

Media Release



5 July 2021

We need a curriculum of hope!

As ACARA seek to align the Australian Curriculum with the powerful and positive image of the young people we are seeking to form outlined in the *Alice Springs (Mparntwe) Education Declaration*, Christian Schools Australia are encouraging a further refreshing and realigning of the current Consultation Curriculum to embody hope and a positive future for our nation.

“We need to move beyond the negative and divisive ‘culture wars’ to embrace the truth of the history and heritage of the First Nations People of Australia but also balance this with the, largely, Christian heritage introduced with British settlement,” said CSA’s Director of Public Policy, Mark Spencer.

“We shouldn’t whitewash the past,” he said, “but nor can we build a hopeful and shared future without recognising the positive influence of faith and religious activity on our Nation.”

As well as ensuring that the impact of faith on the shaping of our overwhelmingly religious Nation is incorporated in the form of some general religious education, CSA has for a redefining of the ‘Asia and Australia’s Engagement with Asia’ cross-curriculum priority to include the broader Asia-Pacific.

“We have a long history with the Pacific Island Nations and our near neighbours in Papua New Guinea and Timor Leste,” Mr Spencer said, “we also have a clear future interest in our relationships with these nations”.

CSA is also calling for a reduced target for the total teaching time allocated to the Australian Curriculum and greater engagement with parents.

“There have been numerous calls to ‘declutter’ the curriculum, but this will not happen without a clear target.” Mr Spencer said.

“Reducing the total teaching time allocated to the curriculum from 80% to 60% would give more time for teachers to respond in the local context and individual community and student needs.”

“The curriculum also needs to be written in a way understandable by parents, particularly in sensitive areas of the HPE curriculum, if there is to be true and meaningful partnership,” he said.

CSA commends the Education Council for commissioning this review and appreciates the work undertaken to date by ACARA, but there is more work to be done to ensure a final updated Australian Curriculum that can carry forward learning in the contemporary Australian context.

ENDS

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About Christian Schools Australia

Christian Schools Australia is the largest association of Christian schools in the country and has member schools educating over 70,000 students and employing nearly 10,000 staff at 170 locations across Australia. CSA is part of the global ACSI network of 24,000 schools educating in excess of 5.5 million students in over 108 countries world-wide.

