

AASE NATIONAL CONFERENCE – BETTER TOGETHER

7 September 2023

Removing barriers to education, not creating them

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INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS AUSTRALIA



PRESENTATION OVERVIEW

Acknowledgement of Country

- *Overview of Independent Schools*
- *National picture*
- *Key insights from Independent Schools Australia's Special Assistance Schools research report*
- *Barriers to learning*
- *Removing barriers - Flexible programs, personalised learning, innovative strategies and wrap-around support, inclusive pedagogical approaches*
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INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS

1 IN 6 STUDENTS ATTEND AN INDEPENDENT SCHOOL



1,209

INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS



688,638

INDEPENDENT STUDENTS



INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS

141



BOARDING SCHOOLS

The Independent sector is the largest provider of boarding students with 14,577 students

143



SPECIAL SCHOOLS

16,571 students are enrolled across in special and special assistance schools

983

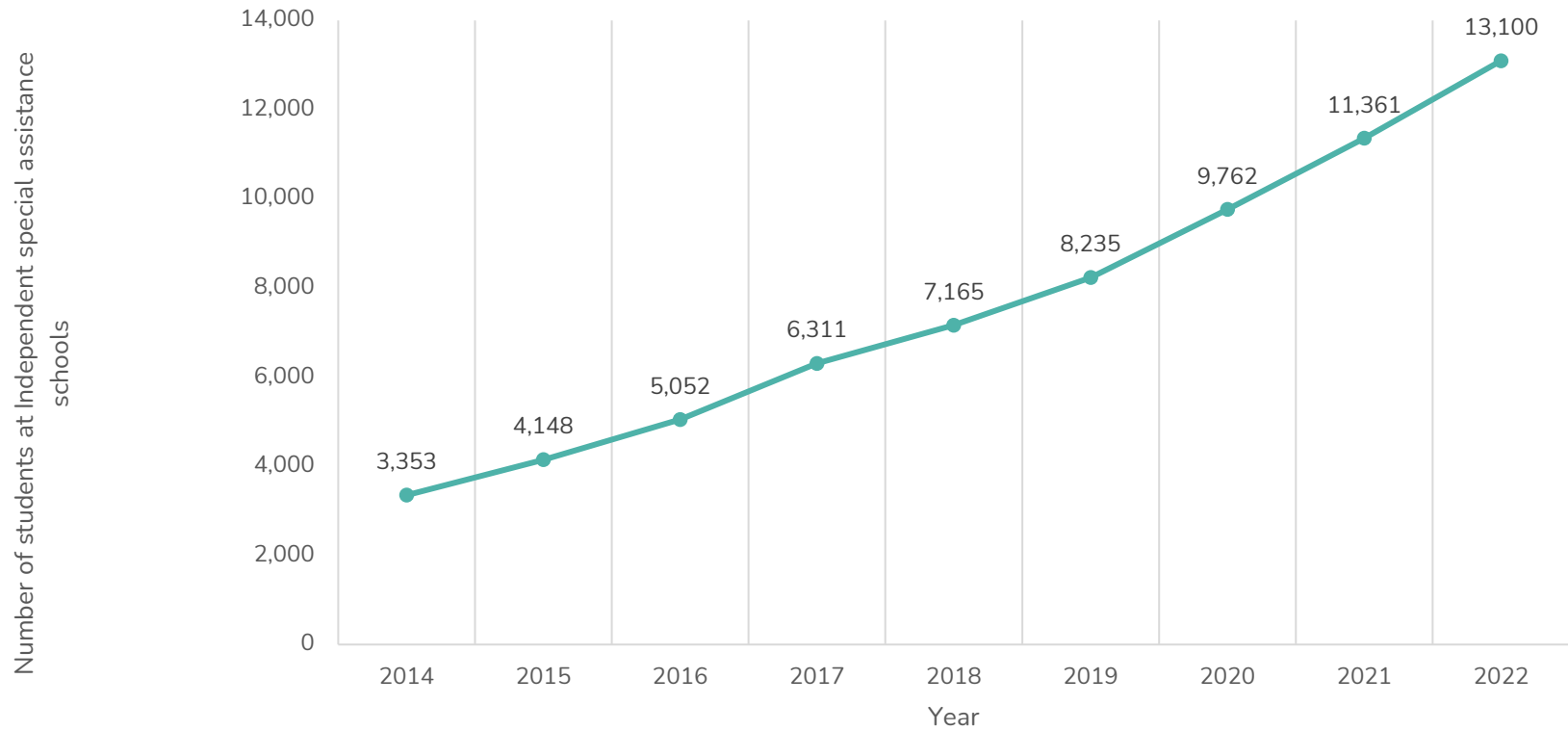


SCHOOLS WITH INDIGENOUS ENROLMENTS

17,752 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students enrolled in 983 Independent schools



GROWTH IN STUDENT ENROLMENTS IN SPECIAL ASSISTANCE SCHOOLS, 2014-2022



National picture

- 2022 Senate inquiry into school refusal
- 2023 OECD report on Australian schools
- 2023 Senate inquiry into disruption in Australian school classrooms
- 2023 AERO Engaged Classrooms Project



Youth Inc, Adelaide, SA

‘You never change things by fighting the existing reality.
To change something, build a new model that makes the
existing model obsolete.’

R. Buckminster Fuller, Philosopher and Systems Theorist



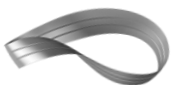
KEY INSIGHTS FROM INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS AUSTRALIA'S SPECIAL ASSISTANCE SCHOOLS RESEARCH REPORT

- Special Assistance Schools provide:
- A wide range of support services and flexible approaches to attendance, curriculum, assessment and teaching and learning
- Individual transition support to post-school pathways
- A safe and caring environment for students where building trust and positive relationships is essential
- Differentiated, flexible and inclusive approaches to teaching and learning
- High staff to student ratios and small class sizes support individualised education strategies
- Students determine their own goals focused on interests, abilities and strengths
- Welcoming environments with thought given to school design



YOUTH INC, HINDLEY ST, ADELAIDE CITY CENTRE





BARRIERS TO LEARNING

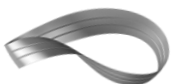
- Students attending Macleay Vocational College (MVC), Kempsey NSW are given a fresh start. Principal, Ryan Martin states that, 'The level of trauma experienced by students is eye-watering'; and that 'Every student has experienced significant mind-boggling trauma and many are living with catastrophic domestic violence'
- Many students in SASs may have:
 - experience of poverty, bullying, homelessness, discrimination or intergenerational unemployment
 - experienced personal or social barriers to learning
 - mental health challenges such as anxiety and depression
 - a disability
 - experienced discrimination
 - experienced underemployment or unemployment
 - been in the juvenile justice system

 - Some students are living in residential care, are homeless, or in foster care
 - Some students are young parents



WHAT ARE SOME OF THE BARRIERS THAT STUDENTS IN YOUR SCHOOL EXPERIENCE?

- Share with a colleague a barrier that some of your students might experience and describe one strategy or approach that your school does to remove this barrier
- Is it effective?
- How do you know?



FLEXIBLE PROGRAMS, PERSONALISED LEARNING, AND WRAP-AROUND SUPPORT – REMOVING BARRIERS

- Basic needs met – eg transport, health care, ID documents, housing, breakfast, lunch , take home meals, washing machines
- Personal goals – success different for each student
- Access to specialised support such as counsellors, youth workers, teacher aides, psychologists, occupational therapists, lawyers, drug and alcohol support, nurses, health or housing services, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander educators
- Flexible term dates, starting and finishing times, part time attendance
- Outreach programs, young parent programs, child care
- Literacy and numeracy specialized support
- VET and post school options for work or further study



INCLUSIVE PEDAGOGICAL APPROACHES – NO ONE SIZE FITS ALL

- Trauma informed education
- Restorative practice
- Self regulation strategies used to explicitly teach social and emotional concepts
- Positive psychology – strengths-based whole school psychological approach grounded in wellbeing theory
- Project based learning – real world problems and challenges – development of critical thinking and practical skills
- Transformative learning – critical reflection to find meaning and understanding – questioning prior assumptions and examining new perspectives
- Individual learning plans and personalized adjustments to identify and remove barriers to learning and participation
- Culturally responsive curriculum, trained staff and focus on cultural safety
- Outreach programs
- Direct Instruction - for students who have experienced limited academic success
- Unconditional positive regard



WHAT NEW IDEA MIGHT YOU TAKE BACK TO YOUR SCHOOL?

Write it down

Who will you discuss this with?

Give it a time frame

How will you know if it was effective?



THANK YOU

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[ISA-Special-Assistance-School-Showcase.pdf](#)

