



empowering  
independent  
education

The Association of  
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Red Tape Committee  
Department of the Senate  
PO Box 6100  
Canberra ACT 2600

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SUBJECT: Effect of red tape on private education

Dear Senators,

Thank you for the opportunity to contribute to the discussion about the effect of red tape on private education.

The Association of Independent Schools of NSW (AISNSW) is the peak body which supports and represents independent schools in New South Wales. The AISNSW represents more than 482 schools and campuses, enrolling more than 199,000 students and accounting for some 16.5% of NSW school enrolments.

The schools we represent are not-for-profit institutions founded by religious or other groups in the community and are registered and accredited with the regulatory authority, the NSW Education Standards Authority (NESA).

Independent schools are a diverse group of non-government schools serving a wide range of communities throughout NSW. Many independent schools are small with almost half enrolling fewer than 200 students, and approximately one-third enrolling fewer than 100 students. It is not well understood that two-thirds (65%) of independent schools in NSW have a socioeconomic status (SES) score in the lower half of the SES distribution range, with 48% of all students in the sector enrolled in these schools.

In the last five years, enrolments in the NSW independent schools sector have grown by 8 per cent. This rate of enrolment growth has been a consistent trend in the sector for more than twenty years, with most of this growth attributable to a significant increase in the number of low fee independent schools.

The Independent Schools Council of Australia has provided a comprehensive submission detailing the impact of red tape on independent schools. The AISNSW endorses the contents of this submission, which capture the diversity and volume of compliance and regulation under which independent schools in New South Wales operate.

The significant burden of red tape has led to many schools choosing to appoint staff members with responsibility solely for managing compliance and regulation, whilst in others existing staff take on additional responsibilities so that schools can meet various reporting and accountability requirements. These are costs that are borne by parents, families and school communities, and are costs which direct resources away from schools' core business of educating students.

Kind Regards,

Robyn Yates OAM

**Chief Policy and Compliance Officer**