
MEDIA RELEASE

7 May 2024 – For Immediate Release

Queensland Government Deaf to People of Faith

Detailed and genuine concerns expressed by faith leaders, and supported by Christian schools, have been dismissed by the Premier and Queensland Government according to reports in the media today.

The letter to the Premier earlier this month, supported by Christian school leaders, expressed concerns about the restriction of fundamental human rights by the draft *Anti-Discrimination Bill 2024*. The proposals fly in the face of strong community support for Christian and other religious schools employing staff who share their beliefs and parental choice in education.

The independent polling, conducted last month, showed that over 80% of Queenslanders support the right of a religious school to employ teachers and other staff who support the clearly stated values and beliefs of the school. A similar percentage of Queenslanders believe that Australian laws should protect the right to hold and practice religious beliefs. This figure has been increasing since 2019.

The polling also showed that:

- About 90% of parents sending their children to faith-based schools in Queensland and nearly 80% of all Queenslanders support the right of a religious school to enforce standards of uniform and behaviour consistent with their values and beliefs
- Over 75% of parents sending their children to faith-based schools in QLD 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 QLD voters.

ENDS

Comments attributed to Vanessa Cheng, Executive Officer, Australian Association of Christian Schools –

“At our recent Town Hall event in Brisbane, 800 Christian school parents, teachers and supporters attended, some coming as far away as Chinchilla and Hervey Bay, to show their commitment and support for the future of Christian education in Queensland. The Premier

would be wise to listen the voice of our community and ensure our schools can continue to offer genuine choice for parents.”

Comments attributed to Alistair Macpherson, Executive Director, Public Policy and Advocacy Associated Christian Schools –

“It is essential that all faith based schools be able to employ staff that reflect the faith, values, mission and ethos of the school. To not support this right for faith based schools is a fundamental breach of religious freedom and the right of parents to choose an education that aligns with their faith convictions”

Comments attributed to Mark Spencer, Director of Public Policy, Christian Schools Australia –

“The Premier and Queensland Government need to listen to the people of Queensland and protect Christian and other faith-based schools. Religious freedom is not an optional extra human right.”

For all media enquiries:

Vanessa Cheng, Australian Association of Christian Schools, 0416 244 372

Alistair Macpherson, Associated Christian Schools, 0401 365 776

Mark Spencer, Christian Schools Australia, 0419 419 224

About the Associations:

Australian Association of Christian Schools (AACS) 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.