

# Australian Council of State School Organisations Limited

*One voice for every child in public education*



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## MEDIA RELEASE

### A stronger future depends on acknowledging our past

Today, as a nation we recognise National Sorry Day. On National Sorry Day we remember the negative impact of Australian policies, practices and attitudes on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. This year also marks the twentieth anniversary of National Reconciliation Week, where we can learn about our shared histories, cultures, and achievements, and to explore how each of us can contribute to achieving reconciliation in Australia.

“National Sorry Day and Reconciliation Week reminds us that Australia’s colonial past has benefited some Australians while exploiting others. As a nation we must recognise that our shared story of Australia needs to be grounded in truth,” stated Andrew Bidwell, President, Australian Council of State School Organisations (ACSSO). “It is only by acknowledging the wrongs of the past that we can work together to make our country stronger and more inclusive.”

“As a nation, this acknowledgement openly of our history is a way to understand and heal the wounds suffered as a result of our colonial past. Our ideology regretfully led to decades of harmful policies directed at Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples,” he continued.

“Family is at the forefront of ACSSO’s core values. Australians need to continue to work together as a country, to support the health and well-being of those from the Stolen Generations who are still recovering from loss of family, loss of culture and loss of life. We must work together to address the inter-generational hurt that still remains to this day.

The journey of reconciliation will take time, but every step forward creates a more solid foundation for our country to walk together, towards a hopeful and proud future.” Mr Bidwell concluded.

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