



Independent Schools
Council of Australia

Media Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Independent Schools Council of Australia welcomes support for family contribution to education

The Independent Schools Council of Australia welcomed today the Prime Minister's announcement that a Coalition government would offset family contribution to education with tax rebates.

'If Australia is to meet community expectations of schooling in the 21st century then governments need to find ways to harness community resources,' said ISCA Executive Director, Mr Bill Daniels. 'Tax rebates are one way governments can support private contribution to school education.'

Mr Daniels said private contribution now amounts to a significant proportion of Australia's expenditure on school education.

'The latest available data show the combined total annual spend by governments on Australian schools is some \$30 billion in recurrent costs a year,' said Mr Daniels. 'Families contribute another \$5 billion.'

Mr Daniels said that adding capital expenditure to recurrent costs would show an even higher private contribution.

'Given that some 90 per cent of capital costs in the independent sector are met through private effort, counting in capital expenditure would mean that private contribution to Australian schooling would be worth some \$3.4 billion annually from the independent sector alone,' said Mr Daniels.

In the independent schools sector, 56 per cent of sector income is sourced from families, and 44 per cent from governments. In the government schools sector, it is estimated that 4 per cent of sector income is from families while governments contribute 96 per cent.

Mr Daniels said there are now 500,000 students enrolled in independent schools, a growth of 50 per cent since 1995.

'The continued growth of the independent sector is evidence that Australian families are increasingly prepared to dig deep into their own pockets and invest in the education of their children,' said Mr Daniels. 'A quality school education benefits the whole of society, so parents will be encouraged by government policies that support their investment.'

Mr Daniels said parents would particularly welcome the flexibility of the Coalition's policy, which allows them to claim on a range of education expenditures.

'The flexibility of the Coalition's policy means a very broad range of financial pressures in families can be targeted,' said Mr Daniels.

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