

MEDIA RELEASE | FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE | 17 March 2022

## Schools are realising the future of education now

“What we used to call the future of education is manifesting right now in our schools.”

Addressing the [National Education Forum](#) in Canberra today, the National Chair of the Association of Heads of Independent Schools of Australia (AHISA), the Rev. Chris Ivey, told the Forum that, while there was an expectation that the COVID-19 pandemic had offered an opportunity to press the ‘reset’ button on education, and that schooling systems would shake off the remnants of industrial-age education provision, “many independent schools in Australia had taken the opportunity presented by COVID-19 disruption to hit the ‘fast forward’ button”.

The Rev. Ivey, who is Principal of St Andrew’s Anglican College in Peregian Springs, Qld, told Forum delegates that by applying the values of collegiality, contribution and collaboration, educators could scale and share the intellectual capital generated within their schools for the benefit of all students.

“Collaborative effort does not demand uniform practice,” said the Rev. Ivey. “On the contrary, collaboration supports diversity because it does not regulate – it enables.”

Forum delegates heard speakers on a range of key issues in Australian schooling, including the role of schools in Australia’s journey of reconciliation, student and staff wellbeing, and children’s online safety.

The 2022 National Education Forum was the fifth to be hosted jointly by AHISA and Independent Schools Australia. As well as providing a platform for experts on education and school governance issues, the Forum is designed to give independent school governors, principals and sector representatives the opportunity to hear directly from the federal Minister and Shadow Minister for Education.

“The federal government does not own any schools, but it wields enormous influence on what schools teach and even on who gets selected for entry to initial teacher education courses,” said the Rev. Ivey. “With a federal election so close, we were privileged to hear from the acting Minister for Education and Youth, the Hon Stuart Robert and from Shadow Minister for Education, the Hon Tanya Plibersek, about their vision for Australia’s schools,” said the Rev. Ivey.

“Whatever their topic, speakers at the Forum were agreed on the power of school education to realise the potential of our young people and contribute to our national future,” said the Rev. Ivey. “What we have learned over the past two years is that, in times of crisis and uncertainty, schools also play important roles as centres of stability and beacons of hope to their communities.”

The Rev. Ivey said that the COVID-19 pandemic had revealed the capacity of teachers to be fast learners. “The actions of schools and educators during COVID-19 should give governments assurance that the future of Australian education is in good hands,” said the Rev. Ivey. “We would like to see governments make consultation with the profession a priority for their policy making in the future.”

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 and 70 per cent of independent sector enrolments.