

# A message from ACSSO Chair Sharron Healy



## A busy term three

Here we are already in the middle of another term and the year is moving so fast with so much still to be done. There is still a large number of COVID cases and most report that the dreaded winter flu is having a big impact on absenteeism in both students and staff.

NAPLAN, Science Week, Education Week and Year 12 trials have all come and gone in most states and we are looking to move to the term break in the not too distant future. It's been a busy year – but nice to return to some face to face events.

### **Susan Ryan Family Engagement Awards**

Nominations for the inaugural Susan Ryan Family Engagement Awards are closing soon, on the 9th of September, so ensure your school or parent club submits an entry showcasing the fabulous work being done in family engagement. There are so many wonderful strategies being used, and outcomes being achieved, and we would love to share them with the rest of the nation's schools. The winning entry will be announced at our 75th Anniversary conference on Saturday 5th of November, in Canberra, with category finalists invited as our guests. Full details on how to nominate are on [the ACSSO website](#).

### **ICPA Conference**

ACSSO's CEO and I attended the Isolated Children's Parents Association conference earlier this month, where discussions were held around the concerns of some of our country's most isolated families. It was certainly interesting to hear of the unique challenges, particularly around online access, families face. Although not exactly the same challenges, the issues are very similar in terms of access as those often faced by our most economically disadvantaged metropolitan students and their families. We work on many stakeholder groups with ICPA, so it is good to have an understanding of what drives them in these discussions.

## **75th Anniversary Conference**

Registrations will open soon for ACSSO' 75th Anniversary Conference and celebratory dinner, to be held on Saturday 5<sup>th</sup> and Sunday 6<sup>th</sup> of November at The Vibe Hotel, Canberra.- The dinner will be held on the Saturday evening at Old Parliament House, Canberra.

Registrations will open next week – [email now](#) for more information and keep an eye out on our [social media](#).

## **Online Communities**

Our CEO and project officer have been working on setting up our new Online Communities platform, which will be launched at conference. This platform will facilitate discussions between interested individuals and groups from across the nation, and internationally, on topics current to public education. It will provide a place for expertise to be shared, not just from professionals in the field, but also from our parents and families, who have the most relevant, lived expertise from which to draw, ensuring the conversations are meaningful and reflect what is happening in the educational lives of families.

## **National Reform Agreement Inquiry**

With the national reform funding agreements due to expire at the end of 2023, the Productivity Commission are currently conducting a [review of the National School Reform Agreement](#). The review will examine how well national policy initiatives by the Australian, State and Territory Governments have achieved the objectives and outcomes set out in the Agreement. First round of submissions closed in June and an interim report is due early September.

ACSSO appeared before the Productivity Commission on Monday, July 25 and our submission can be found [here](#)

## **Teacher workforce**

Meetings are currently being held between the Federal and State and Territory Education Ministers to address the growing shortage of teachers across the country. ACSSO firmly believes we should be included in these discussions, and will again be requesting a seat at the table with Minister Clare.

We hope our peak parent bodies are all included at their state/territory level, too. Such important decisions must include the voices of those most affected by the current situation and the plan going forward, and that is, families in our government schools.

The issues paper can be found [here](#).

And finally, don't forget that the Public Education Foundation scholarships close in September - scroll down to find out more, and watch the video at the top of this newsletter for inspiring stories from leading Australian government school graduates!

Cheers,

**Sharron Healy**

**Chair**

**Australian Council of State School Organisations**

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