



MEDIA RELEASE

[Australian Council of State School Organisations Limited](#)

REFORM TO CHAPLAINCY PROGRAM WELCOMED BY PARENTS

The Australian Council of State School Organisations (ACSSO) welcomes the announcement of the Federal Government's proposal to open the National Chaplaincy Program to professionally qualified student welfare officers.

"We were extremely pleased with this announcement by the Minister. Our nation's government schools are not the place for religious proselytising." ACSSO President Sharron Healy said.

"ACSSO has continuously advocated for students and families who need support to have access to mental health, social and wellbeing assistance from qualified professionals. This must be supported by funding schools so that they have the resources necessary for teaching and learning.

"Whilst we welcome this move by the Education Minister, we urge the Federal Government to go a step further."

"We ask the Federal Minister to discontinue public funding for chaplains and alternatively invest in appropriate student wellbeing and mental health programs, professional development for teachers and to train and employ qualified school counsellors to support the students full time in every government school. Mrs Healy said.

"Families and many professionals, including teachers and principals have clearly stated the anxiety and stress in young people coming out from the past two years is at an all time high. We need to invest in regular mental health check ins, strategies for identifying and regulating emotions and the proper support to ensure our young people are in the "right space" to learn." Ms Healy concluded

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One voice for every child in government education