

## Briefings

Thought leadership for the independent schooling sector

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### STATE/TERRITORY CONTRIBUTIONS TO PUBLIC FUNDING FOR SCHOOLS

#### From the Executive Director

**The Productivity Commission's *Report on Government Services*<sup>1</sup> shows that in 2016/17, Commonwealth, State and Territory Governments spent \$58 billion in recurrent expenditure on Australian schools. \$44 billion of this recurrent expenditure was on state schools whilst \$14 billion was on non-government schools.**

On a per student basis in 2017, public recurrent expenditure on state schools was \$17,531 whilst public funding for non-government schools was \$10,644 per student.

Historically, the Australian Government has provided most of the public funding for non-government schools whilst State/Territory Governments provide the bulk of funding for state schools. Which level of government provides funding for schools and the relative amounts of that funding continues to be a highly contested area of public policy.

In 2017 the Turnbull Government enshrined in legislation the responsibilities of the Federal and State/Territory Governments in terms of the funding of schools, both state and non-government.

Under the *Australian Education Act 2013*, the public funding entitlement (the loaded Schooling Resource Standard – SRS) is calculated for each Australian school under a formula devised by David Gonski in his 2011 review of the funding of schools. Section 22 of the amended Act essentially prescribes that for non-government schools, the Australian Government will provide 80% of that entitlement whilst the State/Territory Government will provide 20%. For state schools, it prescribes that the State/Territory Government will provide 80% of the entitlement and the Australian Government 20%. This is commonly known as the 80/20 rule.

The Act gives some latitude for states and territories by prescribing if the starting share (being the state/territory contribution in 2018 to the public entitlement) in respect of state schools is less than 75%, then the contribution should be 75% from 2023; if it is between 75% and 80%, then it should be the starting share; and if it is above 80%, then it should be 80%.

Similarly, for non-government schools, if the starting share is less than 15%, then it should be 15% in 2023; if it is

between 15% and 20%, it should be the starting share; and if it is above 20%, it should be 20%.

State and Territory Governments have the discretion to fund schools above minimum funding entitlements as prescribed in the Act.

It is good public policy to legislate the respective funding responsibilities of governments for schools, ensuring that each school is treated consistently in terms of its funding, no matter its location or whether it is a state school or a non-government school. Whilst the 80/20 split can be contested (why not 70/30 or some other figure?), it is worth remembering that all public funding for schools, no matter which level of government providing it, is sourced from the Australian taxpayer.

Whilst the transition arrangements to the 80/20 requirement are complex (they are impacted by indexation rates, changes in student needs and other policy changes associated with the funding model), at least it might have been expected most schools would have been receiving their full public funding entitlement by 2023.

Section 22 of the Act provides that the 80/20 requirement and the transition to it can be overridden by an agreement between the Australian Government and a State/Territory Government.

The recently signed National School Reform Agreement (NSRA)<sup>2</sup> is one such agreement and disappointingly for most states and territories it will negate the requirements of the *Australian Education Act* in terms of the transition to the 80/20 rule.

## STATE/TERRITORY CONTRIBUTIONS TO PUBLIC FUNDING FOR SCHOOLS

**Table 1:** Public Funding Entitlement for State Schools – State/Territory Starting Shares, 2023 Contributions and Requirements under the Act (%)

	STARTING SHARE 2018	PROJECTED 2023 CONTRIBUTION	AUSTRALIAN EDUCATION ACT REQUIREMENT IN 2023
New South Wales	70.7	72.2	75.0
Queensland	69.3	69.3	75.0
Western Australia	84.4	75.0	80.0
South Australia	75.0	75.0	75.0
Tasmania	72.9	74.1	75.0
Australian Capital Territory	80.0	80.0	80.0
Northern Territory	55.2	59.0	75.0

**Table 2:** Public Funding Entitlement for Non-Government Schools – State/Territory Starting Shares, 2023 Contributions and Requirements under the Act (%)

	STARTING SHARE 2018	PROJECTED 2023 CONTRIBUTION	AUSTRALIAN EDUCATION ACT REQUIREMENT IN 2023
New South Wales	25.3	22.8	20.0
Queensland	23.2	20.6	20.0
Western Australia	26.3	20.0	20.0
South Australia	19.7	19.7	19.7
Tasmania	21.5	20.0	20.0
Australian Capital Territory	20.0	20.0	20.0
Northern Territory	15.1	15.1	15.1

Source: National School Reform Agreement

Note: Victoria has not signed the National School Reform Agreement

As part of the NSRA, each state/territory (except Victoria which has not yet signed the NSRA) through an associated bilateral agreement with the Commonwealth has been required to identify the 2018 percentage of public entitlement provided by the State Government for state and non-government schools (the starting share) and specify the projected share in 2023.

Table 1 sets out the starting shares across the states and territories in respect of state schools in 2018,

the percentage the state/territory is committed to funding by 2023 and the contribution required under the Act in 2023.

Apart from highlighting the inconsistencies in funding for state schools across the nation, it is surprising that only the ACT will meet an 80% commitment by 2023 (the ACT was already meeting the requirement in 2018). Western Australia which was funding its state schools above 80% in 2018 will move to below the 80% requirement by 2023.

Only two of seven states/territories will meet the legislated requirements of the Act in terms of their contribution to the public entitlement of state schools (ACT and South Australia).

For Queensland state schools, there will be no change to the 2018 State Government contribution of 69% to the public funding of their entitlement. The Queensland Government bilateral agreement does indicate that Queensland state schools will be funded at 75% by the State Government by 2032.

For NSW, Tasmania and the Northern Territory, there will be small increases in the state/territory contribution to the public funding entitlement of state schools (although none of these will meet the legislated requirement). The chronic under-funding of public schools in the Northern Territory stands out with the Territory Government providing just 59% of their public entitlement by 2023.

For the states and territories, increases in the percentage contribution to state schools' loaded SRS involves significant additional expenditure. It has been suggested that up to an additional billion dollars in Queensland Government expenditure would be required to lift state schools to the percentage required under the Act.

As the Queensland Government states in its bilateral agreement "Queensland has a limited revenue raising capacity" and "the proposed transition path represents an increase to Queensland's school education budget that is financially sustainable and will not compromise other areas of service delivery".

Table 2 outlines the starting shares for non-government schools in each state/territory and the transition to the 80/20 requirement. It suggests that most State/Territory Governments will take a different approach when it comes to non-government schools. They have used the provisions of the Act to project an intended reduction in funding to non-government schools over the period of the NSRA.

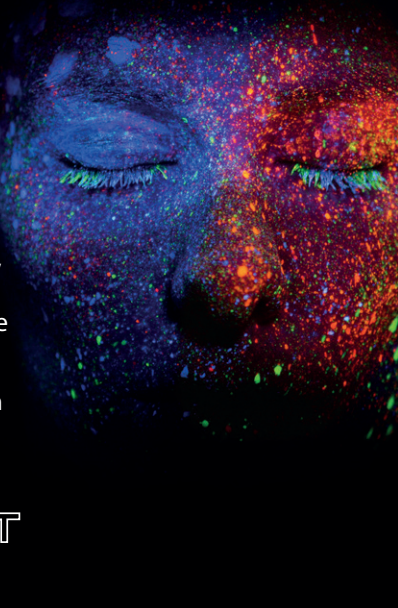
2 The National School Reform Agreement and associated bilateral agreements between individual states and territories and the Commonwealth can be accessed at [www.education.gov.au](http://www.education.gov.au)

**ISQ's 2019 STATE FORUM, ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING & ANNUAL DINNER will be held at the Brisbane Convention and Exhibition Centre on 29 May.**

With a list of speakers including Dr Catherine Ball, Bernard Salt AM, UQ Vice Chancellor Professor Peter Høj AC and Peter van Onselen, the forum looks to the future under the theme "Think Next".

For further information and registrations, visit [www.isq.qld.edu.au](http://www.isq.qld.edu.au)

**TH/KNXT**



The **2019 FEDERAL ELECTION** will be held on 18 May. ISQ's federal election web page provides member schools with information on the education policies of the major parties. It also has information on each electorate in Queensland including maps, schools in the electorate and schooling participation rates.

Visit the page at [www.isq.qld.edu.au](http://www.isq.qld.edu.au)



In accordance with the provisions of the Act, states/territories are within their rights to reduce the contribution to non-government schools where the starting share is higher than 20%. However, it is unfortunate their keenness to comply with the 80/20 requirement for non-government schools doesn't extend to compliance with the Act for state schools.

Overall it is a disappointing outcome for Australian schools and not one that would have been expected when the *Australian Education Act* was amended in 2017 to provide for the 80/20 requirements. It suggests that the divisive debate over the funding of schools is far from settled, with most states and territories failing to adhere to the requirements of the Act.

Federal Shadow Minister for Education Tanya Plibersek has committed to lifting the Australian Government contribution to the public entitlement of state schools to 22.2% across three years if the ALP forms government after the 18 May federal election. She has also signalled that the ALP will be

tough on "accounting tricks" which allow states/territories to include non-school expenditure in the calculation of their contributions.

It would be a disappointing outcome if an increase in the Australian Government contribution to 22.2% was simply used as a substitute for state/territory funding of schools.

At a time when the Federal Government is increasing funding for schools (both state and non-government) more focus needs to be placed on State/Territory Government contributions. It raises the question of why public education campaigns (such as the current "Fair Funding Now!") are so focused on the Australian Government but have little to say about state/territory funding.

Commonwealth-state financial relationships are complex and the subject of continuing dispute (including in education and health). It is disappointing that the 2017 attempt to set out the funding responsibilities of respective governments appears to have been rejected by most states and territories.



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## ADVANCING ADVANCEMENT IN INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS



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*“We all have the same mission: advancing education to transform lives and society”*

**SUE CUNNINGHAM,**  
PRESIDENT AND CEO,  
COUNCIL FOR ADVANCEMENT  
AND SUPPORT OF EDUCATION

**The advancement profession in education institutions has evolved over the past half century from the traditional fundraising, alumni relations and communications and marketing to also encompass those responsible for brand and reputation management, crisis management, digital technology and data privacy, community relations and volunteer recruitment, admission and enrolment management, advertising, design and much more. Sometimes large teams carry out these functions, sometimes (often in schools) many of these duties fall to one or two people.**

### Defining advancement

Advancement, although not widely used in Queensland, is a term used globally in the education sphere. Agreeing on a definition for advancement and ensuring schools understand the benefit of an advancement professional can be a challenge. David Willows, director of advancement at the International

School of Brussels in Belgium says when people ask what he does, he finds it easier to say he is a storyteller.

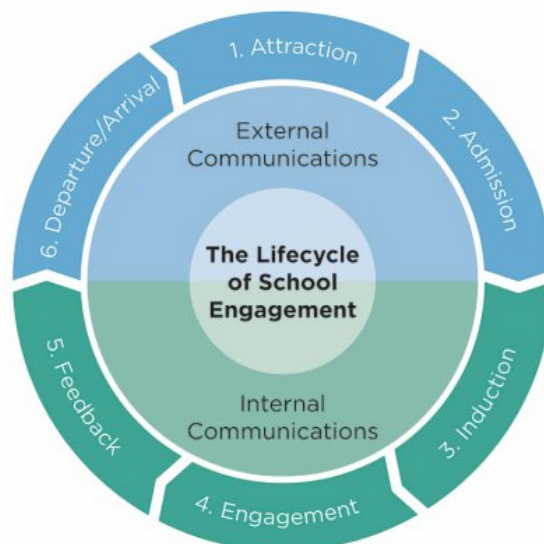
“I tell the story of my school, and I help people find their place in that story. I think about what the story of the school is today, as well as what it might be tomorrow. I try to find new ways to connect this story to people at each stage of the school’s lifecycle. And I manage, alongside members of my team, a set of processes that enable all of this to happen in an engaging and coherent way” (Willows, 2019, para. 4).

Willows took the analogy further to map families’ interactions with the school story through six stages he calls the Lifecycle of School Engagement. This helped him explain why certain work functions need to work together and, at his institution, sit together in the same office. It also acts as a visual reminder of what is at the heart of advancement (see Figure 1).

*“Everything we do... is organized around three fundamental pillars or activities: story, people, and process. We tell the story of our school. We help people find their place in that story – as prospective parents, students, teachers, donors – and we manage a set of processes that enable these two things to happen. That’s just about the sum of it” (Willows, 2019).*

Willows’ Lifecycle of a School begins with Attraction – the first time a family hears about a school; the second stage is Admission when a family chooses to become part of a school community; then the family and student/s move on through the subsequent stages – Induction; Engagement; and Feedback – until the final stage Departure, although the student also moves on to Arrival – becoming an alumnus, so in effect the cycle and connection with a school is ongoing.

**Figure 1:** The Lifecycle of School Engagement (Willows, 2019)



Advancement professionals are vital to a school because they:

- Secure additional financial support from potential donors committed to the school's mission
- Engage alumni in the life of the school as volunteers, advocates, prospective parents and supporters
- Promote or market the school to prospective students, their parents and others
- Communicate about the school with those who have a stake in its success, including community members, business leaders, government officials, and the media
- Build community.

Willows argues that we can “break advancement down to a series of essential, irreducible, yet related elements” (Willows, 2018, para. 2). (See Figure 2).

While the 21 elements are arranged vertically based on the pillars of story, people, and process, patterns also emerge horizontally. The first column of elements is centred around the role of storytelling. As ambassadors of the school, it is imperative that advancement professionals understand how their work and the work of those around them support the organisation. The second column of elements brings into focus the ways in which advancement professionals can empower and engage colleagues to work collaboratively for greater impact. The third column is about managing a set of processes across the broad scope of advancement within a world of rapid social and technological change.

Advancement practitioners and their many functions are impacted by fluctuating Australian politics, emerging digital technologies, differences in generational expectations, the global economy and a changing regulatory landscape.

## The regulatory landscape

Consent is increasingly framing all interactions. Advancement

**Figure 2: The Periodic Table of Advancement**

Story	People	Process
<b>Mn</b> 1.1 Mission What is the story of the school?	<b>Gv</b> 1.2 Governance What is the role of the Board in advancing the Mission of the school?	<b>Ps</b> 1.3 Policies What are the policies that support the Mission of the school?
<b>Br</b> 2.1 Brand How do we know and influence what other people think and feel about the school?	<b>Co</b> 2.2 Community How do we build a community of students, parents, staff, donors, partners and alumni around the story of the school?	<b>Sy</b> 2.3 Systems How do we ensure that what we do is connected to all other aspects of school life and that others understand what we do?
<b>Ch</b> 3.1 Coherence How do we ensure that our story is coherent at all stages of the engagement life-cycle: from first contact to departure?	<b>Tm</b> 3.2 Team How do we build and organise a team that can tell the story of the school and help others find their place in that story?	<b>Pc</b> 3.3 Procedures How do we allocate roles and responsibilities to members of the advancement team?
<b>Am</b> 4.1 Amplification How do we select and manage the platforms that capture and disseminate the story?	<b>St</b> 4.2 Support How do we effectively and systematically solicit support to achieve the school's mission?	<b>Ev</b> 4.3 Events How do events both amplify and solicit support for the story of the school?
<b>Eg</b> 5.1 Engagement How do people interact with and find their place in the story of the school?	<b>Cn</b> 5.2 Connection How do we work collaboratively with colleagues, as well as students, families and school partners?	<b>In</b> 5.3 Indicators How do we measure what is important and set targets that can track progress over time?
<b>Rn</b> 6.1 Reinvention How do we re-imagine the future story of the school?	<b>Fd</b> 6.2 Feedback How do we seek out the perspectives of others and continuously edit the story of the school?	<b>Gs</b> 6.3 Goal Setting How do we learn - as individuals and as a team - and how do we know what we should be in the future?
<b>Lc</b> 7.1 Legacy How do we celebrate those who were once part of the school's story?	<b>Un</b> 7.2 Understanding How do we capture and record what we are learning as an Advancement team for those who come after us?	<b>Ar</b> 7.3 Archiving How do we preserve the story of the school for future generations?

Source: Willows, 2018

professionals have been navigating the ever-changing regulations and implications on independent schools around data breaches, privacy and electronic communications for some time. But the clarion call was the issue of stringent guidelines for permission-based marketing and fundraising, most prominently the European Union (EU) General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) in 2018 (Grenzbach, Glier and Associates, 2015). These guidelines have serious implications for various fundraising and marketing practices for some independent schools – in

both mass communications and one-to-one contact (Grenzbach, Glier and Associates, 2015). In many cases, it is the role of the advancement professional to understand new regulatory requirements like the GDPR, and to ensure they comply in this era of consent.

Seventy-five Queensland independent schools educate close to 2,000 full fee-paying overseas students (Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2019), many of whom call the EU home. These schools may come under the GDPR (Australian

## ADVANCING ADVANCEMENT IN INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS CONTINUED

Government, 2018) because they are an Australian business whose website:

- targets EU customers for example by enabling them to order goods or services in a European language (other than English) or enabling payment in euros (international student enrolment applications and fees);
- mentions customers or users in the EU (international student marketing materials and homestay programs).

Furthermore, independent schools develop highly successful, global-minded alumni, many of whom further their careers overseas. Annual giving or capital campaign marketing and associated building/scholarship funds must comply with Australian and international privacy and tax laws (ATO) prior to launching to their current and alumni communities, many of whom may not be Australian citizens or who now reside overseas and do not consent to receiving this information.

### The economic picture

Experts suggest advancement professionals tasked with raising huge sums of money for a master plan or much-needed resources, need to change their lens as to why people give money. “[It’s] extremely important to consider as we encounter a new landscape for charitable giving. Post-recession giving, particularly

to education, has been on a steady growth trajectory” (Orem, 2019, para. 3).

Projections (Independent Schools Queensland [ISQ], 2017) for school-aged population in Queensland point to continued strong demand for new schools. The Queensland independent schooling sector currently expends approximately \$330 million per annum on capital facilities (including boarding provision), approximately \$300 million of which is financed by parents, fundraising and borrowings for capital projects.

Queensland’s economic downturn has been challenging for the independent schooling sector evidenced by the lack of large independent schools being built. The typical Prep to Year 12 school model makes up the majority of the independent schooling sector in Queensland – 144 schools – (ISQ, 2018a) yet new independent schools are small, niche schools catering to disengaged young people or students with disability.

Orem (2019, para. 4) says that despite the current volatile economic picture, “if the economy continues to improve, giving may grow, particularly among major donors.” However, she warns small schools “that depend on many small gifts may still be hit harder than those that get the bulk of their giving from high-net-worth individuals.” It’s important to realise that “when it comes to charitable giving, we are often ruled by our hearts and not our heads” (Sanders & Tamma, 2015, para. 4).

### Going digital

Social media continues to play an increasingly fundamental role in schools advancement. The Seventh Annual Survey of Social Media in Advancement, conducted by Mack & Stoner (2016) reported “nearly nine out of 10 respondents... agreed that social media is a more important part of the communications and marketing mix at their institutions than it was three years ago.” But realising the potential of such significant communication and engagement channels continues to be a challenge.

The survey findings stated: “While Facebook continues to be the single most important social channel used by school, college and university marketers and advancement officers, many struggle with how and when to fully embrace emerging social channels” (Mack & Stoner, 2016). Schools must establish a presence, plan their content, build a following and master the new platform, prior to engaging in a new channel.

School leaders are starting to realise the benefits of social media and other digital options such as blogs, online news hubs and e-newsletters, which “offer a cost-effective way to disseminate information quickly and easily” (Quigley, 2016, p. 28). Many institutions, like Barton College in North Carolina, are pushing the avenues of engagement across increasingly fragmented channels to appeal to a new generation of parents. “In the age of Instagram and Facebook, we put photos on our annual fund envelopes and appeal letters. The paragraphs are shorter, the fonts more striking, and the salutations more personal. Our spring appeal using this approach raised 45 percent more money than the campaign in 2012” (Bailes, 2013, p. 54).

With these new technologies, practitioners must also manage expectations internally. “It’s a communicator’s job to evaluate situations and present options” (Quigley, 2016, p. 28). As Chief Marketing Officer, Frank Grillo simply put, the

*Schools must establish a presence, plan their content, build a following and master the new platform, prior to engaging in a new channel.*

new mission of the advancement professional is “to bring value to every interaction we have with a customer or potential customer; to facilitate the decision they want to make; on their terms not ours” (Grillo, 2018, para. 5).

## Mission: Impact

It is the mission of experienced advancement professionals to make an impact – to make a difference and live for something larger than ourselves. The future of advancement seems strong according to a 2011 study by human resources firm Mercer, where the “opportunity to make a difference” ranked in the top three career priorities of millennials (Nekuda, 2011, para. 6); highly educated, ambitious, tech-savvy millennials who are social, global, and civic-minded. Millennial development officer J. Zachary Bailes: “As I found success raising money, I realized that at the heart of fundraising is an opportunity to ignite imaginations and transform communities” (Bailes, 2013, p. 52).

Advancement practitioners yearn to inspire and equip fellow and future leaders to transform the world – and transform themselves in the process (Bailes, 2013, p. 52). Queensland independent school advancement specialists are able to connect with peers, share knowledge and acquire best-practice to meet the contemporary challenges of the role through organisations such as: Association of Fundraising Professionals (AFP); Queensland Registrar’s Association; Educate Plus, an Australasian network; and the international Council for Advancement and Support of Education (CASE).

The 2019 CASE Asia-Pacific Advancement Conference Schools Programme was held at Brisbane Grammar School this month (8 April); the first time in its 45-year history the conference has been held in Australia. Schools Programme Chair and advancement professional, Heather Hamilton has been a member of CASE for seven years. Heather joined Brisbane Grammar School in 2014 and advocated the

benefits of advancement. Her title, Executive Director Advancement and Community Relations, reflected this shift in focus at the school. Early 2017, Headmaster Anthony Micallef further recognised the importance of advancement and included Hamilton as part of the Brisbane Grammar School Senior Leadership Team.

The theme for the 2019 CASE APAC Schools Programme was Advancing Advancement. “We spend a high proportion of our days focused on our external community for fundraising, marketing and admissions to achieve our institutional objectives, often forgetting (or struggling) to bring our internal community of faculty, staff, administrators, Heads of Schools and Board members along for the ride. They are an integral part of our institutions’ programming and this year we have made them an integral part of our conference with an exciting programme for Heads of Schools” (Brisbane Grammar School, 2019).

Independent Schools Queensland Executive Director David Robertson gave the opening plenary at the CASE schools conference. Robertson spoke about the role of schools, and advancement professionals, in education futures and the need for diversified independent school funding, such as philanthropy and giving campaigns, as schools can no longer rely on government funding and tuition fees as their sole sources of income. This is especially true with regard to capital funding – currently 80 percent of capital costs are met by parents and independent school fundraising (ISQ, 2018b). Robertson warned school leaders and advancement professionals of education’s impending Uber disruption moment. He discussed how, much like the education industry, the

taxi industry was certain it would continue winning; that was until the game changed with the introduction of ride-share apps. Parents will increasingly look for and be open to better and what they perceive as easier alternatives.

## What parents want

Advancement professionals are responsible for managing institutional relationships, developing sources of revenue, and effectively communicating a school’s mission. School leaders rely on them to turn their dreams into education reality, and in turn, advancement professionals strive to make an impact.

The increasing cost of providing education challenges independent schools to find new ways to resonate with today’s parents and students. Independent schools have traditionally defined themselves through a mission, values and traditions. The millennial generation of parents desires agency in all decisions and is willing to continually look for something that better fits parents’ needs.

The National Association of Independent Schools (NAIS) in the United States recently undertook qualitative research into why parents choose independent schools and found that parents ‘hire’ schools to do particular ‘jobs’ for them. The four ‘jobs’ of a school are to:

- Overcome any obstacles, so their child doesn’t fall behind;
- Fulfil emotionally strong and intelligent child growth to achieve full potential;
- Produce a well-rounded child who will be productive in society, not just academic; and

*It is the mission of experienced advancement professionals to make an impact – to make a difference and live for something larger than ourselves.*

## ADVANCING ADVANCEMENT IN INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS CONTINUED

ISQ SCHOOLS MARKETING  
& COMMUNICATIONS FORUM  
6 AUGUST | BRISBANE

### Join the tribe: the collective power of community

Communities generate tangible and emotional value, build lasting loyalty and can create new sources of growth. It's about listening to your community and stakeholders, and responding appropriately. Explore practical strategies designed to inspire new ideas, engage marketing innovation, and solve some of the key challenges faced by independent schools.

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- Fulfil potential when a child has particular talents while also providing good academic results. (Torres, 2019)

These findings are remarkably similar to the ISQ *What Parents Want Survey* (ISQ, 2019b), which is undertaken every three years. It is the longest running parent survey in Australia, with four surveys conducted over 12 years since 2006. The trend data suggests that parents have remained consistent as to why they choose an independent school:

- Preparation for student to fulfil potential in later life;
- The high quality of teachers;
- School seemed right for child's individual needs;
- Good discipline; and
- Teaching methods/philosophy.

Parents search for authenticity in a school brand. Aaron Cooper, head of school at The Elisabeth Morrow School in New Jersey, believes in order to appeal to millennial parents, schools must let the parents take ownership of the storytelling. Millennial parents are "eager to partner with them and take their suggestions seriously so that they are co-creating the environment in which they want to raise their children – and the brand with which they want to be associated" (Cooper, 2017, para. 7). It isn't a transaction, but a collaborative relationship where everyone is working towards a larger goal.

Robertson elaborated further when interviewed on ISQ's podcast, *The School Bell* (ISQ, 2019b), stating that the power of community and word of mouth remains the most influential in parent decision-making, with 67 percent of parents relying on family,

friends and colleagues, followed by other parents/children at the school (54 percent).

The new generation of parents have higher expectations of schools: they weigh up all schooling sectors; are less likely to start thinking about school choice before or from their child's birth; and are influenced heavily by a school's external appearance and facilities.

School infrastructure is an important driver for the area of admissions with 7 in 10 parents motivated by a school's facilities; however, this research is equally useful in understanding what dreams donors are trying to fulfil with their gifts.

### A valuable investment

Advancement offices in independent schools are often hierarchical and not structured to facilitate the exchange of creative ideas or to show their value to the organisation.

Advancement is not only driven by newly available technologies, but also new realities: a volatile economy; restricted government funding; changing student demographics to more bespoke, specialist schools; increased competition; and greater parental expectations. Given this landscape, school leaders and advancement professionals alike need to be more accountable and transparent than ever before.

The value of advancement work must be tied to tangible (often financial) outcomes, aligned with a school's strategic plan. Some areas of advancement are more suitable to quantifiable measurement than others. "Marketing is an investment, and like any investment, institutions have the right to expect a reasonable return" (Moore, 2014). But unlike their development and admissions colleagues who can report on the thousands of dollars they raise or number of students enrolled, marketing and communications professionals are at risk of being seen as an overhead. Moore goes on to say schools have a tendency to view some areas of advancement as "nonessential



– a place to cut during tough budgetary times. Demonstrating return on investment shows school leaders that advancement work has a direct effect on the health and viability” of an independent school (Moore, 2014).

Claire Brown, director of student recruitment and admissions at the University of Liverpool in the United Kingdom says “marketing has much more of a seat at the top table now... And it’s a seat that’s talking a lot more about strategy, about understanding markets, dynamics, competitors, positioning, and value propositions. These are conversations that weren’t being had at the level that they are now” (Walker, 2013, p. 26).

Strengthened appreciation for the valuable work of the advancement professional in independent schools will only be realised when further strategic discussions about tactics, stakeholders and resources take place in the principal’s office and the board room.

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## Advancement Resources

ISQ has created a collection of resources, templates and helpful guides to assist member schools with their enrolments, marketing, alumni and fundraising practices.

VISIT PAGE

### Podcast: The School Bell

Educators, researchers and experts discuss issues of importance to Queensland independent schools, from parental choice to innovative practice, wellbeing and student outcomes.

SUBSCRIBE

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