

INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS IN THE AUSTRALIAN CAPITAL TERRITORY

SNAPSHOT

The Australian Capital Territory Independent school sector is a diverse and growing group of non-government schools. This provides an overview snapshot of the key characteristics of the ACT Independent school sector, those who are enrolled, those who work in Independent schools, and how these schools are funded.

The Independent school figures in this snapshot include Independent Catholic schools, except where otherwise indicated.

2024 EDITION

LATEST AVAILABLE FACTS AND FIGURES

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE INDEPENDENT SCHOOL SECTOR

BROAD CHOICE FOR PARENTS

STRONG COMMUNITY LINKS

DIVERSITY OF SCHOOL TYPE, SIZE AND FOCUS

AUTONOMOUS GOVERNANCE ARRANGEMENTS

COMPREHENSIVE ACCOUNTABILITY

SCHOOL METRICS

In 2023, there were 18 Independent schools of which 2 were boarding schools. The majority of Independent schools in the ACT are co-educational and 3 are single sex.

SIZE OF ACT INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS

FEWER THAN 199 STUDENTS	3	17%
200 - 999 STUDENTS	7	39%
1,000 - 1,999 STUDENTS	6	33%
MORE THAN 2,000 STUDENTS	2	11%

NUMBER OF ACT INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS

PRIMARY	3	16%
SECONDARY	1	6%
COMBINED	13	72%
SPECIAL ASSISTANCE	1	6%
TOTAL	18	100%

TYPE OF ACT INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS

BOYS' SCHOOLS	2	11%
GIRLS' SCHOOLS	1	6%
CO-EDUCATIONAL SCHOOLS	15	83%

18



INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS IN ACT

862



AVERAGE NUMBER OF STUDENTS ENROLLED IN ACT INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS

512



AVERAGE NUMBER OF STUDENTS ENROLLED IN ACT GOVERNMENT SCHOOLS

SCHOOL PROFILE

Independent schools have diverse religious or philosophical affiliations. They represent a range of approaches to teaching and learning.



83%

ACT INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS WITH A RELIGIOUS AFFILIATION

AFFILIATIONS OF ACT INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS BY NUMBER OF ENROLMENTS

2023

AFFILIATION	SCHOOLS	STUDENT FTE	%
ANGLICAN	4	6,900	44.5%
CATHOLIC	3	4,081	26.3%
CHRISTIAN	5	3,131	20.2%
OTHER	6	1,399	9.0%

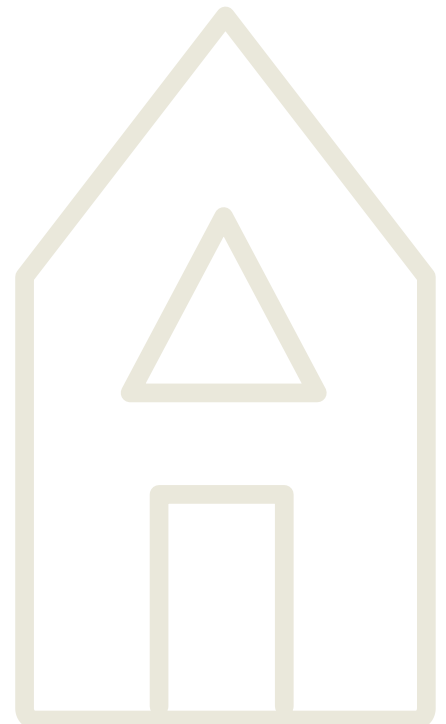
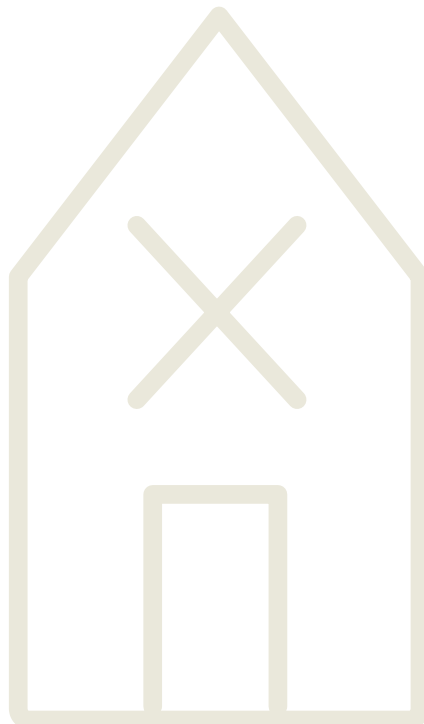
GOVERNANCE

Independent schools in the ACT are not-for-profit institutions founded by groups in the community. All Independent schools are registered with the relevant state or territory education authorities.

Independent schools are primarily accountable to their parent and school communities.

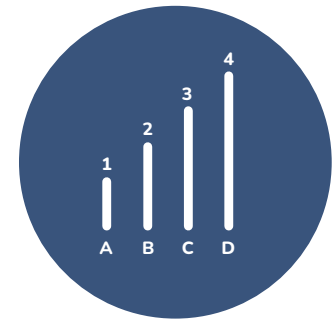
One Independent school in the ACT operates within an approved system authority.

All ACT Independent schools comply with relevant territory and federal education legislation and regulation.



STUDENT ENROLMENTS

The rate of growth of the Independent school sector has been increasing. In 2023, enrolments in ACT Independent schools grew by 4.5 per cent.



4.5%

GROWTH IN ENROLMENTS IN ACT INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS



15,510

TOTAL NUMBER OF STUDENTS IN ACT INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS

GOVERNMENT	CATHOLIC	INDEPENDENT
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ACT ENROLMENTS BY SCHOOL SECTOR AND LEVEL 2023

TOTAL ENROLMENTS	60.2%	19.4%	20.4%
PRIMARY	63.8%	21.1%	15.1%
JUNIOR SECONDARY	53.1%	19.0%	27.9%
SENIOR SECONDARY	62.0%	13.7%	24.3%

PERCENTAGE SHARE %

ACT ENROLMENT CHANGE OVER TIME BY SCHOOL SECTOR 2000-2023

2000	63.5%	19.0%	17.5%
2005	59.2%	21.7%	19.1%
2010	57.1%	21.8%	21.1%
2015	58.6%	21.2%	20.2%
2020	61.5%	19.4%	19.1%
2023	60.2%	19.4%	20.4%

PERCENTAGE SHARE %



213

ABORIGINAL AND TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER STUDENTS



89

OVERSEAS STUDENTS

TOTAL ADDITIONAL ENROLMENTS BY ACT SCHOOL SECTOR 2000-2023

GOVERNMENT	7,675
CATHOLIC	3,349
INDEPENDENT	4,984



175

BOARDING STUDENTS



2,990

STUDENTS WITH DISABILITY (est.)



5,026

LANGUAGE BACKGROUND OTHER THAN ENGLISH

ENROLMENTS IN ACT INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS 2023

	MALE	FEMALE	TOTAL
PRIMARY	3,305	2,928	6,232
SECONDARY	5,539	3,739	9,278
TOTAL	8,844	6,667	15,510

STUDENTS WITH DISABILITY IN ACT INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS (est.)* 2023

SUPPORT PROVIDED WITHIN A QUALITY DIFFERENTIATED TEACHING PRACTICE	1,110
SUPPLEMENTARY	1,500
SUBSTANTIAL	350
EXTENSIVE	30

*MORE INFORMATION ON THE LEVELS OF ADJUSTMENT FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITY ARE AVAILABLE AT WWW.NCCD.EDU.AU

SOURCES OF INCOME

Most of the income of Independent schools in the ACT comes from families, which means the cost of education is shared. Governments save an estimated \$253 million in funding due to the contribution to ACT Independent schools from families and other private sources.



\$253 MILLION

SAVINGS TO GOVERNMENT FROM ACT INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS



\$9,273

MEDIAN ANNUAL FEE 2022

GOVERNMENT FUNDING OF ACT INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS

Government funding for schools is provided by the Australian Government and state and territory governments. The Australian Government is the main government funding source for ACT non-government schools in the ACT, providing 79 per cent of total government recurrent funding, while the ACT government provides 21 per cent. The ACT government is the main funding source for government schools. The proportions of private/government funding vary greatly from school to school.

RECURRENT FUNDING FOR SCHOOL EDUCATION \$ MILLION FY 2021-22

GOVERNMENT SCHOOLS

143.8	1,007.1	21.1
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CATHOLIC SCHOOLS

153.7	38.6	58.1
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INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS

91.3	24.3	189.1
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AUSTRALIAN GOVERNMENT ACT GOVERNMENT PRIVATE INCOME (Parents, etc)

FUNDING MODEL

The current funding model for schools, the Schooling Resource Standard (SRS) comprises base funding plus loadings to address educational disadvantage. Base funding for Independent schools is adjusted according to the school community's estimated capacity to contribute (CTC) to the costs of education, assessed on parental income tax data. This methodology is known as the Direct Measure of Income (DMI). Schools with a higher CTC score receive less per capita base funding.

LOADINGS:

- SCHOOL LOCATION
- SCHOOL SIZE
- SOCIO-EDUCATIONAL DISADVANTAGE
- INDIGENEITY
- LOW ENGLISH LANGUAGE PROFICIENCY
- STUDENTS WITH DISABILITY

AVERAGE GOVERNMENT RECURRENT FUNDING PER ACT STUDENT

FY 2021-22

TOTAL GOVERNMENT RECURRENT FUNDING PER ACT STUDENT COMPARISON

FY 2021-22

PER STUDENT AVERAGE	\$24,940
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LOW CTC	\$11,330
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PER STUDENT AVERAGE	\$7,830
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HIGH CTC	\$3,570
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ACT GOVERNMENT SCHOOLS ACT INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS

ALL GOVERNMENT SOURCES. THE AMOUNT OF FUNDING RECEIVED FROM ALL GOVERNMENT SOURCES VARIES SIGNIFICANTLY DEPENDING ON THE CIRCUMSTANCES OF THE SCHOOL.



SOURCES OF INCOME

The majority of ACT Independent school funding (recurrent and capital) comes from private sources.

Parents and communities contributed \$240 million (recurrent and capital) to ACT Independent schools.

65%

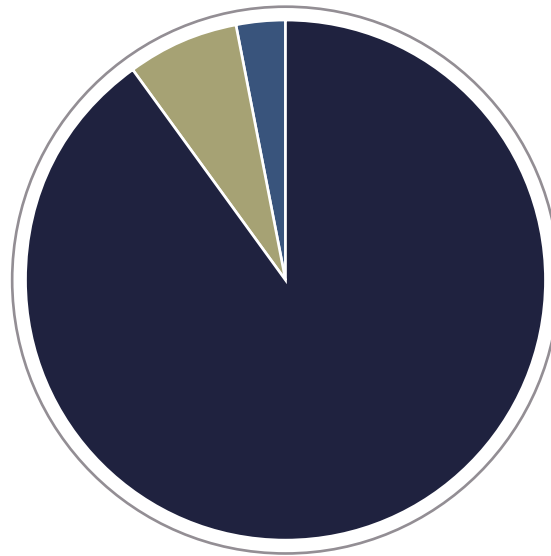
PRIVATE SOURCES
OF FUNDING

35%

ALL GOVERNMENT
SOURCES

MAIN SOURCES OF CAPITAL INCOME

On average, parents and communities provide 90 per cent of capital funding for ACT Independent schools. The amount of capital funding in the ACT Independent schools from private sources in 2022 was \$45 million.



90%

PRIVATE SOURCES
PARENTS AND DONORS

Most capital funding is sourced through borrowing, fund raising, levies on parents or school reserves.

7%

AUSTRALIAN GOVERNMENT CAPITAL
GRANTS PROGRAM FOR ACT

In 2022, the Australian Government provided \$3.6 million in capital grants to ACT Independent schools. In 2023, it is estimated that grants for the ACT Independent sector will be approximately \$1.5 million.

In the Independent school sector, Australian Government capital grants are distributed on a needs basis through Block Grant Authorities, with priority given to disadvantaged school communities with the least capacity to raise funds.

3%

ACT GOVERNMENT CAPITAL
FUNDING

In 2022, the ACT Government provided \$1.2 million in capital grants to ACT non-government schools.

SCHOOL TEACHERS

ACT Independent schools employ almost 21 per cent of all teachers in ACT schools.



21%

ACT TEACHERS EMPLOYED BY INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS

TEACHERS IN THE ACT INDEPENDENT SECTOR BY GENDER AND LEVEL (FTE) 2023

	MALE	FEMALE	TOTAL	MALE	FEMALE
PRIMARY TEACHERS	78	329	408		
PER CENT %	19.2%	80.8%	100%		
SECONDARY TEACHERS	349	449	797		
PER CENT %	43.7%	56.3%	100%		

1,205

NUMBER OF TEACHERS FULL-TIME EQUIVALENT

1,318

NUMBER OF TEACHERS FULL-TIME AND PART-TIME

2,318

NUMBER OF TEACHING AND NON-TEACHING STAFF

ACT STUDENT TO TEACHER RATIOS

CHANGE 2000 – 2023

INDEPENDENT CATHOLIC SCHOOLS ARE INCLUDED WITH CATHOLIC SCHOOLS.

	GOVERNMENT		NON-GOVERNMENT			
	PRIMARY	SECONDARY	CATHOLIC		INDEPENDENT	
	PRIMARY	SECONDARY	PRIMARY	SECONDARY	PRIMARY	SECONDARY
2000	17.1	12.5	21.7	14.1	16.9	11.9
2005	13.8	11.8	18.8	13.9	14.6	11.3
2010	13.5	11.5	18.4	14.4	14.9	11.4
2015	14.6	11.6	17.8	13.2	13.4	10.6
2020	13.9	12.4	17.1	12.7	14.1	10.7
2023	13.5	12.8	16.4	12.7	15.3	11.6



STUDENT TO TEACHER RATIOS (AVERAGE)

2023

INDEPENDENT	13.1 TO 1
CATHOLIC	14.3 TO 1
GOVERNMENT	13.2 TO 1

SOURCES: FIGURES IN SNAPSHOT ARE DERIVED FROM DATA PROVIDED BY THE AUSTRALIAN BUREAU OF STATISTICS, THE AUSTRALIAN GOVERNMENT DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION, THE PRODUCTIVITY COMMISSION AND THE AUSTRALIAN CURRICULUM, ASSESSMENT AND REPORTING AUTHORITY. SOME FIGURES MAY NOT ADD DUE TO ROUNDING. FUNDING FIGURES IN THE SNAPSHOT USE THE LATEST AVAILABLE FINANCIAL DATA WHICH IS FOR THE FINANCIAL YEAR 2021-22, OR FOR THE CALENDAR YEAR 2022. UNLESS OTHERWISE SPECIFIED, STUDENT ENROLMENT FIGURES ARE FULL TIME EQUIVALENT.

PRODUCED BY INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS AUSTRALIA



THE ASSOCIATION OF INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS OF THE ACT