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# Schools for All Report

## Association of Independent Schools of the ACT

### Quarterly Report – September 2016

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#### Introduction

As noted in the Preamble of the ACT Government Response to the Expert Panel recommendations, “...AIS (has) considered each recommendation and acknowledge a strong desire to build on existing reforms, improvements and initiatives in so far as it is practical and possible. As an independent governing body representing 18 independent schools that are separate and autonomous entities, AIS notes all the recommendations and the ACT Government response.”

An indication of this desire to build an existing reform, and to respond to the recommendations, is evidenced in the agenda of both AISACT Board and Executive Committee meetings. Further, the Executive Committee has established a Schools for All Subcommittee to provide it with advice on strategies, opportunities and approaches in direct reference to the Schools for All Report, and the responses to the recommendations from the Association. The establishment of this Subcommittee was noted and endorsed by the full Board of AISACT.

#### Progress on the Recommendations specific to Independent Schools and/or to AISACT

##### Policy and School Governance

<b>Recommendation 3.2</b>
That ETD, CE, and each Independent School, develop practical and readily accessible guidelines to enable school leaders and staff to understand and comply with their core legal obligations with respect to human rights, discrimination, work health and safety, and privacy; including how to reconcile potentially competing obligations.
<b>AISACT Response</b>
The AIS will support member schools to review relevant policies and procedures and will access the ETD resources to provide to ACT Independent Schools.
<b>Key Activities</b>
All AISACT Member Schools have access to the University of Canberra Disability Standards for Education online course. With over 250 Staff in AISACT Member Schools engaging with the online course.

A number of Member Schools have included or plan to include the course in their end of term/year professional learning schedule for staff.

Member Schools have access to a range of resources to understand and comply with their core legal obligations via the Associations website. Additionally the Association will continue to collaborate with external agencies and consultants to support Member Schools in this area as requested.

#### Recommendation 4.1

That ETD, CE, and each Independent School, review their policies and procedures with respect to students with complex needs and challenging behaviour to ensure that all schools have a comprehensive suite of relevant policies and procedures.

#### AISACT Response

The AIS will support member schools to review relevant policies and procedures and will access the ETD resources to provide to ACT Independent Schools.

#### Key Activities

A number of Member Schools have begun the process of reviewing their procedures and policies with respect to students with complex needs and challenging behaviours through a whole school approach.

AISACT is supporting Member Schools through professional learning; for example an event titled *Managing Challenging Behaviours in Schools* presented by Education Psychologist Tim Dansie.

Additionally, Member Schools have access to relevant resources via the AISACT's website.

#### Recommendation 11.1

That ETD, CE, and each Independent School, develop practical guidelines on the appropriate use of voluntary withdrawal spaces, seclusion, and physical restraint.

#### AISACT Response

ETD will share these resources with CE and AIS and will collaborate to develop future resources to support all students.

#### Key Activities

AISACT will collaborate with ED and CE in developing possible future resources.

Individual schools provide the following specific examples:

#### Example A:

The School has guidelines around voluntary withdrawal and seclusion. Physical restraint is not used.

The School's Head of Senior School, Director of Pastoral Care, and counsellors work in conjunction with Heads of Houses to ensure a consistent approach in dealing with student needs. There are clear guidelines provided to staff via individual student plans which are developed to better support

students in terms of their physical and emotional needs. These are reviewed regularly to address their changing needs. The students and parent(s) are involved in the development of these individual plans to ensure that the process and decisions are transparent and that all of the students' needs are met.

Example B:

The School has adopted a policy of Relationship Management that views inappropriate behaviour as an opportunity for educators and students to discuss, problem-solve and negotiate alternative solutions for challenging situations.

**Recommendation 11.2**

That ETD and CE establish procedures that (a) enable ETD and CE to approve and monitor any behaviour support plans that propose the use of restrictive practices for an individual student; (b) require member schools to report each occasion of the use of restrictive practices to a nominated officer within ETD or CE; and (c) monitor the use of restrictive practices and identify trends in order to inform service improvement. That each Independent School establish procedures that enable any behaviour support plans that propose the use of restrictive practices to be approved by the school leadership or management.

**AISACT Response**

AIS notes that where such procedures are not in place already, the AIS will support member schools to establish such procedures.

**Key Activities**

A number of Member Schools are currently reviewing their procedures. The Association will continue to support schools in the development and review of the procedures.

**Recommendation 11.7**

That the ACT Government seek an amendment to the Education Act 2004 (ACT) to require Catholic and Independent Schools to report data of suspensions and exclusions of students, including the proportion of students with a disability and students in out of home care, to the Registrar of Non-Government Schools.

**AISACT Response**

ETD is committed to transparency of reporting and will consult with CE and AIS to determine if this level of reporting can be achieved.

CE and AIS have an agreement to report to the Minister for Education the number and nature of critical incidents that occur in schools.

**Key Activities**

AISACT has entered into a Memorandum of Understanding with the ACT Government to report to the Minister the nature and number of critical incidents every six months

**Recommendation 12.6**

That ETD, CE, and each Independent School, develop guidelines which regulate access to schools by NDIS service providers.

**AISACT Response**

AIS will where appropriate work with member schools to support the development of guidelines related to NDIS providers in schools.

**Key Activities**

2 staff members from the Association sit on the NDIS Education and Employment working group which meets on a monthly basis.

AISACT is in the process of creating and distributing suggested guidelines to schools. These guidelines will be taken to the AISACT Schools for All Executive Committee Subcommittee for consideration before being provided to Member Schools.

**Recommendation 15.1**

That ETD and CE, and each Independent School, make clear in their strategic plans a) how their student-centred vision and principles are operationalised with respect to priorities, targets and indicators; and b) how the various components, services and programs that they provide contribute to the implementation of their student-centred vision.

**AISACT Response**

AIS notes the strategic plans are developed by the governing body of a school to best set the directions and priorities, and reinforce the culture of schools. The office of AIS will, where appropriate, work with and support schools in their consideration of this recommendation.

**Key Activities**

Schools for All is an item at each AISACT Board Meeting in order to update Board Members on the progress and strategic implications of the work being conducted in Member Schools.

Additionally, a Schools for All Executive subcommittee has been developed to provide additional support and guidance to Member Schools and the Association.

## Community and Culture

### Recommendation 6.1

That ETD, CE, and each Independent School, encourage all school leaders to implement KidsMatter (for primary schools) and MindMatters (for high schools) as part of their overall strategy to support positive school culture, student wellbeing, and behaviour.

### AISACT Response

KidsMatter and MindMatters are also actively promoted across all AIS member schools. AIS will continue to support these programs and identify other recognised programs appropriate for each independent school's context.

### Key Activities

Each Independent School develops pastoral care policies and programs to suit the culture and ethos of the school and the needs of the students.

The Association and Member Schools have embraced KidsMatter and MindMatters as a program for student wellbeing. Thirteen Member Schools have implemented either/or both programs, with many of these and others taking aspects of the programs to fit the respective school's culture and existing pastoral care program.

Individual schools provide the following specific examples:

#### Example A:

The School has a Pastoral Care Program which involves aspects of MindMatters and other programs to promote a positive school culture, student well-being and behaviour. The School has targeted programs for each Year level which are reviewed and updated each year. For example, Years 7 and 11 are involved in the Peer Support Program. These programs have been developed over many years and staff have attended Professional Development courses in relevant areas (including attendance at MindMatters workshops).

To facilitate these programs and provide for student well-being, the school has a House structure. Upon arrival at the school, students are allocated to one of the 6 Houses (in which they remain for the rest of their time at the school) and to a Tutor Group within that House - there are 11 Tutor Groups in each House. Years 7, 11 and 12 remain in year groups, Years 7 and 11 are split into two smaller Tutor Groups. In Year 12, students are in the one Tutor Group. Students from Years 8, 9 and 10 are in 6 vertical Tutor Groups.

The School has a 10 day cyclic timetable; the timetable includes dedicated Pastoral Care times, with each Tutor Group meeting 5 times; the whole House meeting 3 times; and a 50 minute Personal Development Program once a cycle. In the Pastoral Care Program, students meet in year groups (still within the House) with dedicated tutors who facilitate the delivery of the Pastoral Care Program for that Year level.

The School has yearly staff and student evaluations of these programs to allow the school to assess

the outcomes. There is continual review and incorporation of new programs as required. Thus far the outcomes have been positive, with increased connectedness and sense of belonging. The programs implemented aim to build relationships, develop resilience, and the students understanding of others.

Example B:

The School has been a KidsMatter school since KidsMatter's inception. The school was part of the original pilot program in 2007/2006. There is a KidsMatter Action team in addition to a student Action team called KAT (KidsMatter Action Team). The KAT is elected by the Year 4/5 students, who serve a semester term at a time. This allows many of the Year 4/5 students to have the opportunity to be part of the team and actively promoting connectedness and mental wellbeing in the Junior School.

KidsMatter is integrated within the school's values of education and informs all school activities. Examples of the dedicated KidsMatter activities include: Happiness Day, Art shows, whole school dances, multicultural day, boys/dads - girls/mums activities, a notice board with the value of the week and value awards each week at the Junior School assembly.

The school has a transition to school KidsMatter Program which provides parents information about what to expect when their children come the school. Parents are provided with an information pack with KidsMatter handouts, and there are parent meetings where new parents can meet each other, ask questions and gain support. New Kindergarten students are visited at preschool by two Junior School staff members, this allows each student to get to know the staff and be able to recognise a familiar face when they attend orientation. The new Kindergarten students a visit the school for Orientation, then are provided another opportunity to come for a play date one afternoon, after school and build friendships with other students.

Students who are identified as being anxious about the transition are sent a letter from the School Psychologist with a transition magazine that is individualised with their name and their photo, telling them all about 'Big School', who their teacher will be and what to expect. Each classroom has all the students' photos up in the window before school starts. The Friday before school starts all students come in to meet their new teacher, see where their desk is, pick up their books and have a play. By the time students arrive on their first day of school they are comfortable enough with the environment and the teachers that they settle in quickly. The School has seen a success with the program and have used it for over 10 years.

The school is also currently in the process of introducing MindMatters into the High School. Both a parent group and a student advisory group has been formed. The school is planning to launch the program soon and teachers are currently completing the training modules.

The school is already conducting Personal Development sessions with all Year levels. Examples of these sessions include coping with stress, resilience, mental wellbeing, cyber safety, and targeted male/female sessions. The school plans to run parent sessions in the near future.

Example C:

The School has adopted the Mind Matters framework to strengthen its use of evidence based decision making models when identifying, evaluating, and implementing new student mental health

and wellbeing practices. The results of applying this framework into the school environment has seen the inclusion of dedicated Student Wellbeing Time (SWELL TIME) in which students are encouraged to engage in mindfulness and relationship building activities with school staff. SWELL TIME has allowed teaching and youth support staff the opportunity to further model effective problem solving and resilience building thinking practices. The time has been used to reinforce the notion that the school is a safe and nurturing space in which all students are an active and valuable member of the school community. The importance of healthy and trusting relationships between staff and students is a key operational priority at the school, and the success of SWELL TIME is testament to the quality of these relationships. Students are supported to share the challenges they are facing in their lives in order to workshop, think through, and explore possible solutions with their youth workers and teachers. The forums that have developed are free from judgement or criticism, and are used as a safe space for the young people to have their voices heard.

The School has further modified its environment in order to proactively build students' skill sets in the areas of social-emotional learning (SEL) and values based decision making (Values Ed). During these dedicated learning sessions, students are able to explore a variety of interrelated concepts, ideas, and frameworks that have a focus on personal growth and healthy development. Students are encouraged to enhance their understanding of their physiology and stress responses, emotional literacy, and use of mindfulness practices. During these dedicated learning times, students are challenged to broaden their perspectives on what it means to be a healthy, happy, and effective individual within a broader community of people. They are given opportunities to extend their sense of self and shown how to manage their emotions when life becomes stressful and frustrating.

### Recommendation 6.3

That ETD, CE, and each Independent School, develop and promote practical resources to assist all schools to effectively engage with parents/carers of students with complex needs and challenging behaviour.

### AISACT Response

Improving parent engagement with students is an ongoing priority for ETD, CE and independent schools. (Reference to the ARACY cross-sectoral project)

### Key Activities

AISACT continues to work with Association of Parents and Friends of ACT Schools to engage with the Parents and Friends committees in Independent Schools.

AISACT hosted NDIS information night for Independent School parents in Term 3 to inform them about the NDIS and how to connect their child's NDIS plans with their educational program.

### Recommendation 6.4

That ETD, CE, and AIS, negotiate a partnership agreement or Memorandum of Understanding with the Community Services Directorate to better meet the needs of students who live in out of home care, drawing on models such as the Victorian 'Out of Home Care Education Commitment'.

#### AISACT Response

CSD will lead the development of the partnership agreement with ETD, CE and AIS.

CE and AIS acknowledge that the partnership could be strengthened in this area and welcome the recommendation.

#### Key Activities

A member of staff from the AISACT office sits on the Improving Educational Outcomes committee (for young people on care and protection and youth justice).

The IEO committee has asked that AISACT request from Member Schools examples of ILP's for the committee to discuss. Six schools have currently shared their ILPs with AISACT with a number of other schools waiting for approval to share this information with AISACT and the committee.

### Recommendation 9.1

That ETD, CE, and each Independent School, (a) endorse School-Wide Positive Behavioural Support; (b) resource and support schools to implement the program for a minimum of three years; and (c) evaluate the success of the program.

#### AISACT Response

AIS notes that Member Schools may have very similar approaches to that of Positive Behavioural Support as the theoretical foundation of this program is to create learning environments that are perceived by the student to be safe, welcoming and engaging. AIS will work with member schools to inform them of Positive Behavioural Support. Should individual schools wish to adopt the Positive Behaviour Support model, they could use the available resource support to implement the program for a minimum of three years.

#### Key Activities

AISACT has been closely monitoring the work of the Galilee School in their development and implementation of a bespoke Trauma Informed Positive Behaviour Support model and are exploring opportunities to provide the model as a professional learning event in the near future.

The Galilee Schools has developed the model in the form of 12 modules of professional learning to approach schools embedding the Positive Behaviour Support Framework

- Positive Behaviour Support Framework: An Overview
- What is Behaviour
- Influences on Behaviour:
- Purpose of Behaviour:
- Effective Communication



- Positive Behaviour Strategies
- Evidence Based Research
- Environmental Supports
- Positive Behaviour Support Planning Meetings
- Rights and Responsibilities
- Monitor: Review and Evaluation
- Legal and Ethical Responsibilities

### Recommendation 12.1

That ETD, CE, and each Independent School (a) develop and implement a case management framework for students with complex needs and challenging behaviour; and (b) support all schools to identify or recruit suitably qualified staff to act as case managers, including, for example, social workers, welfare officers, and/or community development workers.

#### AISACT Response

AIS notes that if schools are interested in exploring this recommendation it would be necessary to verify the resource support available for implementation.

#### Key Activities

Further discussion and information gathering from Member Schools will occur through the AISACT Schools for All Executive Committee Subcommittee.

### Recommendation 12.3

That ETD, CE, AIS, the Community Services Directorate, and ACT Health, collaboratively develop mechanisms to ensure that service provision with respect to children and young people with complex needs and challenging behaviour, and their families, is offered in a strategic and client focused manner and demonstrates effective communication among all parties

#### AISACT Response

CE and AIS welcome the opportunity to work collaboratively on client services in this area.

#### Key Activities

AIS notes that this work has not commenced.

**Recommendation 15.3**

That ETD, CE, and AIS co-fund a tertiary institution, or other relevant research institute, to undertake a longitudinal study on post-school outcomes for students with complex needs and challenging behaviour.

**AISACT Response**

ETD, CE and AIS are open to an approach to support or facilitate research from tertiary institutions. ....independent schools will consider possible partnerships for analysis of....data.

**Key Activities**

AIS are open to an approach to support or facilitate research from tertiary institutions. Independent schools will consider possible partnerships for analysis of this data.

## Student Wellbeing

### Recommendation 6.2

That ETD, CE, and each Independent School, develop and promote tools to assist all schools to meaningfully and regularly consult with all students about (a) their experiences at school; (b) decisions that affect them at school; and (c) the operation of the school.

### AISACT Response

AIS acknowledge(s) that student satisfaction is an important indicator of student engagement.

### Key Activities

Each Independent School has their own policy and programs in place to support student voice. A majority of the schools have a student representative council or similar which are made up of a range of Year groups.

The Association and Member Schools were recently involved in the *Ask Us... Student Voice forum*. The Association and Member Schools look forward to reviewing the resources and reports that are being developed by the ACT Youth Coalition.

Individual schools provide the following specific examples:

#### Example A:

The School has a student council, appointed House captains and 57 other student leadership positions, all of which are provided opportunities to express the views of the student body. Tutors and students meet daily and input/reflection time is part of the pastoral program at the school.

#### Example B:

The School has a Student Representative Council who meet weekly, with a representative from each Year 3-6 class. Every Year 6 student is involved in a leadership team across the school, they forward student lead initiatives. Head of Junior School meets fortnightly with the student leaders to get feedback about their area of involvement and on alternate fortnights the Head of Junior School meets with School Captains. As an International Baccalaureate school students are constantly involved in developing essential agreements in classrooms and other areas of the school.

#### Example C:

The School for a number of years has had a student bullying survey that is done at least yearly, but often twice a year, to give students a chance to anonymously indicate whether they feel safe at school and identify others in the school who may be causing them to feel unsafe etc. This has been done for the past 4-5 years. The school has received positive results and the students are open about their feelings. Students who regularly target others have been identified and dealt with effectively. The survey results note that the schools rates of bullying are well below the national figures.

The school also has staff, parent and student satisfaction surveys that go out to the school community in rotation. The survey has provided useful information which has been acted upon

and has made changes to the way the school conducts business.

Additionally, the School has student advisory groups in all levels of the school. These groups bring requests, information and feedback to the school executive at regular intervals.

Example D:

The School has student satisfaction surveys undertaken annually. In addition to specific issue surveys are undertaken to get feedback from students. The most recent survey focussed on the student's views about recreational areas in the College. Based on the students feedback the school made a decision to change existing arrangements from Semester 2, 2016.

Student leaders meet annually with the College Board and discuss issues of importance to students. Student leaders meet weekly with a member of the Executive. Leadership training is provided to all students in leadership positions to assist them in gaining the skills to articulate views on issues of importance to them and to other students.

**Recommendation 11.5**

That ETD, CE, and each Independent School, provide alternative options to out-of-school suspension where appropriate and possible, including in-school suspensions with temporary additional staffing or support.

**AISACT Response**

AIS notes that ACT Independent School Boards and school leadership teams make decisions about how best to utilise their resources to meet the needs of their student community.

**Key Activities**

Individual schools provide the following specific examples:

Example A:

The School has strategies employed to avoid escalation of behaviours that might warrant an out of school suspension.

Example B:

The School, where possible, conducts most of its suspensions as in-school suspensions. Negotiations take place with parents to find an appropriate level of suspension for each individual case.

Out-of-school suspensions only occur when there are multiple students involved in an incident and all students require a suspension consequence. To prevent the student's involved serving a suspension together they are separated. Occasionally the main protagonist may serve an out of school suspension due to the lack of physical spaces to safely conduct multiple in-school suspensions at the same time. On rare occasions a student may be given an out-of-school suspension for a very serious breach of school rules/policy, this is negotiated between Heads of

School, Deputy Principal and the Principal.

Example C:

The School limits out-of-school suspensions as much as possible and looks at ways it can have students at school working, but away from their peers for the specified time. A range of other interventions are considered before any form of suspension is applied in most cases.

Example D:

The School re-allocates their school funding to place additional staffing in classrooms and to provide additional support to students. The school uses targeted early intervention that is proactive in addressing issues, rather than reacting once a student has responded inappropriately to a challenging situation. Educators involve families in discussions of strategies to enable students' positive inclusion and consistent approaches between school and home.

**Recommendation 15.2**

That ETD, CE, and each Independent School, complement the reporting of students' academic performance with reports on student progress towards the personal and social-emotional goals listed in school's vision statements and strategic plans.

**AISACT Response**

Each ACT independent school develops reporting formats which best reflect the ethos of the individual school. An individual student's progress in personal development and goals would be considered to be an integral part of the responsibility in reporting to parents in schools. AIS will, where appropriate, work with member schools as they consider this recommendation.

**Key Activities**

Each Independent School has developed methods of reporting on student outcomes appropriate to the needs and expectations of their communities.

Individual schools provide the following specific examples:

Example A:

The School considers the whole student when taking wellbeing into account. Each semester students review personal, academic, social and physical goals with their tutor. Tutors then participate in strategic planning in consideration of the school's vision statements.

Prefacing every regular report regarding academic progress, which is sent home to parents, is the Pastoral Care report. This is written by Tutors to comment on the student's personal development. The school recognises the need to consider the whole student, thus the focus is not just on the academic.

The Pastoral Care system allows the Tutor to develop a meaningful relationship with the students in his or her care, often over many years, so that meaningful comments can be made.

Example B:

At the School student progress is reported to parents in the Junior School via see-saw. Snippets of work, photos/videos of student participation and activities are regularly uploaded to see-saw by the class teacher and a dialogue between teacher and parent can occur. If teachers have concerns regarding progress they may also email parents or request an additional meeting.

Parents are encouraged to attend parent teacher interviews, each semester, to discuss their child's progress and to evaluate the student's personal, social and emotional goals. Weekly awards are award to students who achieve their personal goals at the Junior School assembly.

In the Middle and Senior Schools students discuss personal goals with their Pastoral Care Teacher during Pastoral Care Group time at the beginning of the year. These are monitored throughout the year by the Pastoral Care Group teacher. Students attend Parent teacher interview with their parents twice a year, at the interviews students can comment on their own progress in individual classes and re-adjust goals for the coming semester.

## Environment

### Recommendation 8.1

That ETD, CE and each Independent School, ensure that all existing schools have safe, calming/sensory spaces that are appropriate to meet the needs of students with complex needs and challenging behaviour.

### AISACT Response

AIS notes the recommendation and will support schools to review current provision for calming/sensory spaces.

### Key Activities

AISACT continues its work with Member Schools to review current provision for calming/sensory spaces.

Students in Independent Schools access a variety of safe calming/sensory spaces, be they a quiet room next to the counsellors office or head of houses office, at the back of the class room, quiet study nooks within the classroom or library, or in the student services building.

Each Independent School will have their own policies about safe, calming/sensory spaces.

Individual schools provide the following specific examples:

#### Example A:

The School has a Safe School room, the students had a naming competition which resulted in the room being called the Chill Pill room. There are mindfulness colouring book activities, positive psychology posters, resources of strengthen cards and resilience games to stimulate calm, welcoming and a safe, supportive environment.

#### Example B:

The School has sensory corners in most of its Junior School classrooms. Some include a tent or similar space, some include a corner with books, quiet toys and cushions. There are sensory fidget toys and quiet music available in all classrooms. In the Junior School there is a welfare room where students can go for some time out. There are computers, cushions, Lego and spaces where students can sit quietly or talk to the welfare team leader if they need to.

In the school's Student Services building there is a dedicated calming space with lounge chairs, sensory toys, calming music. It is in a safe and seclude place away from the other students so they can have privacy. The Deputy of Welfare and School Psychologist are on hand to assist if students need/want help, otherwise they can just sit and relax.

The schools senior resource team have their room available to any of the school's students with disabilities to use as a haven at recess and lunch. The student have access to computers, games, quiet space. Students are able to toast their sandwiches, heat up lunch or make two minute noodles. They have a safe place to connect with other kids when they find the playground

overwhelming.

Year coordinators in the Middle and Senior Schools also have a room where students can have some time out if needed.

Example C:

The School views the classroom and school environment as a 'third teacher' - the physical environment and the human environment both influence behaviour. This includes offering different areas in classrooms that invite different behaviours, e.g. quiet individual nooks through to spaces for energetic collaborative endeavours. Students are encouraged to choose the space that best suits the task at hand and their needs as a learner/researcher. Music is also used to create the appropriate atmosphere. Educators' tone of voice, body language and positioning are adapted to model and elicit respectful interactions.

**Recommendation 8.2**

That ETD, CE and each Independent School, ensure that the design briefs for all new schools follow principles of universal design, and include an appropriate range of learning areas and facilities to meet the needs of students with complex needs and challenging behaviour. These may include flexible classroom areas with adjacent small group learning spaces, and inclusive playgrounds, as well as safe, calming/sensory spaces.

**AISACT Response**

ETD, CE and AIS accept the recommendation.

ETD will share elements of universal design with CE and AIS.

**Key Activities**

AISACT is looking to expand on a connection with A4L in assisting schools with the design of learning spaces.



## Professional Learning

### Recommendation 10.7

That ETD, CE, and each Independent School, commit to the professionalisation of LSAs and ensure that by 2018 (a) all LSAs hold, or are in the process of obtaining, at least a Certificate IV in School Age Education & Care or equivalent; and (b) all LSAs working in a Learning Support Unit or specialist school hold, or are in the process of obtaining, at least a Certificate IV in Education Support or equivalent.

#### AISACT Response

AIS notes the recommendation and will work with the other sectors to explore strategic options for workforce planning.

#### Key Activities

AISACT recognises that to commit to professionalisation of LSAs will require close work with schools to adjust their employment agreements.

AISACT previously has provided opportunities for LSAs to gain higher qualifications through the More Support for Students program. Further discussion will occur through the AISACT Schools for All Executive Subcommittee.

### Recommendation 13.5

That ETD, CE and AIS, (a) develop, and liaise with the Teacher Quality Institute to accredit, a suite of professional learning options relevant to teaching students with complex needs and challenging behaviour. This would include, but not be limited to, modules on: de-escalation and safe use of restraint; trauma; autism spectrum disorder; mental health; attention deficit hyperactivity disorder; and/or learning difficulties; and (b) establish mechanisms to monitor staff and school participation in these programs.

#### AISACT Response

ETD, CE and AIS will develop a suite of professional learning programs for staff in schools, which will explicitly address teaching students with complex needs and challenging behaviour.

#### Key Activities

The Association has a representative on the TQI led working group, which discuss matters in relation to this recommendation and recommendation 13.1.

AISACT has provided a TQI accredited (5 hours) PL titled *Managing Challenging Behaviours in Schools* presented by Education Psychologist Tim Dansie. All Member Schools had representatives attend this PL.

AISACT will continue, in partnership with ED and CE, to explore that specifically addresses this recommendation.

**Recommendation 13.7**

That ETD, CE, and each Independent School, (a) prioritise scholarships and sabbaticals for school leaders and teachers to undertake formal study in relation to students with complex needs and challenging behaviour; (b) create opportunities for school leaders and teachers to visit and see in action practices in schools with a reputation for creative and resourceful approaches to teaching students with complex needs and challenging behaviour; and (c) create opportunities for these school leaders and teachers to become mentors and facilitators within networks, sectors, and schools.

**AISACT Response**

**Key Activities**

AISACT has an established Students with Disability network who meet once a term at a different Independent School each term. At the beginning of each meeting the host school provides an overview of the types of programs they have in place for students with disability and students with complex needs and challenging behaviours.