



THE ASSOCIATION OF
INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS
OF THE ACT

2020 ANNUAL REPORT



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Dr Justin Garrick
Chair

MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR

It is a pleasure to present this, my first Annual Report as Chair of the Association of Independent Schools of the ACT, and to thank all involved in its preparation.

Few of us wish to look back on 2020 with all the strains imposed by the COVID-19 pandemic. Nonetheless, we can be very proud of the work of the Association and its support for Member Schools, all the more so in the context. Even beyond the enormous complexities entailed in responding to the pandemic, it was a very busy year, in which the Association continued its commitment to advancing education across all sectors in the ACT.

Held just prior to the COVID lockdown, the first and only AISACT Leadership Breakfast of the year brought educational leaders together from all sectors. Similarly, the annual AISACT Colloquium brought educators together from across the ACT for fruitful discussion, albeit in re-imagined format, like so many events in 2020. Presented by Dan Haesler, the

Colloquium topic *Building Authentic Engagement through Appreciative Inquiry* was launched via Zoom in September. It was extremely well subscribed, with 65 people participating in four online modules.

Overall, the extraordinary breadth of professional learning offered by the Association during 2020 is to be commended: from curriculum development to leadership opportunities, Instructional Coaching, wellbeing programs for principals and staff, action research projects, a suite of governance courses, and so much more. As with so much in schools, these were all quickly adapted to be delivered in meaningful ways online.

In a first for the Association, there were three articles published by staff from member schools aligned to professional learning run by the Association: two articles in *Teacher Magazine* from the *Evidence into Action Workshop Series*, and one in the *Australian Journal of Special and Inclusive Education*, from the NCCD action research work done by schools in conjunction with Dr Michael Arthur-Kelly.

“ *In a first for the Association, there were three articles published by staff from Member schools, aligned to professional learning run out of the office: 2 articles in Teacher Magazine from the Evidence into Action Workshop Series, and one in the Australian Journal of Special and Inclusive Education, from the NCCD action research work done by schools in conjunction with Dr Michael Arthur-Kelly.*

Instead of the now traditional end of year Celebrating Teaching and Learning event, a combined Teaching and Learning Subcommittee and Education Support Subcommittee meeting was held - again online. This was a collaborative occasion with wonderful dialogue and sharing by staff from member schools in planning for future events.

Of course, articulating the views of the ACT Independent School sector, and advocating on its behalf, remain a large part of the Association's work in addition to its core business of supporting the nineteen member schools in Canberra (and two associate member schools in nearby NSW), which together educate over 15,000 students.

The Association remained committed to making meaningful contributions to the government's education policies, with our focus always being on ensuring high quality education throughout the Territory, irrespective of schooling sector. The Association works closely with both the Education Directorate and Catholic Education Office to enhance educational outcomes in the ACT.

In addition, the Association works with over 42 organisations, departments, businesses, and other organisations to articulate our views and advance the best possible outcomes for schools, teachers and students. This work was particularly relevant in the lead up to the ACT election and, of course, as the continuing

dialogue over school funding remains important.

In that context, I am ever grateful to the staff of the Association, under the exceptionally dedicated leadership of Andrew Wrigley. They have always given so much to education and to the support of member schools, but never more than amid the challenges of 2020. They have my sincere admiration and appreciation for their commitment and collegiality.

I also extend my appreciation and thanks to the members of AISACT for their approach to the governance of the Association throughout the year, and to the AISACT Executive; Deputy Chair Steven Bowers, Immediate Past Chair Rita Daniels, Heather Walsh, Christine Worth, Samantha Brady, Ian Hewitt, Maureen Hartung, Anna Owen and Jacqui Lee. Their commitment to the work of the Association is acknowledged sincerely and gratefully.

Likewise, I thank the expert staff from schools who volunteer their time to advance the work of the Executive Subcommittees.

2020 was indeed a difficult year, but I believe that we can all be proud of our achievements in rising to its challenges. Let us hope the year ahead will be better for our communities but, come what may, we can be confident in the support of the Association in keeping education and the good of our children at the heart of all we do.

Dr Justin Garrick
Chair



Andrew Wrigley
Executive Director

MESSAGE FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Throughout 2020, the Association has continued to promote the AISACT mission on the advancement of educational excellence through the promotion of a strong independent sector in the ACT.

The Association has had the privilege throughout 2020 of working with - and in many cases, for many years previously - a broad range of groups and organisations. I acknowledge these organisations and people, as all of these organisations, and the people who work for them, are very important to the work of the Association:

Education and Training Directorate

Catholic Education Canberra and Goulburn

Board of Senior Secondary Studies

Teacher Quality Institute

Senior Practitioner

Block Grant Authority

Independent Schools Council of Australia

Association of Parents and Friends of ACT Schools

Australian Institute of Management

Nexia Canberra

NAB Education

Catholic Care

Snedden Hall and Gallop

AON Risk Solutions

Independent Education Union

Australian Council for Educational Leaders

Giraffe Visual Communication Management

University of Canberra

Australian Catholic University

AISNSW

“ *What an extraordinary way school communities have responded to these massive changes in how schools operate in 2020.* ”

Of course, the real heart of the Association is its members.

What a year was 2020!

From rolling off a significant drought, we were then hit with devastating fires - fires of a geographic scale and ferocity we had not seen before.

We then all lived the experience of horrendous smoke conditions which settled over Canberra, flights were cancelled, national monuments closed.

To be followed by a massive hailstorm and flooding.

And then, of course, COVID-19..... a world pandemic.

Masks. Physical distancing. Lock down. Hand sanitizer. Who would have thought that in 2020 Australians would absorb more alcohol through their hands than through their stomachs?

Our lives could almost be tracked through our changing use of apps on our phones: Fires Near Me, then air quality, then COVID safe all were, in their time, checked regularly and with intensity as to the data and information being given.

Unfortunately, we didn't always present the best picture of our collective humanity. We went from opening our homes and wallets to support those severely impacted by the bushfires - and those fighting them - to fighting over toilet paper in supermarket aisles.

Very soon after that, we all went into a new paradigm of lockdown.....remote and online learning!

But look at what has been achieved in 2020!

New ways of doing what we do were done. I will forever remember celebrating the ANZAC Day Dawn Service at the front of our drive....

It has been a monumental effort. More than just offering first class learning experiences, teachers and schools have provided a calm, reassuring and constant voice for every student.

In such a short space of time, teachers and leaders across schools took all they knew about classroom teaching practice and adapted it to a - mostly - unfamiliar online environment. Geography lessons, language lessons, PE lessons, dance, drama, art - everything.

The difficulty of physically uniting a student body was approached in new, exciting, innovative and entertaining ways.

You all maintained a sense of community in an online environment. No easy feat, and one achieved with excellence in every school.

And then, when the time came, and following the requirements and advice of the experts, you were the first to transition - carefully, thoughtfully - back to on-campus learning. And what a joy that was! Attendance by students was at an all-time high! One Principal gleefully noted that they had walked past the cool year 9 group - and they were all wearing their uniform perfectly!

Importantly, schools are well positioned and wonderfully prepared that, should they need to, they are able to flip back to online learning in 24 hours.

And schools re-imagined the end of year events for their students, working to the advice of experts, while still providing their school leavers the important events which are so much a part of their celebrations of school life.

I often say that it is my privilege to serve as the Executive Director for AISACT - and it most certainly is! It is also my very great privilege to work beside and with such an exceptional team who are the staff of AISACT and who, through their expertise and enthusiasm, expertly support our Member schools. It may be a small number, but they pack one hell of a punch! The work of Serita Cordeiro, Kath Morwitch, Joanne Garrisson and Sue Roche is to be commended.

Andrew Wrigley
Executive Director

“ *The leaders and staff in schools, are to be congratulated on all that was achieved this year. We celebrate 2020 as a very different year, full of learning and innovation.* ”

THE ASSOCIATION

Key Functions

The Association of Independent Schools of the ACT (AISACT) is the peak body representing the ACT Independent School sector. Our mission is the advancement of educational excellence through the promotion of a strong independent school sector in the ACT.

The AISACT is guided by the following key principles when representing the views of the diverse group of Member Schools:

- Parents are entitled to exercise choice in selecting the most suitable school and education philosophy for the education of their child(ren).
- The Association advocates for and represents the issues of the independent school sector.
- All students, irrespective of where they are educated, are entitled to a high-quality education.

- Governments have a responsibility to provide a suitable level of funding for all students to achieve high quality education outcomes, regardless of where they go to school.

In addition, the Association provides a number of services and professional learning opportunities throughout the year to Member schools. This professional learning covers a diverse range of topics including leadership, curriculum, governance, coaching, wellbeing and student engagement.

“ AISACT represents and advocates for the interests of all independent schools in the ACT, consulting with governments, statutory authorities, and a wide range of other educational stakeholders.

Membership

The Association has 19 Member schools, which are a diverse group of non-government schools serving a range of communities. The schools are of different types, sizes, religious affiliations and educational philosophies and are a vital part of the ACT education system.

All independent schools in the ACT are Members of the AISACT with each independent school being a separate and autonomous not for profit entity with an independent governing body.

While all schools are required to comply with relevant legislation regarding alignment with the Australian Curriculum, individual schools will make choices about the breadth of the curriculum offered and the subject choices provided within their context.

In 2020 Member schools educated 15,138 students with enrolments ranging from 25 to over 2000 students. In 2020 students in

Member schools made up 19% of the total student population in the ACT. Enrolment in Canberra's Independent schools have historically been very strong and has seen a 21% increase in student enrolment over the past 10 years.

The Association also provided its two Associate Member schools from surrounding NSW with support and opportunities in 2020. These schools have been able to access professional learning in addition to other services that the Association offered. They will continue to be a vital part of the Association and its strategic direction.

GOVERNANCE AND EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE & SUBCOMMITTEES

General Meetings

The Association's General Meeting comprises nominated representatives from each of the 19 Member schools. Each school is able to nominate two representatives, one of whom must be the Principal, and the other must be the Business Manager, or a representative of the School's governing body.

In addition to the Member school representatives, the AISACT invites its Associate Members to participate in Association activities and meetings.

The Association extends the invitation to be an observer to the Association of Parents and Friends of ACT Schools (APFACTS). APFACTS is a partner of the Association and plays a pivotal part in supporting the parents.

Executive Committee

The General Meeting membership elects the members to the Executive Committee. Members of the Executive Committee consider the wide range of strategic impacts to the Association, the Association's best response to those impacts on behalf of Member schools, and the strategic oversight of the services and new initiatives to support Member and Associate Member schools.

AISACT Executive Committee membership details are provided in the Appendix.

Executive Subcommittees

The Executive Committee supported the role of four strategic subcommittees: the Finance Risk and Audit Subcommittee, the Teaching and Learning Subcommittee, the Education Support Subcommittee and the Early Years Learning Subcommittee. All subcommittees provide advice on strategies, opportunities and approaches to the Executive Committee to achieve the Association's key directions. AISACT Executive Subcommittee membership details are provided in the Appendix.

STRATEGIC INTENT

The Office of AISACT continued to develop and provide Member schools with opportunities and support in line with the AISACT Strategic Intent which was endorsed by the Executive committee to continue in 2020. Member Schools provided the Office with feedback and direction via the AISACT Services and Functions annual survey.

ADVOCACY

As the representative body for the Independent School sector, the Association represents the sector's view to Territory and Federal governments on matters of significance and importance in education and in independent schools.

The Association continued to work closely with the ACT Minister for Education and Early Childhood, Ms Yvette Berry MLA, ministerial advisors, and senior officials from the ACT Education Directorate. The Association also worked closely with The Archdiocese of Canberra and Goulburn, Catholic Education to continue to advance the specific issues relating to Non-Government Schools in the ACT.

REPRESENTATION

The Association, through Principals, Board Members, office staff, and teachers from Member schools, represents the interests of Independent Schools, independent education, and the Association on a wide variety of committees, consultative groups and boards.

National Representation

ACARA Curriculum Directors' Group

Australian Institute of Teaching and School Leadership (AITSL)

Association for Learning Environments

Independent Schools of Australia (ISA) Board

ACT Representation

ACT BOARD OF SENIOR SECONDARY STUDIES (BSSS)

BSSS Board

BSSS Curriculum Advisory Group

BSSS Accreditation Advisory Group

BSSS Vocational Education and Training (VET) Group

CURRICULUM

ACT Cross Sectoral Education Committee

ACT Curriculum Implementation Committee (ACIC)

ACT Curriculum Advisory Group

Communities of Practice (various)

ANU Extension

NAPLAN Online Project Board

NAPLAN Online Cross Sector Working Group

STEM Cross Sectorial Advisory Group

TEACHER QUALITY INSTITUTE

TQI Board

TQI Initial Teacher Education Committee (ITEC)

TQI Professional Learning Advisory Committee (PLAD)

TQI Standards and Professional Practices Committee (SPPC)

OTHER

ACT Animal Ethics Committee

ACT Block Grant Authority (BGA) Board

ACT Better Schools for Kids Committee

ACT BGA Priorities Committees

ACT Cross Sectorial COVID 19 Advisory Group

NDIS Education and Employment Working Group

School Sport ACT Board

School Transport Liaison Committee

Sector Leaders group (ACT ED, CE, AISACT)

AEDC

Safe Schools

Reportable Conduct (ACT Ombudsman)

Senior Practitioners Working Groups

Positive Partnerships

YAM Schools Working Group (part of ACT Lifespan)

Cross Sectoral Collaboration Group- NCCD

Lifespan Schools Working Group

Standby Advisory Committee

Australian Positive Behaviour Support Association

OUR PARTNERS

During 2020 the work of AISACT has been supported by a range of partners. We thank and appreciate the ongoing role of our major partner **NAB Education** which allows the Association to continue to deliver programs and events, and to develop new ones in response to member feedback.



PROGRAMS AND INITIATIVES

The Association's Strategic Intent guides the decisions and work of the Association and articulates the key directions needed to achieve the Association's goals. The Strategic Intent is supported by a number of operational plans.

This report outlines the key activities of the Association to meet Member School needs and to positively advance the actions designed to achieve the objectives of the School Education Reform Agenda and the Bi-lateral Reform Agreement with the ACT Government

Since 2018, AISACT built and further developed the capacity of Independent schools in the ACT to meet the Australian Government's school education reform priorities for non-government schools and has continued to build on this work in 2020 despite the challenges that we have all been presented with due to COVID. To this end, AISACT provided a strong supportive range of programs beginning in January 2020 although many were amended and delivered on a Zoom platform and over different periods.

Leadership development, staff and student wellbeing, mental health as well as coaching for school improvement were a focus during 2020. AISACT continued to build on previous work on the quality assurance, moderation and support for

the continued improvement of Nationally Consistent Collection of Data on School Students with Disability. A focus on leadership development and support was continued with the provision of expert advice from an experienced staff member providing both hotline support and advice and on-site support at individual schools. For the implementation of online delivery of the National Assessment program, AISACT continues to work to ensure that all 19 Member Schools have access to advice and assistance with regard to their readiness for the implementation of the online delivery of the National Assessment program even though NAPLAN did not take place this year.

The priority addressing the improvement of governance and financial management practices in non-government schools saw the provision of a program provided by the Australian Institute of Company Directors available to all member schools Board Directors in 2018 and 2019. In 2020 the focus was very agile, and provided through the ZOOM weekly meeting a session on key principles of crisis

The Association of the Independent Schools of the ACT

management. In addition, a resource document called *AISACT Governance Principles for Schools* was developed to inform work in 2021.

AISACT continued to provide specialist professional learning programs as identified in the Bilateral Agreement addressing Australian Curriculum, including general capabilities, reporting against the achievement standards, School Leadership, and literacy and numeracy.

The Association has continued to collaborate and contribute with all education sectors in the ACT to provide input through reform specific governance mechanisms and communication especially during the management of COVID in the ACT.

The office of the AISACT enters agreements with a range of providers who provide expert advice and support on an as needs basis to member schools:

Legal Advice - Snedden Hall & Gallop

Employee Assist and Counselling Advice - Catholic Care

Access to PL on Inclusive Practice - Everyone Everyday

Access to Curriculum Resources - C2C

Principals' Wellbeing Program provided by National Excellence in School Leadership Initiatives (NESLI)

The Principals' Wellbeing Program (PWP) supports principals to better understand and proactively manage their day-to-day health and wellbeing to be more effective role models within their schools.

Key Themes

- Sustaining individual and organisational health
- Physical, mental and emotional health
- Self-awareness and self-regulation
- Responding to organisational trauma and stress
- Relationships and their impact on our wellbeing

The program connects principals across member schools of the Association of Independent Schools Canberra and is built around the concept of a supportive community of practice.

The delivery of these workshops was transitioned to delivery via zoom as part of the AISACT Covid-19 Response Plan.

Learning Intentions

- Understand the links between social capital and wellbeing
- Explore practical strategies to enhance personal wellbeing
- Understand how to have a meaningful dialogue around wellbeing in your school
- Help increase social capital and inclusion in your school

GOVERNANCE

Adrienne Day, Director Day & Hodge Associates developed a range of activities to improve understanding of agile governance implementation due to the impact of COVID 19.

A session on key principles of crisis management was presented via Zoom at one of the many Members COVID updates that were held during 2020. It covered:

- a. Acute crisis phase - What do we need to prioritise [*health and safety, finances, communication*]? How do we do this? - checklist to be provided to participants
- b. Post crisis phase - What lessons did we learn? What do we need to do to rebuild [*goals and priorities*]? What changes do we need to make? [*scenario planning, strategic planning, risk mitigation*]
- c. Staying on track - monitoring, evaluating progress, adapting

In addition, Day & Hodge were contracted in the development of a key/source document for our Member Schools. - **AISACT School Governance Guiding Principles and Recommendations - A Guide to Promote Good Governance.**

This is designed to make it easier for participating member schools to turn theory into practice by providing practical tools/templates to support best practice governance, strategic planning, risk management, advocacy and communication. A series of workshops is planned to support member school during 2021 to unpack the guiding principles.

Education Support

Networks

In 2020 there were two networks for support of school staff. The Students with Disabilities Network met each term and provided professional learning, networking and resource support in teaching and learning, program support, teaching strategies and collaboration.

The Student Wellbeing Network met across the year and facilitated networking, mentoring and sharing of opportunities.

Both networks also supported schools in the NCCD specifically in moderation, evidence management and appropriate documentation.

Cross Sectoral Collaboration

2020 saw the continuation of cross sectoral collaboration, particularly in information dissemination and moderation for NCCD processes. Schools continue to report that they find these sessions valuable and highly relevant to their work.

Professional Learning

Accredited professional learning in developing Individual Learning Plans and Behaviour Support Plans was offered, both centrally and school based on request. Feedback indicated the value of both programs and so they will be run again across 2021.

The first full day workshop for school support staff was held in term one and was attended by 36 participants from across 10 AISACT schools. Content included role discussion, self-care, working as part of a team as well as opportunities for networking. Feedback was highly positive and similar workshops are planned for 2021.

School and team based professional learning was collaboratively developed on request and included Behaviour Support, NCCD processes and inclusive practices.

Dr Michael Arthur Kelly provided three 2 hour workshops by Zoom across terms 3 and 4. These workshops supported school teams and cross sectoral representatives to reflect on and analyse the quality of teaching adjustments identified for students with disabilities. 32 participants found the workshops valuable for their planning and were very positive about the application of concepts and use of tools to their future work.

Outcomes of the 2018/19 projects were published in the December 2020 issue of *The Australasian Journal of Special and Inclusive Education*.

Other Support

The Manager of Education Support visited schools and provided advice and resource support in areas relating to NCCD processes as well as specific support on strategies for individual students, building teams and other areas as requested. Advice was also provided around inclusive practices at a strategic level.



Teaching and Learning

Throughout 2020 the circuit breaker of COVID-19 globally elevated the heart and soul of education into high definition.

This afforded an unprecedented opportunity for staff in Member schools to reflect on the core business of teaching and learning. To appropriate and recontextualise Tony Blair's words (Oct. 2011), *"The kaleidoscope has been shaken, the pieces are in flux. Soon they will settle again. Before they do, let us re-order the world."* All staff engaged in a masterclass in change management which led to a range of adaptive teaching practice insights and supportive partnerships that enhanced learning outcomes. Initiatives emerged that

supported equitable access to high-quality education, and student wellbeing insights. The AISACT Teaching and Learning Subcommittee remained engaged throughout the year, informing and supporting the work of the Association by generously sharing resources and professional insights to maximise educational excellence. The challenge regarding how to maximise and sustain emergent high yield innovative practices remains active.

Amidst this upheaval, Education Ministers agreed to terms of reference for the review of the Foundation to Year 10 Australian Curriculum on 12 June. In preparing for the review, ACARA undertook a program of research that included comparative studies of the Australian Curriculum against international curricula; feedback from states and territories on the effectiveness of the Australian Curriculum through its annual monitoring process; and involvement in international research projects such as the OECD 2030 Future of Education and Skills project. ACARA curriculum officers leading the review process worked under the mandate that the current curriculum needs refining, updating and ‘decluttering’ to better support teachers with implementation. AISACT continues to be well represented in these conversations via a range of ACARA curriculum and teacher reference groups.

On 18 February, Dr Jenny Donovan (then at ACARA) accepted an invitation to provide a summative overview of the

Learning Progressions and Online Formative Assessment Initiative (LPOFAI) at our T1 Teaching & Learning Subcommittee meeting. Cross-sectoral representatives from ACT education jurisdictions were also invited and all engaged in a consultative process, contributing insights and perspectives to the initiative. The project continues to work towards building an online ecosystem that has interconnected resources, including a suggestion engine that will give direction for progressing individual students forward using differentiated methodology.

Aligned with this initiative is Version 3 of the National Literacy and Numeracy Learning Progressions (NLNLPs). Approved by the Education Council, teachers use the progressions as a supplement to the curriculum. The NLNLPs contain indicators that describe what students do or produce as they acquire more knowledge and skills, in turn, helping teachers ‘drill down’ into specific areas of Literacy or Numeracy knowledge, to inform planning and teaching.

Evidence into Action workshop series: using Implementation Science to turn evidence into action.

Member schools again engaged with this initiative throughout 2020. With professional input from Susannah Schoeffel (E4L) participants investigated the hierarchy of evidence (Deeble & Vaughan, 2018) and the latest evidence within the E4L Teaching & Learning Toolkit, including a focus on feedback, metacognition and self-regulation. Use of the implementation plan as a road map for an improvement journey, assisted educators to answer these important questions:

- Why - the issue you want to address
- What - the approach you want to implement - active ingredients of the intervention
- How - implementation activities (fidelity, acceptability)
- How well - the implementation outcomes (short, medium and long term)
- So what - the changes you hope to see - the student outcomes (short, medium and long term)

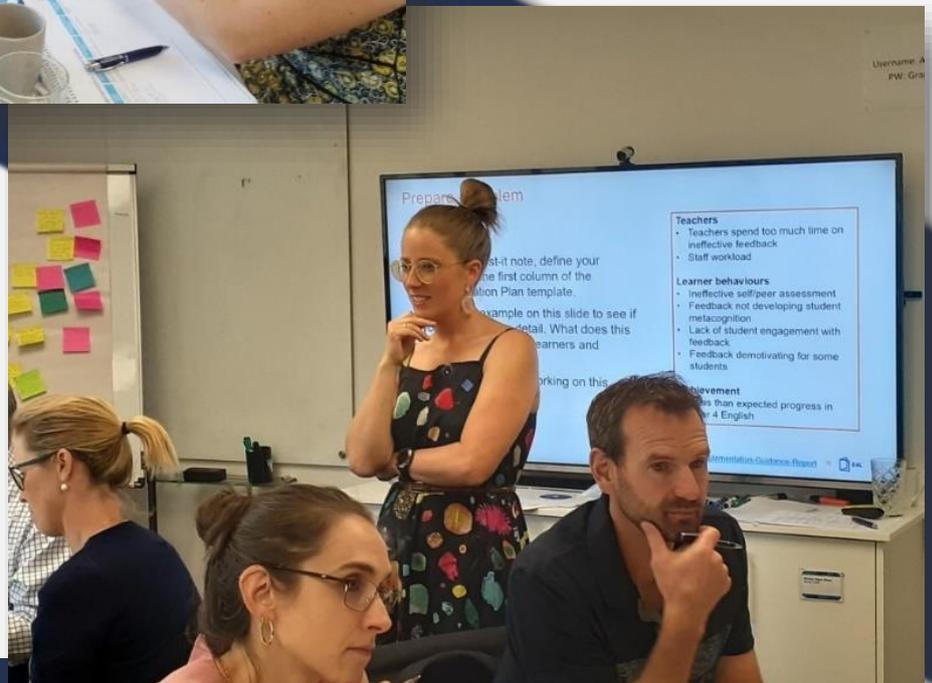
Articles pertaining to two AISACT projects were published in 2020 ACER *Teacher Magazine* editions:

- 7 September: Implementing the Evidence to Maximise the Impact of Teaching Assistants: Luke Wilsmore (Emmaus Christian School)
- 5 October: Evidence-based School Improvement - from Vision to Implementation: Liam Stakelum (Marist College Canberra)

2020 participating schools:

Daramalan College, St Edmund's College, Marist College Canberra, Trinity Christian College, Radford College, Burgmann Anglican School, Canberra Girls Grammar School.

“*Susannah's professional knowledge and expertise provided the workshop participants with the opportunities to discuss how implementing change in our individual school environments could be possible. There was an air of excitement as skill sets increased in approaching change with the toolkit and basing the invitation to make a change in our schools on relevant and up-to-date research. Thank you!*”



“ This workshop was extremely informative as it further developed my skills in identifying the importance of evidence and the types of evidence that are required to action change. Discussions and interactive activities provided opportunities in recognising evidence that works and assisted in ascertaining what circumstances are required for evidence-informed decision making. Ensuring there is a combination of quantitative and qualitative evidence is essential in managing change in a school environment in improving student outcomes.’

Impact Learning Workshops

AISACT continued its partnership with the *Impact Learning Team* to design and deliver TQI accredited bespoke workshops to support teaching and learning. In response to the COVID-19 situation, workshops were redesigned so that teachers could access them via the Open Learning Australia platform. In excess of 150 teachers registered to complete the self-paced modules, providing positive feedback.

Meaningful Assessment Task Development (Secondary):

This workshop unpacks the National Literacy and Numeracy Learning Progressions (V3) and familiarises participants with this valuable tool. Teachers examine their current units of work, scrutinising the literacy and numeracy demands and opportunities present. Through the lens of the learning progressions, participants will plan future assessment tasks aimed at producing accurate and meaningful results.

“ All assessments should be audited to ensure that numeracy and literacy demands are not impeding student results Using ACARA’s literacy and numeracy progressions allows greater access for students within an assessment task, letting them capitalise on their knowledge of a subject without being held back.

Developing Problem Solving Skills (Primary/Secondary):

This professional learning provides teachers with the tools and understanding to help their students to develop problem-solving skills.

“ Convergent and divergent thinking can be complimentary. I have taken away many problem-solving strategies and techniques that will allow me to grow as a professional and as a person.

Data Informed Instruction: Literacy and Numeracy (Primary/Secondary):

These workshops build on previous Literacy and Numeracy workshops. They provide an in-depth look into using data to inform planning for the classroom and schoolwide, equipping participants to begin an action research project.

“ Effective planning requires effective data collection, and it is what we do with our data that makes the difference. When we analyse qualitative & quantitative together, we get a full picture. It is important to make data driven decisions which are moderated by teacher insights and knowledge of the whole child.

“ The workshop model allows for formative assessment to be integrated more naturally. It allows for differentiation and adjustment. It gives students the opportunity to develop and apply independent thinking skills.

Empowering Success through Numeracy (Secondary):

This professional learning provides secondary teachers with an in-depth look at the Australian Curriculum general capability of numeracy, its relationship with mathematics and how it pertains to subjects other than mathematics. Numeracy is an essential tool for accessing information and demonstrating knowledge in all areas of the curriculum. Explore how numeracy skills can be utilised in all subject areas to enhance student learning.

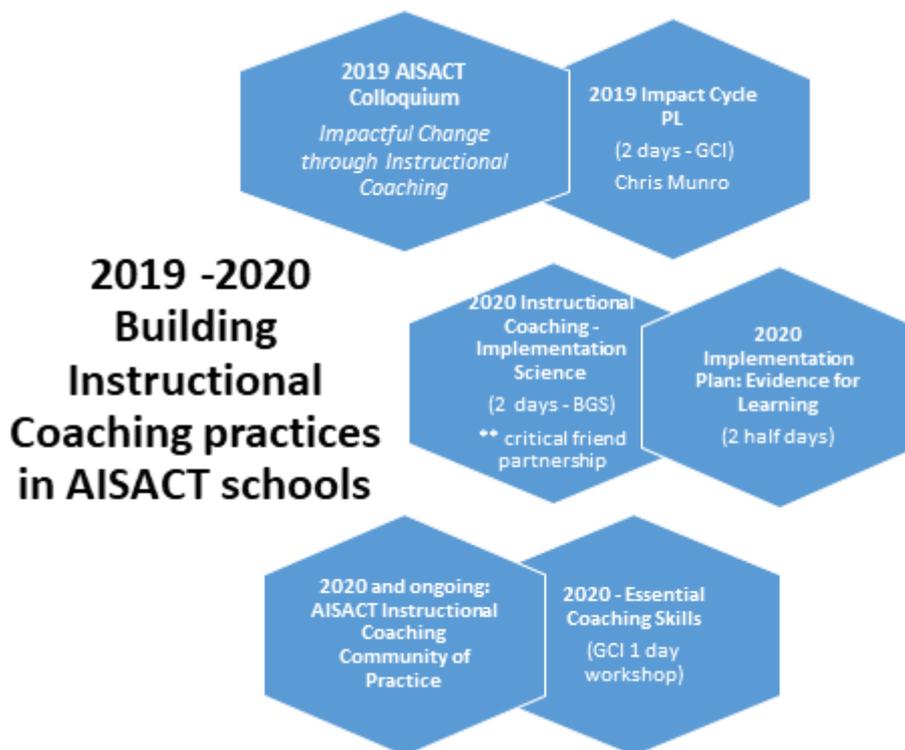
Workshop Model and Formative Assessment: an approach to maximising learning (Primary & Secondary):

This practical session provides an in-depth look at how teachers can organise class time to allow for students to be the ones doing the reading, writing, thinking - and therefore the learning. Using current lessons, participants will unpack the Workshop Model as a tool for planning, conferencing and formative assessment.

“ I’ve taken away a detailed understanding of exactly what numeracy involves, strategies and examples which inspire more application in the classroom.

AISACT Instructional Coaching Project: 2019-2021

The 2019-2021 AISACT Instructional Coaching Program continued its positive trajectory of building internal coaching capacity, in turn, ‘turbo charging’ the effectiveness of implementing instructional coaching in each school’s respective context. The 2020 workshops were designed to further develop the 2019 AISACT Instructional Coaching foundations.



Workshop 1: Instructional Coaching: Implementation Science Workshops (February & August)

Dr Mark Dowley (Instructional Coach Leader) and Dr Ray Swann (Deputy Headmaster) from Brighton Grammar School shared their experience and expertise regarding how to meaningfully use instructional coaching to enhance teaching and learning. Participants engaged in a range of workshops, unpacking the implementation science of Instructional Coaching such as:

- **Fidelity** (the degree to which an approach and support system are conducted as planned, coaching supervision and deliberate practice)
- **Acceptability** (evidence, jointly determined outcomes, adult learning, change, trust, stewardship)
- **Quality of Implementation** (engagement and responsiveness of stakeholders)
- **Dosage** (amount of input and participation in componentry)

Workshop 2: Essential Coaching Skills (2-16 September)

Facilitated by Chris Munro (Director GCI) and Andrea Stringer (Managing Consultant GCI), a series of workshops provided participants with opportunities to develop key coaching skills, a conversational framework and strategic knowledge aligned to The Impact Cycle Concept Framework.

Workshop 3: A Coaching Approach to Managing Challenging Conversations (2-7 December)

Facilitated by Chris Munro (Director GCI) and Andrea Stringer (Managing Consultant GCI), this advanced series of workshops built on prior skills and knowledge of the AISACT Instructional Coaching cohort. The objectives were to:

- Develop an understanding of the value of giving difficult feedback to surface blind spots in behaviours, attitudes and performance
- Identify strategies for providing the positive feedback and recognition in ways that others value
- Explore typical workplace scenarios requiring honest, courageous feedback
- Be introduced to practical tools and resources for managing challenging conversations
- Develop strategies for bringing emotional intelligence to interactions that ensures self-esteem and respectful relationships remain intact
- Gain confidence to deal with challenging behaviours and situations
- Build one's approach to taking a coaching approach to 'non' coaching conversations

2020 participating schools:

Marist College Canberra, Trinity Christian College, Radford College, Burgmann Anglican School, Snowy Mountains Grammar School, Emmaus Christian School, Canberra Girls Grammar School.

The Association of the Independent Schools of the ACT



AISACT subscription to AIM & CPM Virtual & Online Capability Development Programs

AISACT partnered again with the Australian Institute of Management Education and Training (AIM) to provide an opportunity for members to access an extensive range of AIM programs. The courses were applicable for both administrative and teaching staff in Member schools and were delivered via the digital platform zoom between June to November. 50 participants from Member schools were involved in this initiative, with a total of 55 courses attended over the six-month period. Two additional AIM online courses, Resilience During Uncertainty and Addressing Difficult Behaviours, were also provided for staff in Member schools. The feedback from attendees was extremely positive.

AISACT Staff Wellbeing Initiative 2019-2020

In partnership with Exhale People, AISACT continued its delivery of a bespoke wellbeing program for staff in Member Schools. This two-year program, designed to create a holistic and sustainable wellbeing solution for staff, now has several Adesso Accredited Wellbeing Ambassadors in Member schools. Using benchmark data from the Adesso profiling tool, a tailored suite of programs based on developmental preferences is utilised by Wellbeing Ambassadors in participating schools to drive long-term sustainable results. Participants are well positioned to continue in 2021 and to add depth to their skillsets via engagement in an AISACT Staff Wellbeing Community of Practice.



2020 participating Schools:

Canberra Girls Grammar School, Canberra Montessori School, Marist College, Trinity Christian School, St Edmund's College, Islamic School of Canberra, The Anglican School Googong, Marist College Canberra.

2020 AISACT Emerging Leaders Program NESLI: Enhancing Leadership Capabilities

This AISACT leadership program was designed by NESLI to address the leadership and interpersonal challenges associated with a leading teacher position. Co-delivered by Dr Janet Smith and Andrea Dean (NESLI), the program focused on preparing the next generation of Australia's school leaders by equipping participants with the insights, skills and confidence to accelerate their own development as they strengthen their relationships and outcomes of their students, teams and wider school community. Activities and discussions were related back to the day-to-day realities of the participant group ensuring learning outcomes were contextualised to their specific needs.

Learning Intentions

- To build authentic leadership capability
- Develop responses to managing self-regulation and wellbeing
- Understand the importance of student contribution and context in schools
- Apply coaching principles to teaching and learning
- Understand and progress school relationships
- Develop capacity to address conflict in schools

“ It is impossible to pull just one thing out! The theory was all evidence and data based/driven and each week there were a variety of rich strategies to discover and unpack. The theory was useful to be able to understand where the ideas come from in terms of people management, and the strategies were useful and able to be implemented in the day-to-day job I am doing.



SIGNIFICANT EVENTS

AISACT Leadership Breakfast Series

The *AISACT Leadership Breakfast Series* has been established by the Association to engage school leaders across the ACT, irrespective of schooling sector, in issues of significance and importance in the education sphere; specifically, lessons in leadership as delivered by guest speakers, and how these lessons may be transferred to schools to enhance the learning achievements of all students.

The challenges for leadership in educational settings are numerous, and school leaders increasingly look beyond their own environments to learn more and improve their leadership capacity. In organising the breakfast series, the speakers are not necessarily part of the regular education speaking circuit. Rather, their expertise in leadership, and their leadership journey, provide transferable lessons in leadership for educators across Canberra.

Invitations to attend the breakfasts are extended to all schools in the ACT.

Due to Covid-19 in 2020 we were only able to host one breakfast with the keynote speaker Dan Haesler. Dan then collaborated in reimagining the 2020 Colloquium.

Dan Haesler

Title of Address: Lead Less?

How might knowing, saying & doing less make you a better leader?

As a Director of Cut Through Coaching & Consulting, Dan Haesler works with corporate leaders, elite athletes & teams as well as educators.

He is an international keynote speaker and regularly presents alongside industry leaders as well as the occasional Olympian and Oscar Winner. A couple of times he has presented alongside His Holiness the Dalai Lama.

His first book, *#SchoolOfThought* is available now with every cent going to support the Indigenous Literacy Foundation to help get books and reading programs to some of our hardest-to-reach communities.

AISACT COLLOQUIUM reimagined - Dan Haesler 10 September

Building Authentic Engagement
through Appreciative Inquiry

Launched via zoom - 10
September - The framework of
Appreciative Inquiry.

“At its heart, Appreciative Inquiry (AI) is about the search for the best in people, their organisations, and the strengths-filled, opportunity-rich world around them. AI is not so much a shift in the methods and models of organisational change, but AI is a fundamental shift in the overall perspective taken throughout the entire change process to ‘see’ the wholeness of the human system and to “inquire” into that system’s strengths, possibilities, and successes.” Stavros, Jacqueline, Godwin, Lindsey, & Cooperrider, David. (2015).

The launch via Zoom on 10 September, covered the **Define** stage and was followed by four self-paced modules:

Discover 17 September
Dream 8 October
Design 29 October
Deliver 12 November

Each self-paced module was flexibly structured to include:

- 20 minutes of “Catalyst Content” in the form of pre-recorded videos from Dan
- A range of guided activities to support key learnings and potential implementation of each stage
- Podcasts, further readings and
- Opportunity for Q&A with Dan and online networking conversation.

This was delivered through Dan’s learning platform, Cut through Online.

Appreciative Inquiry involves a **5D Process**



AISACT END OF YEAR LEADERSHIP FUNCTION



The Association welcomed guests, Board Members and staff from Member Schools to the AISACT End of Year Leadership Function Event held at the National Portrait Gallery on Friday 13 November 2020. The event provided attendees with the opportunity to celebrate the work of the member school leaders who had made significant contributions to education in Independent schools and the Association during 2020.

Each year the Award for Leadership and Excellence in ACT Independent Education is awarded. The award recognises an individual who, in the opinion of the members, best met the Association's mission of "Excellence in ACT Independent education".

In 2020 a decision was made at the office that we would not seek nominations for

this award this year - not because of the complexities of 2020, but because it was decided that staff in the office would make the award.

So, for demonstrating outstanding leadership, and for advancing educational excellence through the promotion of a strong independent school sector in 2020, the recipient of the Award was EVERY Member and Associate Member school.



The Association of the Independent Schools of the ACT

During the evening departing Members of the ACT were farewelled by the Chair Dr Justin Garrick who sincerely thanked them for their work and contributions to the Association and, of course, to their schools.

The Chair also took the opportunity to recognise and acknowledge the extraordinary contribution to education of a Member of the Executive Committee, Rita Daniels, who retired at the end of 2020.

Rita Daniels has been the Principal of Daramalan College since January 2009. She came to that role after spending seven years as Principal of St Clare's College, and one year as Acting Principal of St Mary MacKillop College.

Rita worked as a teacher and as an Assistant Principal at Daramalan from late 1979 through to the end of 2000, so she was well acquainted with Daramalan before returning as Principal. While at St Clare's College, Rita was the ACT representative on the Catholic Secondary Principals' Association and was very active in Principals Australia, an organisation that promoted on-going learning for principals.

After moving to Daramalan College as Principal, she continued her work on the ACT Board of Senior Secondary Studies and over that time she chaired a number of that Board's committees.



In addition to work-related committees, she has been a member of the Company of the Australia Catholic University and a member of the Marymead Board.

For the Association, Rita has been on the Executive Committee of AISACT since 2010, and most recently served with distinction as our Chair. Rita also served on the Board of the national body, the Independent Schools Council of Australia.

Rita's contribution to her schools, to independent education, and to the Association, over the years cannot be understated. We are all the better for her driving passion for education, her commitment to excellence, her focus, her sharp wit, and her now infamous observation that a proposed policy document was simply 'motherhood waffle'.

When she retired at the end of 2020, Rita would have worked for just over forty years in ACT education.

Rita Daniels Leadership Response.

Excerpts from Rita's address:

I feel extremely fortunate that in my 20 years as a Principal I have always been very well affirmed and supported by my employers, my Boards and by the people around me, in each of the schools I have worked in and beyond them.

"In my first year as a Principal the world experienced the terrible events of 9/11 and while this event happened on the other side of the world the ramifications in terms of our world being shaken up and people feeling much less safe were felt both quickly and dramatically in our schools. Like all of you here, I am sure you remember that time very well. For those of us who were in leadership roles then, like me you would have played a significant part in trying to promote a sense of optimism and hope for the future within our students to counter the fear that was so prevalent then. Some of those fears eased over time but the world was certainly changed after this event.



To finish my time as a Principal in the year of COVID-19 has presented many challenges also. For most of this year we have all felt a bit less safe, concerned about what impacts of the virus there could be on our families and friends, especially the most vulnerable, on our school communities and so on. It is not over yet, but I think that many of us have grown and learned much through the challenges we faced this year also, as once again we have looked for the best ways to support our students through periods of remote learning, provided alternate ways of marking key events in their lives but most importantly of enabling them to stay connected with each other and maintain a positive outlook for their future.

Being around young people in schools can be quite challenging at times as we know but I think it is also an extraordinary privilege.

I think that this year has also provided us as school leaders wonderful opportunities to do things in different ways, to spend less time travelling to meetings, to attend fewer events, to receive greater acknowledgement and appreciation by the broader community for the outstanding work that those who work in schools do every day.

I did not set out to be a Principal, in fact I did not really set out to be a teacher but that's another story. When I began my work as a teacher, I found it incredibly satisfying and I am very proud of the fact that a significant number of my former students have become teachers and some are now Principals in Canberra and beyond I think it is important for us to promote a career in education and in education leadership as both rewarding

and very important ways people can contribute positively to the community.



When I first became a Principal, I decided that it was important for me to not only do my job well within the school but also to step out of my own school and to contribute where possible to the broader educational community in which I have worked. By doing this, I have gained much that I think has made me a better leader and I am very appreciative of the many opportunities I have had over the years as a result of working on various boards or committees.

These opportunities to contribute to decisions about how to hold on to what is important in education or to making changes that were likely to bring about improvements for students or simply to make the best of the available options have been interesting, quite challenging at times but also highly rewarding on a professional level.

For the past twelve years I have greatly valued the collegiality that comes from being a member of AISACT, from working with fellow Principals, the Business Managers as well as all the staff in the

AISACT office. I regard AISACT as being an organisation that genuinely supports its members in productive ways through the provision of a wide range of quality

“*Being around students sometimes makes me feel quite old (which I am) but much more importantly being around students certainly makes me feel very much alive, and alert. The enthusiasm, energy, openness and caring nature of the overwhelming number of students I have encountered over my career has been inspiring. That is one thing I will miss in 2021 and beyond.*”

professional learning, through to keeping members up to date about issues that impact on our schools, but also through the individual and collaborative support provided to schools and Principals, in particular.

I wish to end by simply saying thank you to everyone for your good wishes, your kind words and your collegiality over the years. I am leaving with a sense of fulfilment following more than 40 years as an educator and I have few regrets.

I believe that I have been blessed in my work and in what I have been able to achieve with the support of so many wonderful people around me.

Take care of yourselves and each other. And thank you.”



Statement of Comprehensive Income

For the Year ended 31 December 2020

ABN: 51 980 437 786

| | NOTE | 2020 | 2019 |
|--|------|-----------------|-----------------|
| | | \$ | \$ |
| Income | | | |
| Government assistance | | 100,000 | - |
| Interest income | | 9,755 | 20,092 |
| Other income | | 11,245 | 6,280 |
| Program administration | | 8,266 | 12,135 |
| Reform support fund | | 484,071 | 506,135 |
| Subscriptions | | 352,139 | 337,691 |
| | | 965,476 | 882,333 |
| Expenses | | | |
| Administration and office expenses | | 49,323 | 51,667 |
| Amortisation - right of use asset | 9 | 35,213 | 35,213 |
| Consultancy and legal | | 8,754 | 7,785 |
| Depreciation | | 16,230 | 16,424 |
| Employee benefits expense | | 603,129 | 584,216 |
| Interest on lease liability | 9 | 6,114 | 7,666 |
| IT expenses | | 7,167 | 5,948 |
| Loss on disposal of assets | | 660 | - |
| Other expenses | | - | 9,301 |
| Projects | | 187,339 | 194,767 |
| Rent and equipment lease | | 6,433 | 3,153 |
| Services to schools | | 5,389 | - |
| Subscriptions | | 50,834 | 48,821 |
| Travel - domestic | | 2,528 | 11,084 |
| | | 979,113 | 976,045 |
| (Deficit) for the year | | (13,637) | (93,712) |
| Total comprehensive (loss) for the year | | (13,637) | (93,712) |

Appendix

Member Schools

Blue Gum Community School
Brindabella Christian College
Burgmann Anglican School
Canberra Christian School
Canberra Girls Grammar School
Canberra Grammar School
Canberra Jewish School
Canberra Montessori School
Covenant Christian School
Daramalan College
Emmaus Christian School
Communities@Work Galilee School
Islamic School of Canberra
Marist College Canberra
Orana Steiner School
Radford College
St Edmund's College
Taqwa School
Trinity Christian School

Associate Member Schools

The Anglican School Googong
Snowy Mountains Grammar School

General Meeting Members

Maureen Hartung OAM
Blue Gum Community School
Suzanne Power, Jay De Mel
Brindabella Christian College
Steven Bowers, Joel Anderson
Burgmann Anglican School
Bree Hills
Canberra Christian School
Anna Owen, Matt O'Brien,
Melanie Andrews
Canberra Girls Grammar School
Dr Justin Garrick, Kent Peters
Canberra Grammar School
Rael Matthews, Kate Luck
Canberra Montessori School
Martin Keast, Tim James
Covenant Christian School
Rita Daniels, Hugh Boulter
Daramalan College
Erik Hofsink, Charlotte Kruger
Emmaus Christian School
Tim McNevin
Galilee School
Dr Mahmood Eid
Islamic School of Canberra
Matthew Hutchison, Christine Worth
Marist College Canberra
Jacqui Lee
Orana Steiner School
Fiona Godfrey, David Perceval
Radford College
Joe Zavone, Samantha Brady
St Edmund's College
Amanda Bartels, Talib Sanoon
Taqwa School

Ian Hewitt, Karen Achurch
Trinity Christian School

Merryn Clarksmit, Heather Walsh
The Anglican School, Googong

Andrew Bell, David Evans
Snowy Mountains Grammar School

Executive Committee

Dr Justin Garrick (Chair)
Canberra Grammar School

Steven Bowers (Deputy Chair)
Burgmann Anglican School

Rita Daniels (Immediate Past Chair)
Daramalan College

Heather Walsh
The Anglican School, Googong

Ian Hewitt
Trinity Christian School

Christine Worth
Marist College Canberra

Samantha Brady
St Edmund's College, Canberra

Maureen Hartung OAM
Blue Gum Community School

Anna Owen
Canberra Girls Grammar School

Jacqui Lee
Orana Steiner School

Andrew Wrigley
AISACT

Finance Risk and Audit Subcommittee

Heather Walsh (Chair)

Christine Worth
Marist College Canberra

David Holmesby

Karen Achurch
Trinity Christian School

Samantha Brady
St Edmund's College

Charlotte Kruger
Emmaus Christian School

David Perceval
Radford College

Tim James
Covenant Christian School

Andrew Wrigley
AISACT

Serita Cordeiro
AISACT

Joanne Garrison
AISACT

Teaching and Learning Subcommittee

Erik Hofsink (Chair, concluding T2)
Emmaus Christian School

Anna Owen (Chair, commencing T3)
Canberra Girls Grammar School

Naomi Cole
Trinity Christian School

Lisa Hivers
Galilee School

Chris De Britt
Daramalan College

Alison Easey
Burgmann Anglican School

Rachel McClure
Emmaus Christian School

Liam Stakelum
Marist College Canberra

Peter O'Donnell
Brindabella Christian School

Tim Bibbens
St Edmund's College

Louise Wallace Richards
Radford College

Tara Dunstall
Canberra Girls Grammar School

Andy Gordon
Radford College

Joanna Leaman
Canberra Grammar School

Gillian Hetherington
The Anglican School Googong

Ashleigh Pratt
Snowy Mountains Grammar School

Kath Morwitch
AISACT

Joanne Garrisson
AISACT

Education Support Subcommittee

Ian Hewitt (Chair)
Trinity Christian School

Grant Barclay
Marist College Canberra

Leonie Owens
Marist College Canberra

Cath Amesbury
Burgmann Anglican School

Andrew Wrigley
AISACT

Joanne Garrisson
AISACT

Sue Roche
AISACT

Early Years learning Subcommittee

Maureen Hartung OAM (Chair)
Blue Gum Community School

Subhadra Chapman
Blue Gum Community School

Kate Columbine
Canberra Girls Grammar School

Karen Mahar
Radford College

Andrew Wrigley
AISACT

Joanne Garrisson
AISACT

Staff of the AISACT Office

Andrew Wrigley
Executive Director

Joanne Garrison
Senior Manager Strategic Programs

Kath Morwitch
Senior Manager Curriculum and Professional Development

Sue Roche
Manager, Education Support

Serita Cordeiro
Finance and Office Manager



Annual Report 2020



The Association of the Independent Schools of the ACT





