

AHISA MEDIA RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

19 December 2022

Australia's schooling system deserves collaborative national effort

The Association of Heads of Independent Schools of Australia (AHISA) says agreement by Commonwealth, state and territory Ministers for Education on a National Teacher Workforce Action Plan and their commitment to address outcomes for students from disadvantaged backgrounds are welcome signs that Australian governments recognise that collaborative effort supports the education of all young Australians.

'NAPLAN results and Australia's results in international testing programs consistently point to what has been called Australia's "long tail of underachievement",' said AHISA's CEO Ms Beth Blackwood. 'The news that Education Ministers have agreed to focus on improving academic and wellbeing outcomes for students in regional and remote areas, First Nations students, students with disability and students from low socio-economic backgrounds sets high hopes – and high expectations – for the entire school education sector in 2023 and beyond.'

Ms Blackwood said that time would tell if the 12-month delay in a new National School Reform Agreement would deliver a commitment by state and territory governments to meet their full school funding obligations.

'Federal Minister for Education, the Hon Jason Clare, seems to be setting the stage for a "no excuses" approach to negotiations with his state and territory counterparts,' said Ms Blackwood. 'From his first day in the education portfolio, the Minister has made it clear that he wants equity gaps in educational outcomes well and truly closed.'

Ms Blackwood said that agreement by Ministers to progress the Online Formative Assessment Initiative (OFAI), with leadership by ACARA, was welcome.

'The OFAI project concept and its Spindle prototype held great promise to support teachers in reaping full benefits of ACARA's learning progressions, and AHISA recommended continuation of the project in our [response to the draft National Teacher Workforce Action Plan](#),' said Ms Blackwood. 'The four institutions comprising Australia's National Education Architecture – ACARA, AITSL, ESA and AERO – together form an exceptional national resource and it makes sense to leverage their unique capacities to strengthen and enrich Australian school education.'

ENDS

Contact: Ms Beth Blackwood, AHISA CEO, mobile 0417 180 842.

AHISA is a professional association of 450 Heads of independent schools. Its members lead schools that collectively account for over 11 per cent of total Australian school enrolments, 70 per cent of independent sector enrolments and 20 per cent of total Australian Year 12 enrolments.