

22 April 2016

Mr Stuart Busby  
Director  
Policy Performance and Planning  
Legislative Services  
Department of Education and Training  
PO Box 15033  
City East QLD 4002

Email: [Stuart.Busby@dete.qld.gov.au](mailto:Stuart.Busby@dete.qld.gov.au)

Dear Stuart,

**RE: EDUCATION AND OTHER LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL 2016**

Independent Schools Queensland (ISQ) represents the interests of Queensland's independent schools. ISQ currently represents some 196 independent schools in Queensland enrolling over 116,000 students.

Reference is made to the *Education and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2016* which is currently being considered prior to submission to the government. ISQ appreciates the opportunity to comment on the proposed Bill. The Bill provides for a number of legislative amendments. ISQ's comments relate particularly to those amendments to the *Education (General Provisions) Act* and the *Education (Accreditation of Non-State Schools) Act* which impact on independent schools.

**Education (Accreditation of Non-State Schools) Act 2001**

It appears that the proposed changes to s166 and to the definition of school survey data in the dictionary is with the intention of moving into the regulation the capacity to address procedural changes to the State census data. ISQ does not believe that these proposed amendments will have any practical impact on the operations of independent schools.

The changes to s173 regarding confidentiality of information seem to support current practice of information disclosure to law enforcement agencies. Again ISQ does not believe that this change will have a significant practical impact on our member schools.

**Education (General Provisions) Act 2006**

The insertion of Chapter 8B Enrolment at non-State schools represents a major change to the requirement of enrolments in the compulsory education phase. It requires that a student undertake the preparatory year prior to being able to enrol in Year 1. ISQ is of the belief that s175M(1)(d) and s175M(2) has been drafted to give sufficient scope to an independent school principal to allow an exception to this requirement based on readiness attributes of the child.

ISQ acknowledges that the attributes that the principal should consider as set out in s175M(2) are those that allow the principal to make an accurate assessment of the child's readiness for school. ISQ member schools represent a broad range of educational philosophies and it is understood that the current draft legislation provides scope for that breadth of member schools to continue to operate within their educational philosophy while still complying with the proposed change. The insertion of Part 9 Transitional Provisions which allows current enrolments for Year 1 which do not comply with the proposed changes to process under the legislation at the time of enrolment provides assurance for current school processes.

It is imperative that the implementation of this transitional period be extended to include all potential Year 1 enrolments in 2017 as children who are eligible for Year 1 enrolment in 2017 should not be disadvantaged by this proposed change if they have not had the opportunity to complete the preparatory year in 2016.

As advised by you, ISQ will provide our comments on the proposed Education (Accreditation of Non-State Schools) Amendment Regulation 2016 at a later date once further clarification from your office has been received.

ISQ is happy to discuss any items provided in the feedback in more detail. Do not hesitate to contact the office if more assistance is required. Once again thank you for the opportunity to provide feedback on these amendments.

**Yours sincerely,**



**Helen Coyer**  
**Acting Executive Director**  
**Independent Schools Queensland**