

A message from ACSSO Chair Sharron Healy



Taking our lessons into 2022

In the lead-up to the end of 2021 we're finding the requests for meetings with, and input from, ACSSO have not slowed at all. This is fabulous on one hand as it reinforces how valued we are as an organisation, and that what we do is having a positive impact. On the other hand, I'd love for our CEO and her team to be able to wind down, and spend some extra time with family and friends! They are, after all, the most important parts of life.

We will be closing our office after tomorrow - 17 December - and reopening on 17 January 2022, refreshed and ready for the year ahead.

Federal election

This year has brought many challenges and changes again to the education arena. As we head towards a Federal election in the first half of 2022, ACSSO is aiming to take what we have learnt from each of those challenges, and use that insight to inform our dialogue with the Federal department.

We have heard loud and clear that our current education system is not at all equitable, with very different opportunities available to students in our rural and remote settings, our low-SES schools, and for our indigenous and disabled students compared to those students attending our high-SES city schools and non-government schools. These students may all be being taught the Australian Curriculum, but that is where the similarities end.

We will continue to advocate for access to a high-quality, fully resourced education for every child and young person in our government school sector. No child in Australia should have their education impacted upon as negatively as so many did during the learning from home periods of the last two years.

Doubled down disadvantage

For so many students, their learning online was unable to continue to the same standard as their peers, or at all. Lack of computers, internet connections, private study spaces,

resources, and even meals, all had a huge impact upon students.

The educational needs of every student ought to be met through appropriate funding to schools. It is the responsibility of our Federal Government to adequately invest in the future of Australia by providing such funding to our government schools, and not to the select non-government sector.

Education Wishlist

We want to continue to represent the views of Australian government school families via our *Education Wishlist*, and we do this by gathering information throughout the year. It helps us enormously, though, when you contact us with *your* education priorities and specific needs for our government school programs and infrastructure.

Save the date!

ACSSO will turn 75 in 2022 and we will celebrate this great achievement of parents advocating for, and supporting, government school families and working with education officials, stakeholders and departments at the highest level, during our conference to be held on Saturday 5th and Sunday 6th November in Canberra. Please save the date and consider joining us for this amazing milestone!

Have a wonderful festive season, and I hope you can take some time to reflect on the year that's been, to plan for a *much* better year going forward, and most of all, to enjoy time spent with your family and friends.

Merry Christmas!

Sharron Healy

Chair

Australian Council of State School Organisations

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