



AUSTRALIAN  
ASSOCIATION  
OF CHRISTIAN  
SCHOOLS



Associated Christian Schools  
*Christian education for the common good*



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## MEDIA RELEASE

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26 March 2024 – for immediate release

### Australians Support Christian Schools

New polling has confirmed the widespread support for Christian schools and their rights to hold to their beliefs. The independent polling, conducted from 1 – 16 March by Compass Polling, demonstrated strong public support for the necessary elements of an authentic Christian school –

- Nearly **80% of Australians** support the right of a religious school to **employ teachers and other staff who support the clearly stated values and beliefs of the school**. This rises to more than 90% amongst parents with children in a faith-based school.
- More than **90% of Christian school parents** support terminating the employment of staff if they no longer share these beliefs.
- In the latest polling, over **80% of Australians** believe that Australian laws should **protect the right to hold and practice religious beliefs**, this figure has been increasing since 2019. **98% of Australians actively practicing a faith say this should be protected**.
- Over **90% of parents sending their children to faith-based schools** and over 75% of all Australians support the right of a religious school to **enforce standards of uniform and behaviour consistent with their values and beliefs**.
- Similarly, over **70% of parents sending their children to faith-based schools** support the right of a religious school to be able to **teach students their values and beliefs** about gender, sexuality and marriage, with this supported by a majority of all voters.
- **94% of all voters** support the right of parents to choose a school that reflects their strongly held values and beliefs.
- The right of all students to receive some level of taxpayer funding was supported by **84% of all voters**, consistent with previous results.

Christian school groups have welcomed the results, which build upon previous polling undertaken since 2019.

Christian Schools Australia (CSA), Australian Association of Christian Schools (AACCS) and Associated Christian Schools (ACS) are calling on the Albanese Government to categorically reject the recommendations of the recent Australian Law Reform Commission report that would remove the ability to retain the right to employ staff who share the beliefs of the school.

AACCS Executive Officer Vanessa Cheng said the results “are a clear reminder of the importance everyday Australians place on a fair go.”

“Parents across Australia are increasingly choosing to send their children to Christian schools. They understand that it is fair and reasonable for staff share the values and beliefs of the school, after all that’s what they are paying for when they choose our schools.”

ACS Executive Director Alistair Macpherson said that “International law and covenants, which Australia has ratified, recognise the importance of religious groups to be able to teach and practice their beliefs, and for parents to be able to choose schooling for children that aligns with their personal beliefs.”

He said that the results are a wakeup call for any government seeking to take away these rights, “Australians are clearly calling for protections for people of faith, it is time that governments listen and protect this fundamental human right”.

CSA Director of Public Policy Mark Spencer said, “Parents are investing in faith-based education, and clearly desiring that the schools can enforce the standards of the school around uniform and behaviour.”

“The support for being able to employ staff who share our beliefs is held across the political spectrum. Governments of all persuasions need to listen to what ordinary Australians are saying.”

ENDS

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### About the Associations:

**Australian Association of Christian Schools (AACCS)** represents over a hundred independent Christian schools in every state and territory across Australia, ranging from very small to large; urban to regional, rural and remote. The majority of member schools are non-denominational with a protestant heritage and are governed by parent associations with over 44,000 students enrolled from a wide variety of socio-economic, cultural and religious backgrounds.

**Associated Christian Schools (ACS)** represents over 45 independent Christian Schools throughout Queensland. With over 30,000 students attending member schools, this represents approximately 20% of the independent school students in Queensland. Whilst each of our member schools are independently governed, they choose to collaborate together through ACS, for the purpose of delivering high quality Christian education for the common good.

**Christian Schools Australia (CSA)** is the largest association of Christian schools in the country and has member schools educating over 86,000 students and employing more than 13,500 staff at more than 200 locations across Australia. CSA member schools provide caring and compassionate education within an authentic Christian learning community.