



Association of Heads of  
Independent Schools of Australia



# AHISA 2015-17 Biennial Report

### AHISA'S Primary Object

To optimise the opportunities for the education and welfare of Australia's young people through the maintenance of collegiality and high standards of professional practice and conduct amongst its members

### AHISA's Vision

Excellence and autonomy in independent school leadership that creates and sustains exceptional learning opportunities, outcomes and choices for young people in Australia

### AHISA's Mission

AHISA, in an environment of cooperative endeavour and collegiality, develops excellence in autonomous school leadership through professional learning and support services to members, development of the next generation of school leaders, strong strategic partnerships and being an influential voice in the community and to government



# Message from the National Chair

AHISA's agenda in 2015-17 was both broad and deep as we pursued the three major work streams identified by our 2016-19 Strategic Plan:

- Unrelenting focus on the support and development of AHISA members as high performance leaders
- Commitment to the creation of a strong and sustainable 'pipeline' for future leaders of independent schools
- Determined advocacy of independent schools and their leadership in the political and public domains.

I thank our CEO, Beth Blackwood and Interim CEO, Geoff Ryan – who paved the way for Beth's appointment in January 2016 – for their dedicated execution of AHISA's strategic priorities, always with the interests of AHISA's members as their first concern.

On the following pages you will read just how busy these past two years have been as AHISA has supported its members and advocated on educational issues on their behalf.

You will note AHISA's regular consultation rounds with Australian Government ministers and ministerial advisers and with departments and government agencies, and the number of formal submissions. While the intensity of this advocacy effort testifies to a readiness on the part of politicians and government officers to consult with the leaders of independent schools, there is no room for complacency about the direction of national policy making in education.

As National Chair, I have written and spoken many times on the 'deficit model' thinking that is infecting political and public discourse on school education, partly fed by negative

reporting of the results of national and international testing regimes. A busy consultation agenda cannot mask the disturbing trend among politicians, policy makers and a new breed of education 'policy-preneurs' to seek and adopt silver bullet solutions to perceived problems in Australia's education system – responses that inevitably devalue the professional expertise of school leaders and challenge the value of their hard-won experience.

It is becoming apparent that a tendency to devalue the professionalism of Heads has also crept into the thinking of some school Boards. I have attended multiple meetings of AHISA Branches across the country in the last two years, where I have had the opportunity to listen to and talk with hundreds of AHISA members. I have also spoken privately with members experiencing personal and professional distress. It is deeply concerning that some school governors are ready to adopt the common corporate practice of changing leaders at each new strategic turn.

Good governance is crucial to the ongoing success of schools and their Heads, and the launch of the Chairs, Boards & Heads of Independent School Forum series stands as a key AHISA initiative for 2015-17.

Another highlight of AHISA's work for me personally has been watching the development of the Aspirant membership category (now with 104 members) and continued roll out of the Aspirant Head Roadshow series. To see how our association has enabled the individual and even isolated actions of members to be gathered and magnified through these programs into

a collective assurance of the quality of the future leadership of independent schools has been both inspiring and immensely satisfying.

As a member of AHISA for 17 years I have experienced first-hand the personal and professional support that flows from the willingness of AHISA members to share so generously with colleagues their time, experience and wisdom. It has been a privilege to return that collegial caring through service as your National Chair in 2015-17.

All that AHISA has achieved in the last two years would not have been possible without the commitment of individual members to their colleagues and their profession. We see this in action through the virtual collegiality of HeadNet as much as in attendance at national conferences, and at Branch or regional gatherings. It is certainly evident throughout this Report. I honour and thank you all.

Special thanks go to those who have served as members of their Branch executive. In particular, your welcome and support of new members has been highly valued.

I also acknowledge and thank on your behalf those members who have served on AHISA's Board and Reference Groups, as well as our CEO Beth Blackwood and staff of the National Office. Without their dedication and hard work, AHISA's goals for 2015-17 would not have come to such successful fruition.

**Karen Spiller OAM**  
*AHISA National Chair 2015-17*  
*Principal, St Aidan's Anglican Girls' School*

# AHISA Board Members



AHISA's Board meets three times a year, in February, May and October. The May meeting coincides with the AHISA New Members Conference; one October meeting coincides with the Biennial Conference.

The members listed were serving on the Board as at 30 September 2017. Not all served the full biennial period, but stepped up to replace members whose movement to a school interstate or resignation made them otherwise ineligible to continue on the Board. Also serving on the Board during 2015-17 were: Mrs Bobby Court, Guilford Young College, Tas; Mrs Jane Danvers, Wilderness School, SA; Mr Stuart Meade, then at Hale School, WA; and Mr Colin Minke, then at Tatachilla Lutheran College, SA.

## National Chair

Mrs Karen Spiller OAM  
*St Aidan's Anglican Girls' School, QLD*

## Branch Representative Directors

Mrs Robyn Bell  
*Cannon Hill Anglican College, QLD*

Mrs Jann Robinson  
*St Luke's Grammar School, NSW*

Mrs Rebecca Clarke  
*Walford Anglican School for Girls, SA*

Mr Sholto Bowen OAM  
*Huntingtower, VIC*

Mr Tony Freeman  
*Fahan School, TAS*

Mrs Jenny Ethell  
*Perth College, WA*

## Elected Members

Mr Andrew Muller  
*Scotch Oakburn College, TAS*

Mr Paul Teys  
*Hunter Valley Grammar School, NSW*

Mrs Josie Crisara  
*Aitken College, VIC*

The Rev. Christopher Ivey  
*St Andrew's Anglican College, QLD*

Mr David Gee  
*Wesley College, WA*

Mrs Kath McGuigan  
*Mary MacKillop College, SA*



# AHISA Branches

## Branch Executive Members 2015-17

### New South Wales / Australian Capital Territory

Mr Paul Teys (Chair)  
*Hunter Valley Grammar School*

Dr Julie Greenhalgh (Secretary)  
*Meriden School*

Dr David Nockles (Treasurer)  
*Macarthur Anglican School*

### Queensland

The Rev. Christopher Ivey (Chair)  
*St Andrew's Anglican College*

Mrs Flo Kearney (Secretary/Treasurer)  
*Somerville House*

Executive Officer  
*Ms Dawn Lang*

### South Australia / Northern Territory

Mrs Kath McGuigan (Chair)  
*Mary Mackillop College*

Mrs Anne Dunstan (Secretary/  
Treasurer)  
*Pulteney Grammar School*

(Following Mr Stephen Bousfield, then  
at Westminster School)

### Tasmania

Mr Tony Freeman (Chair)  
*Fahan School*

(Following Mrs Bobby Court, then at  
Guilford Young College)

Mr Andy Muller (Secretary/Treasurer)  
*Scotch Oakburn College*

### Victoria

Mrs Josie Crisara (Chair)  
*Aitken College*

Professional Officer  
*Mrs Judy Young*

### Western Australia

Mrs Jenny Ethell (Chair)  
*Perth College*

Mr Adrian Scott (Secretary)  
*Swan Christian College*

**6** AHISA  
Branches

**430** members

**NSW/ACT** 123

**QLD** 86

**SA/NT** 45

**TAS** 18

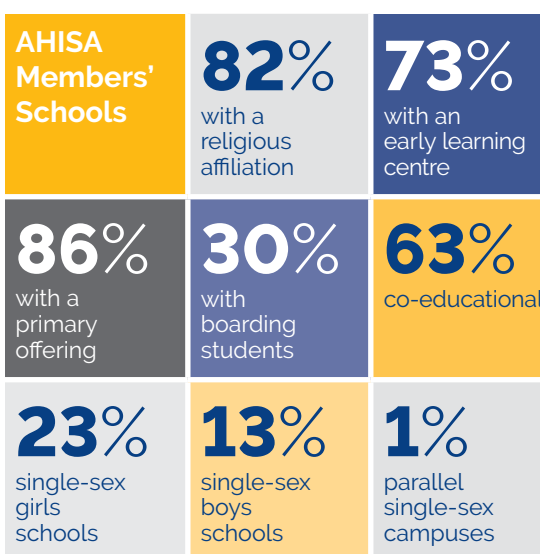
**VIC** 108

**WA** 50

**11** members lead  
schools in New  
Zealand and Asia

% of AHISA  
members who  
are female **39%**

% of AHISA  
members who  
are male **61%**



# AHISA Reference Groups

## Independence Reference Group 2015-17

AHISA's journal, *Independence*, is issued twice a year. It is distributed in hard copy format to members. A digital version of each issue is published online and a digital archive maintained in the public domain for the benefit of the wider education sector.

Mr Sholto Bowen OAM (Chair)  
*Huntingtower, VIC*

Mrs Robyn Bell  
*Cannon Hill Anglican College, QLD*

Ms Beth Gilligan  
*Dominic College, TAS*

Mr Brian Grimes  
*A. B. Paterson College, QLD*

Mr Bob Holloway  
*University Senior College, SA*  
(To June 2017)

Dr Peter Lennox  
*Redlands SCECGS, NSW*

Mr Matthew Maruff  
*Girton Grammar School, VIC*

Mr Mike Millard  
*Pedare Christian College, SA*

Ms Belinda Provis  
*All Saints' College, WA*

## AHISA Social Welfare Reference Group 2015-17

The Reference Group examines student health and wellbeing issues, with the aim of identifying information and resources for AHISA members. Issues examined to date include children's access to pornography on the internet, the impact of social media on student mental health and policies and practices for transgender students in schools.

Mrs Jane Danvers (Chair)  
*Wilderness School, SA*

Mrs Wendy Barel  
*Masada College, NSW*

Ms Rebecca Cody  
*Methodist Ladies' College, WA*

Mr Michael Kleidon  
*Luther College, VIC*

Mrs Catherine O'Kane  
*All Hallows' School, QLD*

Mrs Susan Ryan  
*Mount Carmel College, TAS*

## AHISA Honorary Members

Dr Amanda Bell AM

Miss Elizabeth Butt OAM

Mr Nigel Creese AM

Dr Gordon Donaldson AM

Fr Chris Gleeson SJ

Mr Robert Grant AM

Mrs Carolyn Grantskalns

Dr Judith Hancock AM

Ms Noelene Horton AM

Dr Roderic Kefford AM

Mr Malcolm Lamb AM

Mr David Loader OAM

Mr Neville Lyngcoln

Ms Kathleen McCredie AM

Miss Joan Montgomery AM OBE

Bishop Greg O'Kelly SJ AM

Dr Ian Paterson AM

Mr Geoff Ryan AM

Dr Ruth Shatford AM

Mrs Barbara Stone AM

Mr Bill Toppin

Mr Rick Tudor OAM

Mr Michael Urwin

Mrs Margaret White

AHISA members were saddened by the deaths of honorary members Mr John Moody AM on 2 October 2016 and Mr Harry Macdonald OAM on 3 April 2017.

# Amplifying the leadership journey

AHISA works in four major spheres to support members and amplify their leadership – the personal, professional, relational and influential.

AHISA builds leadership capacity and effectiveness through access to professional learning and the shared knowledge and experiences of colleagues.

AHISA sustains members personally in their leadership journey through connections to an authentic and generous network of school leaders and skilled external service providers.

AHISA applies the individual and collective expertise of members to influence and shape educational thinking, policy and practice in Australia.

## Relational

- Collegiality
- Trust & confidentiality
- Networks, access & connections
- Issues management & support

## Influential

- Contribution to all children nationally
- National voice
- Shaping policy
- Advocacy & representation

## Professional

- Professional standards & ethics
- Learning & development, conferences
- Access to collective IP
- Leadership capacity building & appraisal

## Personal

- Personal advisory service
- Personal wellbeing
- Remuneration
- Protection – contractual advice

# Strategic Priorities 2016-19

## Priority 1

**Leadership Excellence – Building the capacity and sustainability of our members through their leadership journey**

- Develop a member services segmentation model that reflects the distinctive stages of the school leadership journey – beginning, midcareer, transitioning (to another school) and career progression beyond the school environment – and, within this model:
  - Provide relevant and accessible professional learning programs
  - Facilitate the sharing of best practice, professional knowledge and expertise within the network
  - Support newly appointed principals in assuming leadership of their schools through targeted and personalised services
  - Assist principals in sustaining positive relationships with their Board and optimising the potential of their senior staff
  - Promote the use of new technologies to serve members and facilitate innovation in learning and leadership
  - Provide access to a range of specialist external service providers to support principals at each stage in their leadership journey, including contract advice, remuneration, mentoring and executive and career management coaching
- Establish strategic partnerships to participate in educational research that builds the capacity of leaders to innovate within their school context
- Consistently review our services to respond to the evolving needs of our members

## Priority 2

**Aspirant Leadership – Identify and develop the future generation of autonomous school leaders**

- Establish a professional learning and development program for aspiring leaders
- Support current members in identifying and nurturing emerging leadership talent within their schools
- Build the network of aspirant leaders, providing opportunities for connection, engagement and shared professional learning

## Priority 3

**Advocacy & Influence – In the interests of autonomous leaders and their communities, influence the shape and direction of educational policy and practice in Australia**

- Promote the value of independent schools and the rights of parents and students to choice in education
- Construct strategic partnerships with government, nongovernment and representative organisations in education to increase our influence at all levels
- Advocate and provide a strong and coherent voice for members, informed by their views and values on matters of:
  - School leadership autonomy
  - School autonomy
  - Quality teaching
  - Student wellbeing, welfare, disability and care
  - Quality learning and curriculum
  - Assessment and academic achievement
  - Compliance
- Optimise contemporary communications and technology platforms/social media to influence and shape opinion in education

# 1. Focus on Members

## “Unrelenting focus on the support and development of AHISA members as high performance leaders”

When asked what they most value about AHISA, members invariably reply, ‘collegiality’. Collegiality is relational, and in AHISA it is built through the multiple interactions of members – at national conferences, through Branch activities and contact at state, territory and regional level, and virtually through AHISA’s main digital network, **HeadNet**.

At state, territory and regional level, AHISA’s six Branches provide an immediate community of colleagues for members, with regular **Branch meetings, seminars, conferences and retreats** building collegial support and offering the opportunity for professional learning and exchange.

Delivery or oversight of AHISA’s member services and programs is also the primary role of AHISA National Office staff, with a major focus during the biennium being further enhancement of AHISA’s capacity to deliver web-based services across multiple digital platforms. This will be of particular benefit to regional members, who rely on ‘virtual’ engagement when Branch meetings are difficult to attend in person, and to AHISA’s international members.

The shift to a more mobile-friendly virtual connection space has included development of a user-friendly and mobile-responsive website, celebrated with a new, digital-friendly logo and fresh branding for the association.

In recognition that the opportunity for members to get to know other Heads in person is extremely valuable, and that some regional AHISA members may find access to Branch meetings in another state more accessible, AHISA’s Board agreed at its meeting in February 2016 that regional members may join the State Branch they are geographically closest to or visit Branch meetings that are easiest for them to access geographically. During the biennium, AHISA’s CEO also arranged and attended sub-Branch gatherings of members in regional areas.

New Heads were another stratum of membership that was in focus in 2015-17, with further promotion of AHISA’s **mentoring scheme**. This program offers those new to the principalship or new to leading an independent school the opportunity to link with a current or former AHISA member. Given the challenges all new Heads face, AHISA has also advocated that the Australian Government establish a national principal mentoring scheme.

The **AHISA New Members Conference**, held in Canberra in May of each year, remains AHISA’s primary professional learning and collegial event for new Heads, with presenters drawn from among AHISA’s Board members and external legal, media and architectural experts.

A highlight of the Conference is a presentation offered by a new Head

who attended the previous year’s Conference on the key leadership challenges they have faced in their first 12 to 18 months as a principal. AHISA is grateful to Mrs Marise McConaghy, Strathcona Baptist Girls Grammar School, VIC, Ms Peggy Mahy, The Scots School Albury, NSW and Mrs Catherine O’Kane, All Hallows’ School, QLD for their contribution to the conferences.

AHISA’s **Biennial Conference** provides the national focus for ongoing professional learning for members, with ‘EdTalks’ or ‘Ignite’ sessions delivered by Heads complementing keynote presentations and providing a platform for members to learn from other Heads. The 2017 Biennial Conference in New Zealand also represents an important opportunity to connect more closely with AHISA’s NZ members and other independent school Heads across the Tasman.

Another important professional development service is AHISA’s **Quality Leadership Profile for Schools (QLPS)**. A 360-degree appraisal tool, the QLPS was first developed by AHISA with the Australian Council for Educational Leaders (ACEL) and Queensland University of Technology. The tool is specific to leadership of independent schools and can be mapped against the Australian Professional Standard for Principals, ACEL’s Leadership Capability Framework and AHISA’s own Model of Autonomous School Principalship.

In 2015-17, 19 Heads and 134 senior staff in 57 members’ schools were profiled using the QLPS.

In response to demand, in 2015 AHISA launched the **Quality Middle Management Profile for Schools (QMMP)**, a variation on the QLPS for

## Focus on Members

middle management staff. In 2015-17, 152 middle management staff members in 23 members' schools were profiled using the QMMPS.

Pivotal to the success of the QLPS and QMMPS as development tools is the debrief of staff with an experienced Head. QLPS Coordinator and former AHISA National Chair, Mr Malcolm Lamb AM, conducted most debriefing sessions in 2015-17. The increasing demand for the service prompted the training in 2017 of two additional debriefers – former AHISA members Mrs Bobby Court (former Principal of Guilford Young College, TAS) and Mr Brian Kennelly (former Principal of Kinross Wolaroi School, NSW). AHISA's CEO, Ms Beth Blackwood, also participated in the training.

In 2017, AHISA launched its **Chairs, Boards & Heads of Independent School Forum**. The Forum has so far been held in Brisbane, at St Aidan's Anglican Girls' School, and in Melbourne at Haileybury City, and will continue to 'travel' to major metropolitan locations. It was conceived as a means to address the 'relational space' between the Head and the school Board, and particularly the Head and the Board Chair, rather than issues of governance compliance. The health of this relational space is critical to the ability of Heads to sustain high performance in their leadership role and therefore has an impact on the effective functioning of their schools.

AHISA is grateful to members and Chairs of members' schools who participated in Chairs and Heads Panels that are an important feature of the Forums: Mrs Karen Spiller OAM, St Aidan's Anglican Girls' School, QLD; Mrs Robyn Bell, Cannon Hill Anglican

College, QLD; Dr Gavin Nicholson, Chair, Cannon Hill Anglican College, QLD; Ms Ros Curtis, St Margaret's Anglican Girls School, QLD; Ms Alison Quinn, Chair, St Margaret's Anglican Girls School, QLD; The Rev. Chris Ivey, St Andrew's Anglican College, QLD; Ms Elizabeth Jameson, Board Chair, Brisbane Girls Grammar School, QLD; Mr Allan Shaw, The Knox School, VIC; Ms Wendy Lewis, Board Chair, The Knox School, VIC; Ms Annette Rome, St Margaret's School and Berwick Grammar School, VIC; Mr Philip Battye, President of School Council, St Margaret's School and Berwick Grammar School, VIC; Mr Geoff Ryan AM, Chair, Mentone Grammar, VIC.

AHISA also assists members with services and programs for senior staff. In addition to the QLPS and QMMPS already mentioned, a range of AHISA email networks support professional exchange for members of senior leadership teams and pastoral care staff. As well, AHISA hosts a biennial conference – the **Leading, Learning & Caring Conference** – for members' senior and pastoral care staff.

In 2016 AHISA also trialled a remuneration survey of senior staff as an addendum to the **2016 Remuneration and Conditions Survey for Heads**. The trial demonstrated the difficulty of creating benchmarks across roles with a wide range of different responsibilities according to schools' historical circumstances, size and location. In 2017, AHISA worked with corporate sponsor MMG Education to create a more refined survey tool and 187 schools participated in the survey. The quality of the data from this survey is such that AHISA will conduct the **Senior Management Remuneration Survey** in alternate years to the

Remuneration and Conditions Survey for Heads. Nearly 70 per cent of members participated in the 2016 Remuneration and Conditions Survey for Heads.

Other member services include AHISA's **Employee Assistance Program**, which provides up to six counselling sessions for members, and legal assistance, particularly on matters of contracts and workplace issues. AHISA's template contract for Heads is reviewed regularly and continues to be the most popular template for members downloaded from AHISA's website.

Members also benefit from AHISA's corporate partners and the expertise and intellectual property they generously share, particularly at the New Members Conference. AHISA has worked with an external consultant to review and strengthen corporate sponsorships, and has also developed benefits packages for members with a number of major national and international suppliers.



## Focus on Members

# Principal Health & Wellbeing

AHISA supports the **Australian Principal Occupational Health, Safety and Wellbeing Survey**, which has been conducted annually since 2011, with AHISA's CEO a member of the Survey consultative committee.

While the Survey notes that principals report a level of job satisfaction well above the workplace average, it also shows that principals report above average levels of workplace stress and work-life conflict, placing them at high risk of developing serious physical and mental health issues.

As well as promoting member participation in the Survey, AHISA has progressed strategies to raise awareness among members of the importance of maintaining their own health and wellbeing, not least as a means to model good self-care behaviours to staff. A **cartoon**, *Top 10 Stress Busters for Principals*, was produced, drawing on research on effective stress reduction techniques as well as the experience of members. A related **infographic**, *Principal Health & Wellbeing: The Risks*, presents Australian research findings on the wellbeing of independent school leaders.

AHISA has also partnered with psychologist Dr Michael Carr-Gregg to develop a series of short videos on principal wellbeing, focusing on six topics: mindfulness; sleep; diet and nutrition; exercise; stress management; and managing relationships. Experts in various fields, including psychologist Dr Charlotte Keating, a Research Fellow at Swinburne University of Technology in Victoria, also contributed to these resources. AHISA is grateful to Mr Philip Grutzner, Principal of Carey Baptist Grammar School, VIC and former member Mr Rick Tudor OAM for their contribution to this project.

## 2. Focus on Aspiring Leaders

### “Commitment to the creation of a strong and sustainable ‘pipeline’ for future leaders of independent schools”

Members of AHISA have long recognised their responsibility to develop leadership capacity in staff, both for the professional and personal development of staff and as a means to prepare the future leaders of Australian independent schools.

AHISA first gave collective shape to members' intent through an aspiring leaders' workshop at its biennial Senior Staff Conference (later merged with the biennial AHISA Pastoral Care Conference to become the AHISA Leading, Learning & Caring Conference). While the workshop remains a feature of the Leading, Learning & Caring Conference, and an informal shadowing program had been facilitated by AHISA's National Office for many years, in 2015 AHISA began the process of establishing a more formal and sustained program of professional learning and development for aspiring leaders.

Central to AHISA's leadership development strategy is the **Aspirant Membership program**. Candidates for this program must be nominated

by AHISA members, and there are currently 104 Aspirant Members.

This special category of membership gives aspiring leaders access to a password-protected section on AHISA's website, where materials on aspects of school leadership and management are posted. These materials are developed by Mrs Robyn Collins, who also contributes to and monitors an email network for Aspirant Members. Mrs Collins also hosted a special social function for Aspirant Members at the 2016 Leading, Learning & Caring Conference.

The Aspirant section on the website contains links to short videos of new Heads discussing key aspects of their preparation for the principalship. AHISA is grateful to members Mrs Anne Dunstan, Pulteney Grammar School, SA, Mr Simon Le Plastrier, Eltham College, VIC, Mrs Marise McConaghy, Strathcona Baptist Girls Grammar School, VIC, Mrs Catherine O'Kane, All Hallows' School, QLD and Mr Andrew Powell, Ascham School, NSW for participating in the video project. A further video project was filmed in May 2017, featuring vignettes of AHISA Board members offering tips on preparing for interviews.

A special 'Head Hunting' section on AHISA's website keeps Aspirant Members informed of leadership opportunities.

The inaugural **Aspirant Head Roadshow** was held in August 2015 at Camberwell Girls Grammar School, VIC. Since then a further four Roadshows have been held: in Sydney in June 2016; in Perth in November 2016; in Brisbane in March 2017; and in Melbourne in July 2017.

The Roadshow program provides senior staff considering a move to the principalship with advice on a range of issues, including recruitment and contracts and how to seek opportunities for leadership development in their current role.

A popular feature of the Roadshows is the frank discussion of the challenges of the principalship and AHISA is grateful to members Mrs Megan Krimmer, Abbotsleigh, NSW, Mr Peter Fowler, Rouse Hill Anglican College, NSW, Mr Cameron Herbert, St Mark's Anglican Community School, WA, Ms Jacinda Euler, Brisbane Girls Grammar School, QLD and Mr Sholto Bowen OAM, Huntingtower, VIC for their contribution to the Roadshows. AHISA also acknowledges AIS NSW and members' schools that have supported the program by providing venues – Perth College, WA, St Aidan's Anglican Girls' School, QLD and Haileybury City, VIC.

AHISA's **Shadowing Program** is also available to aspiring leaders. In 2016 and 2017, 28 schools participated in the program, which offers senior staff the opportunity to shadow Heads in a range of leadership scenarios. AHISA is grateful to members who generously give of their time to sustain this important aspect of leadership development.

In 2016 AHISA collaborated with the Catholic Secondary Principals Association (CaSPA) to prepare a report for the Minister for Education and Training, Senator the Hon Simon Birmingham, in response to the Government's intention to establish a national principal certification scheme, as mooted in the lead

up to the 2016 federal election. The report, ***A National Principal Preparation Scheme for Aspiring Leaders***, sets out an alternative to a national principal certification scheme and suggests that, rather than initiating a certification scheme, the Government should instead build on AITSL's existing framework for the evaluation of principal preparation programs and encourage providers to seek accreditation of their principal preparation courses or programs. This would support aspiring leaders to adopt a more systematic approach to their professional development while maintaining the diversity of pathways to the principalship necessary to meet sectoral and jurisdictional requirements.

## Focus on Aspiring Leaders

# Transition to the Headship

In 2016 AHISA commissioned Dr Julie Rimes, Adjunct Associate Professor in the Faculty of Education at the University of Tasmania to undertake research on transitioning to the principalship. The project involved a survey of 22 new members and follow up interviews with three Heads. The resulting project report, published in 2017, examined three key themes that emerged from the survey data: the effectiveness of preparation for the principalship; culture shock experiences in the transition into the principalship; and the effectiveness of professional support received throughout the induction period.

The project confirmed anecdotal evidence that beginning Heads identify a need for more experience and knowledge in: financial literacy; self-management; legal and regulatory compliance; managing misconduct and grievance; leading change; instructional leadership; infrastructure development and project management and planning; and workplace law, including pay and conditions and enterprise bargaining. The research data also provide a strong endorsement of the value of a mentor for new Heads.

The project findings will help the creation and implementation of further development programs and materials for aspiring leaders and new Heads.

**AHISA members Mr Andrew Powell, Mrs Catherine O'Kane, Mr Simon Le Plastrier, Mrs Anne Dunstan and Mrs Marise McConaghy contributed to a video project designed to inform Aspirant Members.**



## 3. Focus on Advocacy

### “Determined advocacy of independent schools and their leadership in the political and public domains”

In 2015-17 AHISA actively represented the interests of autonomous school Heads, affirmed the value of independent schooling and defended the professional capacity of teachers and school leaders in both the political and public spheres. AHISA made multiple submissions to parliamentary and other inquiries or reviews, consulted with parliamentarians and departmental and government agency officials, appeared at inquiry hearings, collaborated with other national education organisations and engaged with mainstream media.

#### Government relations

AHISA's National Chair and CEO met regularly with federal parliamentarians and their advisers. Cordial relations were maintained with the office of the Minister for Education and Training, Senator the Hon Simon Birmingham, and AHISA appreciates the readiness of the Minister's Senior Adviser for Schools, Dr Scott Prasser, to discuss issues relating to school leadership, particularly principal certification. Dr Prasser also presented at AHISA's May 2017 Board meeting on the Government's changes to the federal schools funding model.

The National Chair and CEO were also invited to consult with Deputy Leader of the Opposition and Shadow Minister for Education, the Hon Tanya Plibersek MP, on several issues raised in AHISA's policy document, *Independent schools: Helping to build Australia's future*. That document had also been discussed with the Hon Kate Ellis MP when Shadow Minister for Education. AHISA was also invited to attend Labor's Jobs and Skills Summit, led by the Hon Bill Shorten MP, Leader of the Opposition, and Tanya Plibersek in March 2017.

Consultations at Parliament House also included discussions with Senator Nick McKim, as the then Greens spokesperson for the education portfolio, and representation to advisers to then Assistant Ministers Wyatt Roy and the Hon Karen Andrews MP in the industry, science and innovation portfolio.

Ongoing consultations were conducted with the Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority (ACARA) and the Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership (AITSL).

AHISA was consulted by Dr Barbara Watterston on the update to her 2015 environmental scan of principal preparation programs for AITSL, and AHISA's National Chair and CEO were interviewed regarding the Australian Professional Standards for Teachers and certification of Highly Accomplished and Lead Teachers. Together with CaSPA and the Australian Primary Principals Association (APPA), AHISA attended a briefing by AITSL's then acting CEO, Deputy CEO and Senior Project Officer - School Leadership on AITSL's work on principal

certification. AHISA also participated in an AITSL School Leadership Roundtable in April 2017.

Important to AHISA's representation is the AHISA National Chair's membership of the AITSL School Leadership Expert Standing Committee. AHISA's Board also welcomed AITSL CEO Ms Lisa Rodgers and AITSL's then General Manager - Teaching and School Leadership, Ms Sue Buckley, to its February 2017 meeting.

Consultation with ACARA is maintained through participation in teleconferences for parents' and principals' peak national bodies and in stakeholder briefings.

AHISA also participated in two schools and early learning stakeholder briefings organised by the federal Department of Education and Training, departmental teleconference briefings for presidents of national peak principals' associations, and roundtables relating to higher education admissions practices. AHISA's CEO also met with the Secretary of the Department, Dr Michele Bruniges to discuss a range of issues, including the impact of changes to 457 visa arrangements on AHISA members and their schools' recruitment of staff.

Officers of the Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet consulted with AHISA's CEO on the issue of support for Indigenous students in boarding schools.

#### Submissions

During 2015-17 AHISA continued to engage with the work of the **Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse**, making a further three submissions.

AHISA's CEO also participated in a roundtable on child protection reporting practices and appeared at a public hearing on criminal justice responses to cases of institutional child sexual abuse.

AHISA is grateful to its members for their ready response to an online survey to gather information on school practices relating to records and recordkeeping practices on child safety and complaints of sexual abuse, and to Victorian members for their response to a survey on the impact of Victoria's criminal justice provisions for cases of child sexual abuse in schools. The information gathered through these surveys has helped AHISA prepare substantive submissions which have helped inform the Royal Commission's deliberations.

As part of its engagement on the important issue of child safety, AHISA developed a section on its website, 'Child Safe Schools', where key point summaries of Royal Commission research reports and other documents are published, along with policy documents generously submitted by members and links to external resources.

AHISA is also grateful to those members who supported AHISA's submission to a **Senate Inquiry into Harm Being Done to Australian Children through Access to Pornography on the Internet** by responding to an online survey canvassing concerns on the issue and opinions on preferred government interventions.

The Senate's report, tabled in Parliament in November 2016,

concluded there was no evidence that access to online pornography caused harm to children and called for further research. AHISA wrote to the Inquiry Chair, former Senator Larissa Waters, to the Minister for Communications, Senator the Hon Mitch Fifield, to the Minister for Education and Training, Senator the Hon Simon Birmingham, and to the Acting Children's e-Safety Commissioner expressing disappointment in the Committee of Inquiry's conclusion and argued that the evidence presented to the Inquiry clearly showed *risk* of harm.

The Government's response, issued in April 2017, accepts the position that there is evidence of risk of harm and the Government has asked the Online Safety Consultative Working Group (OSCWG), chaired by the eSafety Commissioner, to expand its scope of work 'to inform potential policy responses to address the harmful impact of pornography on children'. The OSCWG has also been tasked with reviewing research into this issue.

AHISA members also contributed to a survey canvassing information on challenges to the education of students from regional, rural and remote areas and examples of innovations and successful practices in members' schools to make provision for these students. Survey data were used to inform AHISA's submission to the Australian Government's **Independent Review into Regional, Rural and Remote Education**.

AHISA also submitted to the **Productivity Commission's Inquiry into the Further Development of the National Evidence Base for School and Early Childhood Education** and

again in response to the Productivity Commission's draft report flowing from that Inquiry. AHISA's CEO was also consulted by Productivity Commission officers for the Inquiry.

AHISA was particularly concerned by three key recommendations in the Commission's draft report: that school performance data (collected from NAPLAN and international standardised tests such as PISA) should be linked to education research; that such research should in turn focus on providing evidence of 'what works' to boost student achievement, which then should be applied to classroom practice; and that a new national institution – created under a new National Agreement between ministers of education – should have oversight of this cycle of evidence creation and application.

AHISA queried the Commission's underlying assumption that the apparent decline in student achievement in Australia was the fault of schools and teachers who were either ill-informed or not applying 'what works', and that such a decline could therefore be arrested by discovering 'what works' and ensuring it was applied.

AHISA further defended Australian schools and their leaders in submissions addressing the Government's policy intentions on innovation, including a submission on the development of **Australia's 2030 Innovation Strategic Plan** and a Parliamentary **Inquiry on School to Work Transition**. AHISA queried the assumption that Australian schools are failing to prepare students for the future world of work and argued that

## Focus on Advocacy

governments should recognise the entrepreneurial capacity of schools and support it.

AHISA is also preparing a submission to the Australian Government's **Review to Achieve Educational Excellence in Australian Schools**, chaired by Mr David Gonski AC (the 'Gonski 2.0' review). The submission will argue for the importance of preserving the autonomy of schools in determining the models of education provision most appropriate for their communities.

A full list of AHISA's submissions appears on page 25.

### Collaborative connections

AHISA continued to consult and work collaboratively with the Australian Primary Principals Association (APPA), Catholic Secondary Principals Australia (CaSPA), the Australian Secondary Principals Association (ASPA) and Independent Primary School Heads of Australia (IPSHA).

AHISA also values its relationship with the Association of Heads of Independent Schools NZ (AHIS NZ) and its connection with principals world-wide through the International Confederation of Principals (ICP). All AHISA members are members of the ICP through their membership of AHISA.

AHISA's CEO also consults regularly with the Executive Director of the Australian Council for Educational Leaders (ACEL), the Australian College of Educators (ACE) and the Australian Boarding Schools Association (ABSA). AHISA is represented at ABSA Board meetings by Mr David Gee, Wesley College, WA.

AHISA also participated in a principals' reference group for a joint initiative

of the Australian Teacher Education Association (ATEA), the Australian Association for Research in Education (AARE) and the Australian Council for Deans of Education (ACDE) on building a research-rich teaching profession for Australia. AHISA was also consulted by Dr Jane Figgis on behalf of the Australian Council for Educational Research (ACER) for a report on the future of education.

AHISA values its membership of the National Consultative Group of the Independent Schools Council of Australia (ISCA), augmented by regular meetings between ISCA's Executive Director and AHISA's CEO. During the 2015-17 biennium, AHISA's close relationship with ISCA was also supported by the membership of AHISA of ISCA's Chairs – first through the then Headmaster of The Hutchins School, TAS, Mr Warwick Dean and, since May 2017, through Mr Steven Bowers, Principal of Burgmann Anglican School, ACT. AHISA also collaborated with ISCA to jointly host the highly successful 2016 National Education Forum.

### Strategic communications

AHISA engaged with mainstream and education sector media through the issue of media releases on topical issues and with comment when requested. The introduction of a blog-style 'Comment' section on AHISA's website also proved a useful adjunct to media releases, with some organisations requesting permission to reprint blog items.

Media releases were also issued to AHISA stakeholders and distributed to federal MPs and Senators.

Major articles and feature interviews published in metropolitan newspapers

and sector publications (online or in hard copy format) included:

- *The Australian Financial Review* published an article by the National Chair in its 'Corporate Woman' section, 'New company directors as close as the local school' (2 November 2015). The article advocated female Heads of independent schools as a ready source of female directors for corporate Boards.
- *The Educator* published an opinion by AHISA Chief Executive Geoff Ryan on the performance of students from independent schools at university (13 November 2015).
- *Australian Teacher Magazine* published in full online AHISA's media release on the NAPLAN 2015 national report, including the accompanying table of analysis of results for Indigenous and non-Indigenous students by geolocation (2 December 2015).
- *Australian Teacher Magazine* published an article by AHISA's CEO based on AHISA's submission to the Inquiry into Harm Being Done to Australian Children through Access to Pornography on the Internet as a lead feature (27 May 2016).
- On 18 July 2016, *The Educator* published an article by AHISA's CEO on 'Public blaming and public policy' (first published in the 'Comment' section of AHISA's website). The article was also published by Independent Schools Victoria on its website.
- *The Educator* published an opinion by AHISA National Chair, Karen Spiller, on 'Innovation and schools: A policy paradox' (1 August 2016).



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## Innovation & Indigenous Education

AHISA responded to the House of Representatives Inquiry into Educational Opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Students with a two-part submission.

Part 1, submitted in December 2015, contained articles published in AHISA's journal, *Independence*, demonstrating how AHISA members' schools have adopted and adapted various strategies to meet the unique circumstances of their immediate communities and the needs of Indigenous students. Part 2 of the submission described innovative models of provision both in major metropolitan areas and on-country as initiated by AHISA members and was submitted in February 2016.

The submission emphasised the important role of school leaders in developing and implementing successful provision for Indigenous students and supported three points raised by the Prime Minister's Indigenous Advisory Council: the value of trialling small-scale innovative models; the value of autonomous leadership in the development of innovative, creative responses to Indigenous education; and the value of city-remote school partnerships.

AHISA is grateful to members Dr John Collier, St Andrew's Cathedral School and Gawura School, NSW, Dr Helen Drennen AM, Wesley College, VIC and Yiramalay/Wesley Studio School, WA, Mr Phillip Heath, Barker College and Darkinjung Barker College, NSW, Mr Jonathan Walter, Woodleigh School, VIC and former member Mr Rick Tudor OAM of Melbourne Indigenous Transition School, VIC, for their assistance with Part 2 of the submission.

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- *The Educator* published its 2016 'Hot List', with a full-page feature on AHISA National Chair, Mrs Karen Spiller OAM (20 November 2016)..
- *The Educator* published an article, 'Closing the gender gap at the top', based on an interview with the National Chair (28 February 2017).
- *Australian Teacher Magazine* published an article by AHISA's National Chair in its 'Hard Word' section, titled 'Why are education policy doctors blaming the patient?' (7 March 2017). The article was republished by Independent Schools Victoria in the 'Dialogue' section of its website.
- *The Educator* published as a full article a letter to its Editor by AHISA's National Chair Karen Spiller in response to the journal's take up of

comments by Westpac's CEO, Mr Brian Hartzler, that single sex schools are a cause of the low number of female CEOs in Australia (27 April 2017).

As well as picking up comment from AHISA media releases, journalists from mainstream and sector press, radio and television requested direct comment from the National Chair and CEO, including *The Australian*, *The Australian Financial Review*, *The Courier Mail*, *The Age*, *The Sydney Morning Herald*, *The Daily Telegraph*, *The Australian Education Reporter*, *The Educator*, ABC News Radio, ABC Radio National, Radio 2SM, Radio 2GB, ABC TV News, ABC News24, NITV, SkyTV, SBS TV and Channel 10. Issues covered included schools and innovation, STEM, ALP schools policy, harm to children through access to pornography on the internet, adolescent drug and alcohol abuse, schools funding, NAPLAN results, PISA results, wellness centres in independent schools, school fees, principal health and wellbeing, My School, NAP Science Literacy test results, 21st century learning spaces, and the contemporary boarding school experience.

On 19 April 2017 Fairfax presses carried a story highly critical of a recommendation in AHISA's pre-Budget submission of January 2017. AHISA recommended that the Australian Government introduce greater flexibility into its general recurrent funding model for non-government schools to support on-country education provision for Indigenous students through satellite schools developed by already established non-government schools.

AHISA further recommended that Indigenous students attending the satellite school should attract the maximum rate of federal per student general recurrent funding, irrespective of the SES score of the parent school. The recommendation was one arising from AHISA's submission to the Inquiry into Educational Opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Students, as a means of scaling up already proven models developed by independent schools.

Fairfax media interpreted the recommendations as an attempt by independent schools to 'cash in' on extra federal funding and inferred that such satellite schools or campuses were a form of racial segregation.

The story attracted significant media attention, with mainstream media pursuing the theme of segregation. Indigenous media coverage, through NITV, Brisbane Indigenous Radio and CAAMA Radio was positive, noting the involvement of Indigenous communities in existing models and the successful outcomes for students.

AHISA's response strategy was to accept as many requests for comment as possible, as a platform to highlight the educational needs of Indigenous students in regional and remote areas. AHISA is grateful to Mr Phillip Heath, Barker College and Darkinjung Barker College, NSW and Dr John Collier, St Andrew's Cathedral School and Gawura School, NSW, for their support of AHISA's CEO in responding to media interest.



### AHISA on Social Media

AHISA supports two Twitter accounts: @AHISAJournal, which largely engages with professional learning networks of educators; and @AHISAConf, which supports delegate exchange at AHISA conferences and transmission of key learnings from conference presenters to the public domain. The two accounts have over 2,200 followers between them and together attract between 350 and 750 profile views per month.





**AHISA & ISCA National Education Forum**  
**Independent education: Leading future learning**

Presenting at the AHISA & ISCA National Education Forum: Senator the Hon Simon Birmingham, the Hon Bill Shorten MP, the Hon Kate Ellis MP, Senator Nick McKim, Professor Ian Chub, Mr Chris Richardson, Professor John Hattie, Mr Warwick Dean, Ms Colette Colman, Mrs Karen Spiller, Ms Beth Blackwood and policy panelists Dr Jennifer Buckingham, Dr Peter Goss, Mr Dom Thurbon and Ms Danielle Toon.

# AHISA Conferences & Events 2015-17

Conferences, forums and seminars are an important way in which AHISA delivers opportunities for professional learning and collegial exchange for members, and for their senior staff and school Board members.

## AHISA & ISCA National Education Forum

15 March 2016, Canberra

Registrations: 317

AHISA and the Independent Schools Council of Australia (ISCA) once again collaborated to host a one-day National Forum to explore national policy issues in school education. Delegates included principals, members of school governing bodies, school business managers and representatives from other national and state-based independent sector organisations.

### Special Guests

Senator the Hon Simon Birmingham, Minister for Education and Training

The Hon Bill Shorten MP, Leader of the Opposition

The Hon Kate Ellis MP, then Shadow Minister for Education

Senator Nick McKim, then Australian Greens spokesperson on education

### Keynotes and Panelists

Professor Ian Chubb AC (Australia's former Chief Scientist 2011-16), *National Education Policy and STEM*

Mr Chris Richardson (Director of Deloitte Access Economics), *The Economy and Its Impact on the Education Sector*

Professor John Hattie (Director of the Melbourne Educational Research

Institute at the University of Melbourne and Chair of AITSL), *National Education Policy and Teaching and Learning*

Panelists, *New Policy Possibilities*: Mr Dom Thurbon (Founder and Chief Creative Officer at Karrikins Group); Ms Danielle Toon (Manager at Learning First); Dr Jennifer Buckingham (Research Fellow and Director of the Five from Five project at the Centre for Independent Studies); Dr Peter Goss (School Education Program Director at Grattan Institute)

Short addresses and information sessions were also given by ISCA's then Chair Mr Warwick Dean, then Headmaster of The Hutchins School, TAS, ISCA Executive Director Ms Colette Colman, AHISA National Chair Mrs Karen Spiller OAM, Principal of St Aidan's Anglican Girls' School, QLD and AHISA CEO Ms Beth Blackwood.

## Leading, Learning & Caring Conference 2016

25-27 August 2016, Adelaide

Registrations: 455

The Leading, Learning & Caring Conference is tailored specifically for senior staff and pastoral care staff of independent schools. The theme of the 2016 Conference was 'Relationships, Resilience and Responsibilities'.

### Keynotes

Ms Dorinda Hafner (international TV celebrity, actor, businesswoman, author)

Professor Lea Waters (Director of the Centre for Positive Psychology, University of Melbourne), *Positive Psychology in Schools*

Professor David Lloyd (Vice Chancellor and President of University of South Australia), *Preparing Leaders Who Can Learn*

Dr Barbara Spears (University of South Australia), *Nothing About Us Without Us*

Brendan Spillane (Australian educator and executive coach), *Performance Patterns – A Reflection on What High-Performing Leaders Pay Attention To*

Dr Gill Hicks (Founder, M.A.D. for Peace), *Life: A Journey of Continuous Learning*

### Conference Committee & Sub Committee

Mrs Rebecca Clarke (Chair)  
*Principal, Walford Anglican School for Girls*

Mr Greg Atterton  
*Deputy Principal, Pulteney Grammar School*

Ms Trina Cummins  
*Director of Wellbeing & Positive Education, Wilderness School*

Mrs Jane Danvers  
*Principal, Wilderness School*

Mrs Anne Dunstan  
*Principal, Pulteney Grammar School*

Mr Craig Fielke  
*Principal, Cornerstone College*

Ms Mandy Hore  
*Deputy Principal, Walford Anglican School for Girls*

Mrs Anne Johnstone  
*(then Principal, Seymour College)*

Mrs Kath McGuigan  
*Principal, Mary MacKillop College*

Mr Rob Rhode  
*Deputy Principal, Cornerstone College*

Ms Helen Steele  
*Deputy Principal, Mary MacKillop College*

## AHISA New Members Conferences

20-22 May 2016, Canberra

19-21 May 2017, Canberra

Delegates 2016: 13 new members

Delegates 2017: 27 new members

The AHISA New Members Conference is hosted by members of AHISA's Board. Held annually over one weekend, the Conference helps build collegiality between new and established Heads as well as their partners. Board members present their reflections and experience on a range of topics, and selected experts are also invited to present on key areas of leadership and school business including media management, master planning, contractual arrangements and staff management.

## Aspirant Head Roadshows

17 June 2016, Sydney

18 November 2016, Perth

9 March 2017, Brisbane

31 July 2017, Melbourne

Total registrations: 130

Aspirant Head Roadshows, held on an evening, are designed for senior staff considering a career as a principal. Speakers include Heads and former Heads and external specialists on recruitment and contracts.

## Chairs, Boards & Heads of Independent Schools Forums

Brisbane, 10 March 2017, Brisbane

Melbourne, 1 August 2017, Melbourne

Total registrations: 197

The half-day Forums focus on the critical professional relationship between a Head, their Board Chair and their Board Members, with speakers and panelists including Heads and former Heads, Chairs and governance specialists. Topics covered include: achieving the best dynamic between the Chair of the Board and the Head of a school; models of governance in independent schools; reviewing Board performance; and professional growth, performance review and renewal practices for Heads.

## 2017 Biennial Conference

29 September - 1 October 2017, Queenstown, New Zealand

Heads attending: 235 (expected at time of publication of this report)

The 2017 Biennial Conference was presented in conjunction with AHIS NZ, with the theme 'Engage, Explore, Envision'. An optional program of school visits was held prior to the Conference on 27 September 2017 in Auckland, Wellington and Christchurch. Features of the Conference were 'Ignite' sessions presented by Heads and a 'Day of Deep Learning', with programs tailored for three different stages of a Head's career: the first five years; mid-career; and long-term Heads.

## Keynote Presenters

The Rt Honourable Dame Jenny Shipley (former Prime Minister of New Zealand)

Steve Munby (former CEO of Education Development Trust, UK)

Dr Tony Fernando (Consultant Psychiatrist and Senior Lecturer at the University of Auckland)

Andreas Schleicher (Director for Education and Skills and Special Advisor on Education Policy to the Secretary General at the OECD)

## Conference Committee

Mrs Karen Spiller OAM (Chair)  
*St Aidan's Anglican Girls' School, QLD*

Ms Rebecca Cody  
*Methodist Ladies' College, WA*

Mrs Christine Leighton  
*St Andrew's College, NZ*

Ms Heather McRae (President AHIS NZ)  
*Diocesan School for Girls, NZ*

Mr Tim Oughton  
*Kristin School, NZ*

Ms Jenny Williams  
*Firbank Grammar School, VIC*

Mr Garth Wynne  
*Christ's College, NZ*



# AHISA Publications 2015-17

AHISA's publishing effort supports collegial contribution and exchange among members and is an important way members contribute collectively to the wider education sector.

AHISA's flagship publication, *Independence*, published twice a year, is distributed in hard copy format to members and subscribers and is also published digitally in the public domain. The journal is a platform for Heads and their staff members to share practice and discuss topical issues in independent school education. It is also a major vehicle for AHISA members' contribution to supporting excellence in school leadership in Australasia and beyond. The digital edition of the journal now has an international following.

In the lead up to the 2016 federal election, AHISA published a policy document, *Independent schools: Helping to build Australia's future*. The document covers 10 key issues: leveraging the entrepreneurial capacity of schools; innovation to help close the gap for Indigenous students; encouraging higher order learning in STEM; language learning for global citizenship; developing exceptional school leadership; improving initial teacher education; professional development for quality teaching; public accountability for teaching quality; making the most of NAPLAN; and supporting students with high level needs. Hard copies of the document and a policy point summary were distributed to key politicians and AHISA stakeholders and a digital version was published on AHISA's website.

## Independence 2015-17



### Vol 40 No 2, October 2015

- Trends influencing school leadership
- Indigenous education
- Strategic school development
- Sport, academic achievement and EI
- School leaders' wellbeing and mental health

### Vol 41 No 1, May 2016

- Enhancing senior secondary academic outcomes
- Meeting special learning needs
- Building a culture of literacy
- Defining effective school leadership
- Staff engagement and school performance

### Vol 41 No 2, October 2016

- When a Head retires: Tips for a trouble-free transition
- Re-branding vocational education
- Connecting adolescents to the real world
- Principal wellbeing in remote schools
- Empowering staff to raise student achievement

### Vol 42 No 1, May 2017

- The future of education
- The independent school principal, superhero
- Pedagogical coaching as a tool for change
- Integrating international and non-international boarders
- Finance matters



*What Parents Say: Quality Education & Independent Schools*; infographic issued March 2016.

*Australian Independent Schools are Top Performers*; infographic issued April 2017.

*Principal Health & Wellbeing: The Risks*; infographic issued February 2017.

*Top 10 Stress Busters for Principals*; cartoon issued January 2017.

AHISA published the third in its series of infographics on aspects of independent schooling. Issued in March 2016, *What Parents Say: Quality Education & Independent Schools* presents findings from parent surveys on why parents choose independent schools, parents' views on what makes for a quality education in an independent school, what parents rate as the top strengths of their child's independent school and why they would recommend their child's independent school to others.

The infographic, *Australian Independent Schools are Top Performers*, first published in 2015, was re-issued in April 2017 to reflect release of results of the OECD's 2015 Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA), which showed students in Australian independent schools ranking highly against students in the world's top performing nations.

AHISA also produced a cartoon, *Top 10 Stress Busters for Principals*, and an infographic, *Principal Health & Wellbeing: The Risks*, to encourage members in their self-care.

AHISA also maintained an extensive internal publishing program for members.

The *AHISA Bulletin* is published three times a year in digital format. It serves to report to members on decisions taken by AHISA's Board and on member and Branch activities. This is supplemented by the National Chair's summary of Board decisions, circulated to members via HeadNet.

The digital CEO's *e-Bulletin* is a twice-monthly compendium of issues of interest to members and is also used to circulate AHISA-generated key point summaries of research, school policies shared by members, policy templates, book reviews generated for members by former members and other advisory material.

In May 2017 AHISA published a report of research undertaken on its behalf by Dr Julie Rimes, *Transition to the Headship*. Two special *National Chair's Reports* for members were also published, one on women in leadership and the other on principal tenure.

# AHISA Communications 2015-17

AHISA's public communications aim to inform policy makers and contribute to public debate on education issues.

## AHISA Submissions 2015-17

AHISA supports its advocacy effort with submissions to public inquiries and consultations conducted by federal parliamentary committees or other government agencies or commissions.

### 2015

- Australian Government Policy Hack on Innovation – 13 October 2015
- Educational Opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Students, Part 1 – 16 December 2015

### 2016

- Productivity Commission: Inquiry into Australia's Intellectual Property Arrangements – 23 February 2016
- Educational Opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Students, Part 2 – 29 February 2016
- Harm Being Done to Australian Children through Access to Pornography on the Internet – 10 March 2016
- Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse: Response to Consultation Paper on Best Practice Principles in Responding to Complaints of Child Sexual Abuse – 22 April 2016
- Productivity Commission: Inquiry into National Education Evidence Base – 25 May 2016

- Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse: Response to Consultation Paper on Records and Recordkeeping Practices – 3 October 2016
- Productivity Commission: Inquiry into National Education Evidence Base – Response to Draft Report – 6 October 2016
- Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse: Response to Consultation Paper on Criminal Justice – 17 October 2016

### 2017

- Pre-Budget Submission 2017 – 19 January 2017
- Australian Education Amendment Bill – 26 May 2017
- Innovation Science Australia: Response to 2030 Innovation Strategic Plan Issues Paper – 30 May 2017
- Departments of Education and Training and Immigration and Border Protection: Impact of Changes to 457 Visa Arrangements on Independent Schools – 26 June 2017
- School to Work Transition – 31 July 2017
- Independent Review into Rural and Regional Education – 29 August 2017

## AHISA Media Releases 2015-17

AHISA distributes its media releases to major metropolitan radio, press and television, the Federal Press Gallery, education journalists, AHISA stakeholders and federal MPs and Senators.

### 2015

- AHISA welcomes National Chair, Mrs Karen Spiller – 1 October 2015
- AHISA National Chair calls for a place for schools on national innovation agenda – 1 October 2015
- NAPLAN 2015 and the achievement gap – 2 December 2015
- AHISA welcomes Innovation Agenda investment in schools – 7 December 2015
- Independent school leaders ready to contribute to national STEM agenda – 11 December 2015

### 2016

- AHISA welcomes Labor's promise of increased investment in education – 28 January 2016
- My School 2016: Parents and the 'happiness factor' – 9 March 2016
- Leading Future Learning Forum: School autonomy underwrites innovation – 15 March 2016
- Schools, parents and governments all have an important role to play in helping to protect children from harm through access to pornography on the internet – 18 March 2016
- Budget 2016: Consultation key to education reform – 3 May 2016
- How governments can help students by helping schools – 27 May 2016

## AHISA Communications 2015-17

- Reconciliation in action: Innovation in education provision for Indigenous students in independent schools – 2 June 2016
- AHISA welcomes Coalition ministry announcement – 18 July 2016
- AHISA welcomes focus on education in Opposition shadow ministry – 25 July 2016
- AHISA cautions against a single focus on 'what works': Schools need support to explore and develop 'next practice' – 6 September 2016
- AHISA welcomes schools sector presence on International Education Council – 19 October 2016
- AHISA welcomes Higher Education Stands Panel recommendations on tertiary admissions transparency – 16 November 2016
- Australian independent schools rate as innovators – 2 December 2016
- NAPLAN 2016 and the achievement gap – 13 December 2016
- AHISA welcomes Productivity Commission's IP recommendations – 22 December 2016

### 2017

- Federal Minister for Education's first steps toward compulsory Year 1 assessment show commendable caution – 29 January 2017
- Principal Health & Wellbeing Survey holds a lesson for all Australians – 15 February 2017
- My School 2017: Numbers alone are not enough for wise school choice – 8 March 2017
- NAP Science results and the gender gap – 15 March 2017

- Indigenous education demands urgent attention – 19 April 2017
- 'Gonski 2.0' a welcome kick start to robust policy debate – 2 May 2017
- AHISA congratulates its National Chair, Karen Spiller OAM on her Australian honours award – 12 June 2017
- Parliament votes for funding certainty for schools – 23 June 2017
- Appointment of Gonski 2.0 Review panel members signals start of national dialogue on education – 12 July 2017

### AHISA Comment 2015-17

To augment its public statements via submissions and media releases, AHISA posts blog-style commentary on education policy and issues in the 'Comment' section of its website.

#### 2015

- Let's respect and appreciate diversity – Karen Spiller, 7 October 2015
- Schools are innovation incubators – Karen Spiller, 15 October 2015
- Heads of independent schools can contribute to corporate Australia – Karen Spiller, 2 November 2015
- Who has the edge at university? – Geoff Ryan, 18 November 2015
- Public education & the rights of parents – Geoff Ryan, 3 December 2015

#### 2016

- STEM policy and schools – Karen Spiller, 6 January 2016
- Student achievement and 'academic press' – Beth Blackwood, 28 January 2016

- Workplace problems demand workplace solutions – Beth Blackwood, 28 January 2016
- Safe schools – Karen Spiller, 3 March 2016
- Consultation is key to education reform – Karen Spiller, 5 May 2016
- Innovative schools for the innovation nation – Karen Spiller, 16 May 2016
- Children's access to online pornography demands multiple responses – Beth Blackwood, 27 May 2016
- Making a difference – Karen Spiller, 14 June 2016
- Public blaming and policy making – Beth Blackwood, 15 July 2016
- When facts fail – Beth Blackwood, 28 September 2016
- Embarrassment and shame? Interpreting Australia's schooling report card – Karen Spiller, 22 December 2016
- Good news and bad in NAPLAN 2016 report – Karen Spiller, 23 December 2016

#### 2017

- Policy speculation is not the same as policy debate – Beth Blackwood, 27 March 2017
- Indigenous education needs urgent attention – Beth Blackwood, 19 April 2017
- Credibility at stake in schools funding debate – Beth Blackwood, 26 May 2017

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2016 National Education Forum photographs are by courtesy of the Independent Schools Council of Australia.

**AHISA values the support of its partners**



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