



Independent Review -

## ***Queensland Non-State Schools Accreditation Framework***

Submission by Christian Schools Australia (CSA)

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## Summary of Recommendations

**RECOMMENDATION ONE:** The reviewer call on the Queensland Government amend the *Human Rights Act 2019* (QLD) to include a right equivalent to Article 18(4) of the ICCPR.

**RECOMMENDATION TWO:** The reviewer call on the Queensland Government introduce a scheme for the monitoring and oversight of ‘reportable conduct’ allegations as recommended by the Royal Commission.

**RECOMMENDATION THREE:** the following be inserted as section 3(1)(a) of the Act –

- (a) to recognise that the education of a child is primarily the responsibility of the child’s parents,

**RECOMMENDATION FOUR:** the current object expressed in section 3(1)(c) of the Act should be replaced with –

to support the liberty of parents to ensure the religious and moral education of their children in conformity with their own convictions and foster educational choices in the State.

**RECOMMENDATION FIVE:** further consultation with school groups be undertaken if any additional regulatory requirements are proposed to allow the opportunity to respond to any purported shortcomings in the current regime.

**RECOMMENDATION SIX:** other overlapping supervisory arrangements be considered with a view to reducing the accreditation criteria.

**RECOMMENDATION SEVEN:** the Act be amended to recognise that the objects may be legitimately achieved through parents exercising their choice of school by including as section 3(2)(a) –

parents freely exercising a choice of school; and

**RECOMMENDATION EIGHT:** the Act be amended to require that regulations to prescribe or amend accreditation criteria can only be made if the Minister is satisfied that:

- appropriate consultation has been undertaken with:
  - the non-government school sector (such as through entities that represent parts of the sector); and
  - entities, including schools, having expertise in fields relevant to the proposed accreditation criteria; and
  - entities, including schools, likely to be affected by the proposed regulation.
- relevant input received as part of that consultation has been taken into account adequately.

**RECOMMENDATION NINE:** a formal approach to regulatory activity, compliance and enforcement and dealing with complaints be incorporated into the Accreditation Framework along the lines of those used by the ACNC.

**RECOMMENDATION TEN:** the activities of the Board be reviewed against the Government’s Public Interest Map Policy to ascertain if all existing functions are necessary and should be undertaken in the current manner.

## Introduction

Christian Schools Australia (CSA) is a national body that supports and represents schools for whom religious formation within a ‘community of faith’ is an integral part of the education process.

CSA serves schools in more than 180 locations, supporting some 11,000 staff and more than 75,000 students across Australia. Within Queensland, CSA has 20 member schools which educate over 13,000 students.

Member schools of CSA operate as independent, locally governed, religious organisations. Some are closely aligned with one or more Christian churches in their communities, while others have their heritage in a group of parents coming together to start a school. In all these schools religious formation is part of the aim of a holistic education in service of ‘the common good’<sup>1</sup>

**“In all of these schools religious formation is part of the aim of a holistic education in service of ‘the common good’.”**

The inclusion of the religious (or spiritual) formation of students as an integral aspect of education is very much in line with the goals of the Alice Springs (Mparntwe) Education Declaration.<sup>2</sup> All jurisdictions across Australia, including Queensland, are signatories to the Declaration which asserts, in its Preamble:

*“Education plays a vital role in promoting the intellectual, physical, social, emotional, moral, spiritual and aesthetic development and wellbeing of young Australians, and in ensuring the nation’s ongoing economic prosperity and social cohesion.”*

We agree strongly that the education of the whole child is not complete unless it includes spiritual, moral, emotional and aesthetic development alongside the more commonly stated domains of intellectual, physical and social. We agree that social cohesion is served well by such a view of education.

The Mparntwe Declaration is also important for its recognition of the role of parents.

*“Parents, carers and families are the first and most important educational influence in a child’s life. They have a critical role in early development, including social, emotional, intellectual, spiritual and physical wellbeing. They instil attitudes and values that support young people to access and participate in education and training, and contribute to local and global communities. It is critical for the education community to work in partnership with parents, carers and families to support a child’s progress through early learning and school.”*

In the schools represented by this submission, and indeed in Queensland faith-based schools of many kinds, the ideals of the Mparntwe Declaration are realised, embodied and celebrated.

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<sup>1</sup> The recent Cardus Education Survey Australia (<https://carduseducationsurvey.com.au/>) provides extensive data on the holistic education provided by Christian schools in Australia, their impact on graduates through their lives, and the contribution to the ‘common good’ of these graduates.

<sup>2</sup> Council of Australian Governments. Education Council (2019). *Alice Springs (Mparntwe) education declaration*.

On behalf of the parents who choose such a faith-based education, and the church and faith communities that deliver it, schools represented in this submission are overt and particular about the beliefs and values that underpin curriculum, culture and practice, including employment practices.

## Preliminary Comments

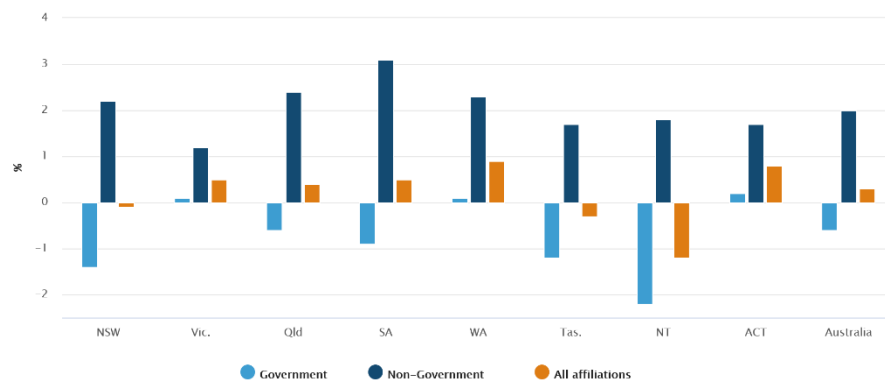
The Submission Guide indicates that the Review will be guided by four principles, we support these principles but also note:

- The first principle talks of ‘students and their families are at the centre of the Review’. We trust that implicit in this statement is the recognition of the role of parents as the ‘first and most important educational influence in a child’s life’. This is captured within the Mparntwe Declaration as mentioned above and provides an important foundation for consideration of the role of schools, and thus the accreditation and regulation of schools.
- That the choice of schools for families is not merely an ‘important part of the Queensland education system’. The ‘liberty of parents and, when applicable, legal guardians to ensure the religious and moral education of their children in conformity with their own convictions’ is a fundamental human right protected under international law to which Australia is a party.<sup>3</sup> Appropriate weight should be given to this right in the Review’s consideration of options and alternatives.

The Guide also identifies some ‘challenges and change’ since the *Education (Accreditation of Non-State Schools) Act 2017 (QLD)* (the Act) commenced in 2017:

- The COVID-19 global pandemic was certainly the impetus for considerable change in educational delivery and reassessment of the important elements of a quality education. Overwhelmingly though, this event highlighted the quality and responsiveness of Christian schools and non-government schools more generally. Parents and families across Christian schools have reported increased confidence in their school, and many schools experienced increased enrolments.
- Not only have enrolments in distance and special assistance schools grown significantly, the non-government sector, and particularly the independent sector, has grown at nearly double and more than triple respectively the rate of growth of the government school sector over that time. The most recent growth from 2021 -2022 is reflective of that trend –

Graph 2 – Annual growth rates in student enrolments by state and territory, affiliation, 2021 to 2022



Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics, Schools 2022

<sup>3</sup> Article 18(4), *International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights*, opened for signature 16 December 1966, UNTS171 (entered into force 23 March 1976) (*‘the ICCPR’*).

These events point to the quality and resilience of non-government education in Queensland, and suggest that little, if any, additional supervisory requirements are necessary. Certainly, the increased enrolments in non-government schools suggests that ‘public confidence in the operation of non-State schools’, one of the objects of the Act, is well and truly being met.<sup>4</sup>

The Guide also refers to the passage of the *Human Rights Act 2019* (QLD) (‘the Human Rights Act’), including the right to education therein, section 36. However, as we have indicated in other submissions to other inquiries, the protections for ‘freedom of thought, conscience, religion and belief’ in section 20 are grossly deficient, in a way directly impinging on many non-government schools. As referred to above, Article 18(4) of the ICCPR requires that signatory states, such as Australia, respect ‘the liberty of parents and, when applicable, legal guardians to ensure the religious and moral education of their children in conformity with their own convictions’. An equivalent provision has not been included in the Human Rights Act.

While recognising that this recommendation falls outside the direct scope of the Terms of Reference, we are **calling on the Review to recommend that the Queensland Government amend the *Human Rights Act 2019* (QLD) to include a right equivalent to Article 18(4) of the ICCPR.**

## Community expectations of schools

The phrase ‘community expectations’, or ‘community benchmarks’ as used in the Submission Guide, or ‘community standards’/ ‘community and stakeholder expectations’ as used in the Terms of Reference are dangerous and unhelpful terms which have no place within a regulatory framework. These ill-defined and nebulous terms provide insufficient clarity and certainty for a framework seeking to assess the suitability of an educational provider.

Fundamental human rights, such as ‘the liberty of parents ... to ensure the religious and moral education of their children in conformity with their own convictions’ are inalienable and cannot be extinguished simply for becoming unpopular. Reliance upon ‘community expectations’ as regulatory standard risks institutionalising ‘mob rule’.

Within our Westminster system, Parliament is the appropriate forum for determining and codifying ‘community standards’. These should be expressed in acts and regulations, subject to Parliamentary scrutiny, oversight and accountability. It should not be the role of an independent statutory body, such as the Non-State Schools Accreditation Board (‘the Board’) to take on the function as the arbiter of ‘community expectations’.

For non-government schools, enrolments are a very real, very tangible, and very immediate form of accountability. Parents vote with their feet, and their wallets, as to whether a school is providing a quality education. This provides very direct feedback to non-government schools of whether they are meeting ‘community expectations’. In fact, it may be better to characterise the role of the Board as ensuring that ‘minimum standards’ are met, a common baseline of requirements that must be met to operate a school. Beyond these minimum standards a more effective means of meeting ‘community expectations’ is arguably provided through enrolments and direct parental feedback.

In soon to be published research among Christian school parents, there was a very clear ‘community expectation’ that Christian schools would reflect Christian values and beliefs.<sup>5</sup> The *Christian Schools Community Profile Survey* is the largest survey of its kind ever undertaken in Australia and explored the

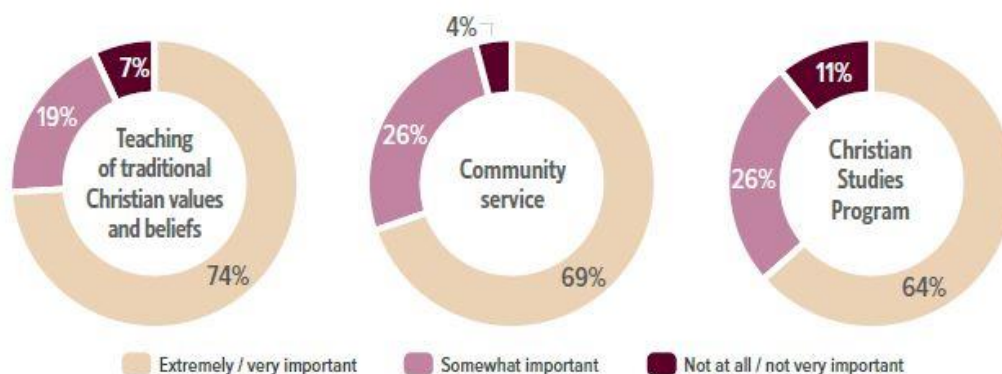
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<sup>4</sup> *Education (Accreditation of Non-State Schools) Act 2017* (QLD) (the Act), section 3(1)(b).

<sup>5</sup> Iselin, D. (2023). *Why Parents Choose Christian Schools: Christian Schools Community Profile Survey, National Report Summary*. Canberra, Australia: Christian Schools Australia

responses of 8,595 parents from 101 Christian School Australia member schools across the nation, 1,499 of those parents within Queensland.

The dominant reason why parents are choosing Christian schools was for the distinctly Christian values and teaching, with 54% of parents selecting ‘values that align with my own’ as the primary determinant. When asked what practices should be most important at a Christian school, 74% of parents indicated teaching of traditional Christian values and beliefs was extremely, or very important.



The importance of community service (69%) and the demonstration and application of Christian values and beliefs was also highly regarded by parents.

The most important value-added outcome that families hoped children would achieve through attending a Christian school was strong character and Christian values (45%). This was followed by a desire to see graduates have a love for God and others (28%).



The results of this survey provide a very clear indication of the ‘community expectations’ of those involved as parents with Christian schools. These are the members of the Queensland community most involved with those schools, with most at stake in relation to those schools, and most able to provide effective accountability for those schools.

This direct and effective accountability is also formally captured by requirements under the Commonwealth’s regulatory regime. The *Australian Education Act 2013* (Cth) requires schools to provide ‘information in accordance with the regulations’,<sup>6</sup> with the regulations requiring schools to

<sup>6</sup> *Australian Education Act 2013* (Cth), section 77(2)(f).

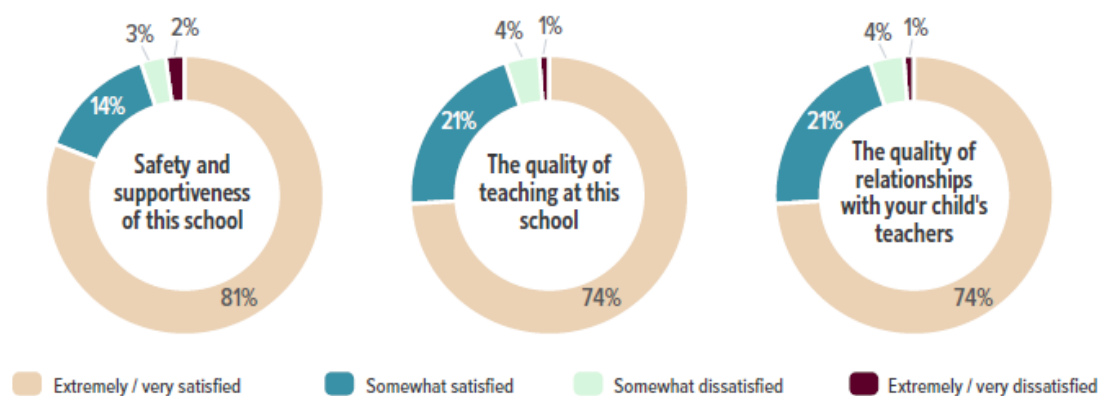
publish within six months of each year end information on ‘parent, student and teacher satisfaction with the school’.<sup>7</sup>

## Protecting students, promoting wellbeing

The Bible teaches, profoundly given its historical and cultural context, of the inherent dignity and worth of all people. The Apostle Paul, writing to believers in Galatia, proclaimed that *‘There is neither Jew nor Gentile, neither slave nor free, nor is there male and female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus’*,<sup>8</sup> a revolutionary statement for the society in its day. The recognition of the unique nature of all humankind as image bearers of God, Imago Dei, provides the very foundation for contemporary Western culture and the freedoms we enjoy.

That foundation forms the basis for the revulsion towards vilification, harassment, racism or victimization held by the schools represented in this submission. This finds expression in the school context in strong anti-bullying policies and procedures and a deep commitment to high quality pastoral care – for all students. Christian schools have long prided themselves on providing effective student, and often family, wellbeing. These measures all flow from, and reflect, the Biblical beliefs and values of Christian schools, and provide a unique approach to student wellbeing.

The effectiveness of these measures is reflected in the results of the *Christian Schools Community Profile Survey*.<sup>9</sup> Families are overwhelmingly very satisfied with the ‘Safety and supportiveness’ of their Christian school, with the ‘quality of teaching’ and the ‘quality of relationships between teachers and students’.



Once again, this provides very clear and direct feedback on the efficacy of these measures, and significant assurance to the wider community of the care being demonstrated within Christian schools.

From the early days of the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse (‘Royal Commission’), CSA has consistently advocated for a strong, nationally harmonised child protection framework.<sup>10</sup> This has included advocating for a system of monitoring responses to allegations of ‘reportable conduct’, which Queensland has yet to implement. While, once again, outside the scope of

<sup>7</sup> *Australian Education Regulation 2013* (Cth), section 60(1)(f).

<sup>8</sup> Galatians 3:28.

<sup>9</sup> Above n 5.

<sup>10</sup> See, eg. Submission in response to *Consultation Paper - Best practice principles in responding to complaints of child sexual abuse in institutional contexts*, 6 April 2016, <<https://www.childabuseroyalcommission.gov.au/sites/default/files/file-list/Consultation%20Paper%20-%20Complaint%20handling%20-%20Submission%20-%2012%20Christian%20Schools%20Australia%20Limited.pdf>>



the Terms of Reference for the Review, **we are calling on the Review to recommend that the Queensland Government introduce a scheme for the monitoring and oversight of ‘reportable conduct’ allegations as recommended by the Royal Commission.**

## Setting the standards of education – Expectations of schools

As indicated above, ‘community expectations’ provides a nebulous and imprecise basis for setting regulatory standards. While Parliament plays a mediating role, it remains unlikely that the breadth and variability of local communities can effectively be captured in a ‘one size fits all’ set of ‘community expectations’.

The current objects of the Act do not properly acknowledge the role of parents in setting ‘community expectations’ as discussed above. Nor do the objects reflect the role of parents as the ‘first and most important educational influence in a child’s life’ recognised in the Mparntwe Declaration. These should be addressed by the inclusion of a further object in the Act, modelled on one of the ‘Principles’ from the *Education Act 1990* (NSW).<sup>11</sup> **We recommend that the following be inserted as section 3(1)(a) of the Act –**

- (a) to recognise that the education of a child is primarily the responsibility of the child’s parents,**

This provides a basis within the Act for the recognition of the effectiveness of accountability to parents and the local school community as a means of safeguarding the quality of educational provision in Queensland.

In a similar way, **recognising the rights of parents under international law, the current object expressed in section 3(1)(c) of the Act should be replaced with –**

- to support the liberty of parents to ensure the religious and moral education of their children in conformity with their own convictions and foster educational choices in the State.**

With the objects of the Act altered in this manner, the role of the Board can be more properly understood and defined as supporting Queensland parents and providing a baseline of universally agreed regulatory requirements.

Child safety would clearly be one of those universally agreed regulatory requirements. Our call above to strengthen the requirements in relation to allegations of reportable conduct would be one element of that. However, in that area and in others, such as mandatory reporting and employment screening, other agencies with established specialist expertise already have legislative responsibilities. There would seem to be little to be gained from adding a further layer of, possibly less experienced and less skilled, oversight from the Board. Certainly, feedback from some schools has suggested a significant degree of variability in the approach taken by the Board in this area. Similar, if not identical, policies have received different responses from the Board, both across different schools during the same time frame for reviews and across different timeframes despite there being no intervening legislative change.

In relation to government funding eligibility criteria, the current requirements in the Act remain fit for purpose.<sup>12</sup> Indeed, along with the other criteria in the Act, there has been no evidence provided at any

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<sup>11</sup> *Education Act 1990* (NSW) section 4(b).

<sup>12</sup> Section 10 of the Act.

stage of the Review process that the current government funding eligibility criteria have not been sufficient in any way.

This goes to a broader point in relation to the Review process. In announcing the Review the Minister indicated merely that “The current legislation has been in place for five years, so now is the right time to make sure the accreditation framework is fit for purpose, supports the provision of high-quality education, and ensures public confidence is maintained in our non-state schools”.<sup>13</sup> No suggestion was made by the Minister of any failings in the current process needing attention and nor have any been identified in the Submission Guide. If there are to be recommendations made which would increase the regulatory burden on schools the principles of natural justice would suggest that schools and school groups are provided with an opportunity to respond to the claims made to justify the increased requirements.

**Further consultation with school groups is essential if any additional regulatory requirements are proposed to allow the opportunity to respond to any purported shortcomings in the current regime.**

## Accrediting non-state schools – expectations and improvements

Current accreditation requirements are outlined in the Act,<sup>14</sup> and within the *Education (Accreditation of Non-State Schools) Regulation 2017* (QLD) (‘the Regulations’), the latter providing more detailed expectations within the broad areas outlined in section 11 of the Act. In reviewing these requirements there are many which seem to be duplicating other legislative or statutory obligations, or compliance with other obligations would seem to provide prima facie evidence of compliance with the accreditation requirements.

Registration under the *Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission Act 2012* (Cth) (‘the ACNC Act’) is only available for not-for-profit entities.<sup>15</sup> Most, if not all, non-government schools would be registered entities under the ACNC Act, requiring them to be not-for-profit on registration and thereafter. Registration under the ACNC Act should therefore be prima facie evidence of compliance with the government funding eligibility criteria under section 10(b) of the Act.

Registration under the ACNC Act would also seem to provide evidence of compliance with section 8(2) of the Regulations which require that records be kept of financial transactions for at least 5 years. The more detailed and onerous requirements under the ACNC Act require a registered entity to keep written financial records that:

- correctly record and explain its transactions and financial position and performance;
- enable true and fair financial statements to be prepared and to be audited;
- are in English; or readily accessible and easily convertible into English;
- are retained the records for 7 years after the transactions, operations or acts covered by the records are completed.<sup>16</sup>

An assessment that a school has ‘access to adequate financial resources for its viable operation’ would also seem to be discharged, by those schools subject to audit in accordance with the Australian Auditing

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<sup>13</sup> Media Release: *Queensland non-state school framework set for review*, 31 October 2022, <<https://statements.qld.gov.au/statements/96453>>.

<sup>14</sup> Government funding eligibility criteria in section 10 of the Act.

<sup>15</sup> *Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission Act 2012* (Cth) (‘the ACNC Act’), section 25-5(3)(a).

<sup>16</sup> The ACNC Act section 55-5.

Standards, through the receipt of an audit report which does not include any qualification in accordance with Auditing Standard ASA 570 *Going Concern*.<sup>17</sup>

Other accreditation criteria refer to the obligations on schools from specific legislation, many of which contain compliance and complaint regimes, the reference to the *Work Health and Safety Act 2011* (QLD) in regulation 15(a) being a very clear example of this. The Board is unlikely to be resourced, experienced or equipped to deal with the obligations on schools under this Act, particularly when any action or determinations of the Board would not impact any actions or decisions taken by the regulator under that act.

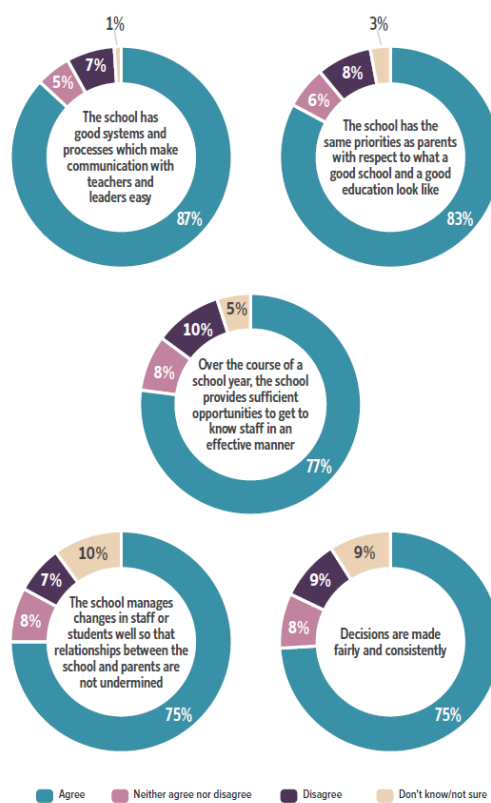
In reviewing the Framework, consideration should be given to reducing the regulatory burden on schools, and the workload of the Board, by **considering other overlapping supervisory arrangements that may allow the reduction of accreditation criteria.**

## Maintaining standards through monitoring and compliance

Acknowledging that there has been no evidence provided of any failure under the current regulatory regime it seems clear that changes to ‘strengthen monitoring and compliance’ are unlikely to be needed.

Once again, the *Christian Schools Community Profile Survey* provides some helpful perspectives. Christian schools, are highly responsive to parents and their concerns, which we suggest is representative of the vast majority of non-government schools,

The overall quality relating to the community and relational emphasis of Christian schools is clearly an area of strength according to the survey respondents, who perceived the systems and processes for communication and interaction between school and parents (87%) to clearly be the strongest aspect of Christian school communities. Parents also viewed the strong alignment between their own expectations and perceptions of what a good school and education looks like and the school’s expectations and priorities (83%) as another area of particular strength across the Christian school sector.



Fair and consistent decision making, opportunities to know staff and the management of change also elicited very positive responses from parents.

These responses demonstrate both the high level of engagement of Christian school parents, and the detailed and nuanced interest that they take with a wide range of facets of school operations. This ongoing, real-time accountability is a powerful form of monitoring of school performance.

<sup>17</sup> Australian Auditing and Assurance Standards Board, 2015. *ASA 570 Going Concern (Compiled)*. Australian Government.

Given the effectiveness of this accountability to parents, it may be appropriate to recognise the role of parental choice more formally in the Act. **We recommend that the Act be amended to recognise that the objects may be legitimately achieved through parents exercising their choice of school by including as section 3(2)(a) –**

**parents freely exercising a choice of school; and**

The inclusion of this sentence will make clear that the Board is not the only means through which non-government schools are accountable. It reinforces the object to [support the liberty of parents to ensure the religious and moral education of their children in conformity with their own convictions and] foster educational choices in the State, and also reduces the focus on the Board to respond to any and all concerns that may be raised in relation to non-government schools.

## Striking the right regulatory balance

In considering how to strike the right regulatory balance the ACNC Act provides a useful benchmark in relation to the development of the equivalent to accreditation criteria. The ACNC Act requires that before any regulations are made, to impose guidelines under the ACNC Act, that the Minister must be satisfied that appropriate consultation has been undertaken.<sup>18</sup> The ACNC Act goes as far as to specify that this consultation must include:

- the not-for-profit sector (such as through entities that represent parts of the sector); and
- entities having expertise in fields relevant to the proposed regulation; and
- entities likely to be affected by the proposed regulation.

The Minister must also be assured that ‘relevant input received as part of that consultation has been taken into account adequately’. A similar approach should be adopted in the Act in relation to accreditation criteria contained in the Regulations. **We recommend that that the Act be amended to require that regulations to prescribe or amend accreditation criteria can only be made if the Minister is satisfied that:**

- **appropriate consultation has been undertaken with:**
  - the non-government school sector (such as through entities that represent parts of the sector); and
  - entities, including schools, having expertise in fields relevant to the proposed accreditation criteria; and
  - entities, including schools, likely to be affected by the proposed regulation.
- **relevant input received as part of that consultation has been taken into account adequately.**

The policies of the Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission (ACNC) for dealing with complaints also provides a useful framework which could assist the Board in dealing with complaints regarding schools.

The responses of the Board to complaints has created an increasingly onerous burden on schools and diverted staff time and resources from the provision of a quality education. Feedback from schools

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<sup>18</sup> ACNC Act section 45-15.

suggest a lack of triaging of complaints, acceptance of complaints with limited evidence and, at least in some instances, perceptions of schools effectively facing a reverse onus of proof.

The ACNC's *Policy Statement: Compliance and enforcement*,<sup>19</sup> indicates that the ACNC is guided by four principles when exercising their compliance function and using their regulatory powers:

- Principle 1: Identifying and responding to risk
- Principle 2: Proportionate regulation
- Principle 3: Consistency
- Principle 4: Regulatory necessity

The policy statement, and the ACNC's broader *Regulatory Approach Statement*,<sup>20</sup> provides a clear, tiered structure that the ACNC follows in discharging its obligations as the charity regulator. Charities, including schools, have certainty and clarity regarding ACNC's approach and escalation pathway.

In relation to complaints received regarding charities, the ACNC's *Policy Statement: Complaints about charities* provides further guidance on the processes they will follow.<sup>21</sup> These includes undertaking an initial risk based assessment of complaints before determining whether to investigate.

As the major regulator providing oversight of charities and not-for-profits organisations, the ACNC is well placed to provide a benchmark for the Board in its dealings with schools. **We recommend that a formal approach to regulatory activity, compliance and enforcement and dealing with complaints be incorporated into the Accreditation Framework along the lines of those used by the ACNC.**

## The importance of powers

The Submission Guide poses the question, *Are the Board's current powers sufficient to enable it to take strong and immediate action to maintain public confidence when concerns are raised?*

Respectfully, we suggest that this question is flawed. We are not aware of any incident where it has been necessary for the Board to 'take strong and immediate action to maintain public confidence'. In fact, if it was to take such action 'when concerns are raised' this would seem to fundamentally undermine the principles of appropriate regulatory action.

Other regulators, and indeed the police, have appropriate powers to deal quickly with serious criminal matters, breaches of the *Work Health and Safety Act 2011* or child protection legislation.

What evidence is there of need to 'take strong and immediate action to maintain public confidence' in relation to other aspects of the accreditation criteria? Is it suggested that a concern about the statement of philosophy and aims of a school should trigger such action?

In any event, the Act already provides for a range of very serious regulatory actions to be taken by the Board and empowers 'authorised officers' with a wide scope of investigatory tools.

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<sup>19</sup> ACNC, *Policy Statement: Compliance and enforcement*, <<https://www.acnc.gov.au/about/corporate-information/corporate-policies/commissioners-policy-statement-compliance-and-enforcement>>.

<sup>20</sup> ACNC, *Regulatory Approach Statement*, <<https://www.acnc.gov.au/raise-concern/regulating-charities/acnc-regulatory-approach-statement>>.

<sup>21</sup> ACNC, *Policy Statement: Complaints about charities*, < <https://www.acnc.gov.au/about/corporate-information/corporate-policies/commissioners-policy-statement-complaints-about-charities> >.

We recommend that no changes be made to the powers of the Board, and, if such changes are recommended, that further consultation be undertaken, and evidence be provided, to justify the changes proposed.

## Good governance

Consistent with the approaches of the ACNC noted above, the Board should adopt a more formalised and transparent risk-based approach to its activities. This will allow a greater focus of resources where needed and establish consistency with the approaches outlined in the Queensland Government Public Interest Map and associated Good Governance Framework.<sup>22</sup> A review of the activities of the Board against the Threshold Test within that policy may also result in a reduction of the scope of the Board's activities, given the overlap with other regulatory bodies noted above.

**We recommend that that the activities of the Board be reviewed against the Government's Public Interest Map Policy to ascertain if all existing functions are necessary and should be undertaken in the current manner.**

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<sup>22</sup> Queensland Government, Department of Premier and Cabinet, *Public Interest Map policy*, 18 May 2016, <<https://www.premiers.qld.gov.au/publications/categories/policies-and-codes/public-interest-map-policy.aspx>>.