

A message from ACSSO Chair Sharron Healy



Uncertainty: the new normal

For families in much of eastern Australia, this newsletter is arriving as extensive lockdowns are beginning to ease and amid high case numbers of COVID and much uncertainty. Those jurisdictions that have not been in lockdown faced their own pressures of border closures and anxiety around vaccination levels.

As the number of fully vaccinated people rises, we hope to see the opening up of the country overall and the excitement of being able to visit family and the return to some of the activities we enjoy - including sending our children back to school in much of NSW and Victoria!

[ACSSO Survey](#)

During the periods of remote learning across the country, and especially for the eastern states experiencing long lockdowns, it has been more vital than ever to hear and acknowledge the direct and genuine voices of families. We are currently conducting a [survey](#) on their thoughts for schools with regard to requirements including air ventilation, vaccines, masks, parent meetings and cleaning etc. We particularly would like to know how Year 12 students are faring: this time has presented many additional challenges for matriculating students. Also, for families who have a child commencing school next year, we want to hear your experiences as this is usually an exciting time with lots of school visits and various transition activities.

The survey can be found on our social pages or just click on this [link](#). It closes this Sunday, 24 October.

[ACSSO Annual General Meeting](#)

ACSSO's AGM will be held on 31 October via Microsoft Teams and will be followed with a Roundtable of members and participants to examine the feedback from families, listen to key speakers and set our platform for the upcoming federal election. Despite all our plans for a national conference to precede the AGM this year, like so many other events

we've had to postpone but we urge you to save 5-6 November 2022 for our next National Conference and 75th Anniversary Celebration. Save the date, further details will follow – and join us!

I take this opportunity to thank the ACSSO Secretariat for their work over the past 12 months. The work of a not-for-profit in lockdown times appears to increase significantly. My sincere appreciation also to the ACSSO Board: Sarah Jefferson, Susan O'Leary, Natasha Coster, Paul Buckley, Neil Myers and Sally Whelan. Their patience and persistence were unfailing when time zones and technology were not always cooperative. We anticipate an exciting year ahead with the expansion of ACSSO's work and a return to, hopefully, the opportunity to work together again in person.

Sharron Healy

Chair

Australian Council of State School Organisations

October 2021