

Media Release

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Independent Schools
Council of Australia

Independent Schools Council of Australia welcomes ALP's promise to underwrite computer technology in schools

The Independent Schools Council of Australia today welcomed the ALP's announcement that if it wins government it will link all schools into a fast-speed national broadband network and establish a National Secondary Schools Computer Fund to ensure all secondary students in Years 9 to 12 have access to their own computer terminal at school.

'Advances in information and communications technologies are leading to a fundamental shift in the nature and cost of schooling,' said Mr Bill Daniels, Executive Director of the Independent Schools Council of Australia. 'This is a particular challenge for the independent sector, which must meet the bulk of ICT costs from private sources. The ALP's plan represents a major boost to help all schools ensure they are addressing the needs of students in accessing new technologies.'

Mr Daniels said the independent sector welcomed the inclusive nature of the ALP's announcement.

'The ALP's plan recognises that all schools, government and non-government need support to access state of the art computer technology,' said Mr Daniels.

'The ALP has already announced it will maintain existing federal recurrent funding arrangements for non-government schools, which provides certainty and stability for the independent sector until at least 2012,' said Mr Daniels. 'Today's announcement is further evidence of the shift in ALP policy toward an inclusive approach to all students, irrespective of the school they attend.'

Mr Daniels said ISCA has previously advocated for a targeted program of ICT funding for schools. Surveys of independent schools had shown that most had a connection speed that precluded them from taking full advantage of digital learning opportunities.

'Keeping up with the fast pace of change in information and communications technology is a challenge for all schools,' said Mr Daniels. 'The ALP's plan is an innovative and practical approach to capital funding and will be viewed as an encouragement to parents who are making substantial financial sacrifices to educate their children in independent schools.'

ENDS.

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