries such as Singapore and Finland get many high-achieving students to apply, and then select the most promising candidates.'

The 'Attracting high achievers to teaching' report by Peter Goss and Julie Sonnemann said:

'Australia's top teachers should be able to earn \$80,000 a year more, and top school-leavers should get \$10,000-a-year scholarships if they take up teaching, as part of a \$1.6 billion blueprint to boost teacher quality and student performance.'

The reform package could double the number of high achievers who choose to become teachers, and increase the average ATAR of teaching graduates to 85, within the next decade.

With this higher-achieving teacher workforce, the typical Australian student would gain an extra six to 12 months of learning by Year 9.

A Grattan survey of nearly 1,000 young high achievers (aged 18-25 and with an ATAR of 80 or higher) found that more bright young Australians would take up teaching if it offered higher top-end pay and greater career challenge.

The reform package should have three parts:

1. Offer \$10,000 cash-in-hand scholarships to high achievers to study teaching. People who get the government-funded scholarships should be required to work in government schools for at least several years.
2. Create two new roles in schools – 'Instructional Specialist' and 'Master Teacher' – so the best teachers can get extra pay, time, and responsibility to improve teaching at their schools and in their regions. About 5-to-8 per cent of teachers would become Instructional Specialists, paid around \$140,000 a year – \$40,000 more than the highest standard pay rate for teachers. About 0.5 per cent of teachers would become Master Teachers, paid around \$180,000 a year – \$80,000 more than the highest standard pay rate for teachers.
3. Launch a \$20 million-a-year advertising campaign, similar to the Australian Defence Force recruitment campaigns, to promote the new package and re-position teaching as an attractive, challenging, and well-paid career option for high achievers.

Bright young Australians are turning their backs on teaching.

Over the past decade, demand from high achievers for teaching fell by a third – more than for any other undergraduate field of study. Only 3 per cent of high achievers now choose teaching for their undergraduate studies,

compared to 19 per cent for science, 14 per cent for health, and 9 per cent for engineering.

Australia needs more high achievers in teaching, because great teachers are the key to better student performance.

The low status of teaching in Australia has become self-reinforcing, putting off high achievers who might otherwise want to teach. By contrast, high-performing countries such as Singapore and Finland get many high-achieving students to apply, and then select the most promising candidates.

All three schools sectors in Australia – government, private, and Catholic – should implement the reform package. State and territory governments, some of which have failed to properly fund their schools, should pay for the reforms in government schools. Private and Catholic schools should fund the reforms themselves, without extra taxpayer money.

This reform package would transform Australia's teaching workforce. In the long term it would pay for itself many times over, because a better-educated population would mean a more productive and prosperous Australia.'

Source: [grattan.edu.au/report/attracting-high-achievers-to-teaching/](http://grattan.edu.au/report/attracting-high-achievers-to-teaching/)

[grattan.edu.au/a-1-6b-blueprint-to-boost-teacher-quality-and-student-performance/](http://grattan.edu.au/a-1-6b-blueprint-to-boost-teacher-quality-and-student-performance/)



# School funding in five easy steps (no, really!)

A very clear explanation of how school funding is calculated was included in the National Catholic Education Commission Newsletter of 2 May 2019 ([ncec.schoolzineplus.com/newsletter/archive](http://ncec.schoolzineplus.com/newsletter/archive)).

'School funding is a contentious and much misunderstood topic – but it's

much less controversial once a few basic facts are known.

State and federal governments fund all not-for-profit schools (government and non-government) to some degree because a typical school education costs a lot more than most people realise – more than \$11,000 per primary

student and more than \$14,000 per secondary student each year, regardless of sector.

This is more than most Australian families could afford, so governments fund free public schools and partially fund all not-for-profit schools sectors.

## 1. The federal government sets a base funding amount for every student in every sector, each year

In 2019, the base amounts are:

\$11,343 per primary student

\$14,254 per secondary student

## 2. Extra funding is added for disadvantage

This extra funding – known as 'disadvantage loadings' – is added for up to six types of disadvantage such as disability, low socioeconomic advantage and Language Background Other Than English.

## 3. The base amount + disadvantage loadings = SRS

The base amount and disadvantage loadings make up the Schooling Resource Standard (SRS), a per student funding target for each school.

Each school has a different SRS because each school's students have different needs. An outer suburban primary school with high levels of disadvantage, for example, might have an SRS of more than \$15,000 per student while a primary school serving relatively affluent families might have an SRS of less than \$12,000 per student.

Now, we get to the important part – who pays the SRS?

## 4. Public schools receive their SRS funding solely from governments

State and federal governments jointly fund the SRS for government schools, regardless of the school's location or socio-economic status (SES). Parents are not required to contribute to the SRS in government schools. Government schools may still raise money privately, and almost all do - but they do not lose a dollar of their government SRS funding entitlement.

## 5. Non-government schools attract only part of their SRS funding from governments, based on parents' ability to pay

Non-government school parents are expected to fund some of their children's education, so governments reduce the funding they provide to non-government schools according to the ability of each school's parents to pay fees.

This is done by assigning each non-government school a socio-economic status (SES) score from 60 to 140 (based on student addresses and ABS household data).

The higher the SES score, the more parents are expected to contribute – and the less government funding that non-government school attracts.

Non-government schools serving the poorest families (those with an SES score from 60 to 93) attract 90% of the SRS base amount (and all the disadvantage loadings) in government funding.

Non-government primary schools

serving the poorest communities therefore attract \$10,209 per student in government funding (plus all disadvantage loadings), while a government primary school in the same area attracts \$11,343 per student (plus all its disadvantage loadings)

As SES scores rise, the level of government funding for non-government schools is gradually reduced, to the point where those serving the wealthiest families (an SES score of 125 or more) attract just 20% of the SRS base amount in government funding (plus all disadvantage loadings).

In other words, the wealthiest non-

government primary school attracts just \$2,269 per student in government funding (plus all disadvantage loadings) while a government primary school in the same area attracts \$11,343 per student (plus all its disadvantage loadings).

Non-government schools, therefore, always attract less government funding per student.'