



**2 June 2022**

## **New data shows support for religious freedom protections, push to accelerate timeline**

New research shows growing support for religious freedom laws in Australia, with strong calls for the Albanese Government to re-introduce religious anti-discrimination legislation to Parliament.

### **The latest research shows:**

- **Three out of four** 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.
- **Over two thirds** of Australians believe that Australian laws should protect the right to hold and practice religious beliefs.
- **62 per cent** of younger voters (18-24) support this right, with the highest support (**77 per cent**) in that age bracket from those with postgraduate university qualifications
- Unsurprisingly, over **88 per cent** of those actively practicing a religious faith supported these protections, but they were still supported by a majority of voters without any religious faith

The Australian Association of Christian Schools (AACS), Christian Schools Australia and Associated Christian Schools, jointly commissioned the report which reaffirms the strong desire across Australians for these protections to be put in place, regardless of their faith.

**AACS Executive Officer Vanessa Cheng said:**

“We are calling upon Prime Minister Albanese to deliver on the ALP’s election commitment that his government will prioritise preventing discrimination against people of faith and maintain the right of religious schools to preference people of the same faith in the selection of staff,” she said.

“We hope and pray that an Albanese Government can succeed in achieving this overdue reform for people of faith where the Morrison Government failed.”

**Christian Schools Australia Director of Public Policy Mark Spencer said:**

“The support for protections across all party lines and amongst those without a religious faith is reassuring,” he said.

“Parents with children in a faith-based school clearly understand the importance of ensuring staff share the school’s beliefs, with nearly 90% expressing support for protecting that right.”

**Associated Christian Schools Executive Director Dr Lynne Doneley said:**

“The ACS position, Christian education for the common good, is strongly supported by the findings of the National Poll on Attitudes to Christian Schools.

“It is evident from the National Poll that both people of faith and people of no faith strongly support the contribution Christian schools are making to educate young Australians.”

**ENDS**