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## REPORT SHOWS NON-GOVERNMENT SCHOOLS COST TAXPAYERS LESS

Independent Schools Queensland today welcomed the Australian Government's Productivity Commission Report for finally putting the record straight that government schools receive almost double per student in public funding compared to students in non-government schools.

Executive Director of Independent Schools Queensland, Dr John Roulston, said the report showed in 2007/08 total government recurrent expenditure on government schools was \$28.8 billion compared to just \$7.7 billion on non-government schools.

"Given the misinformation about schools funding, I am particularly pleased to see these figures highlighted by the Productivity Commission's Report," Dr Roulston said.

"In 2007-08, average government recurrent expenditure per FTE student in government schools was \$12,639, while for non-government schools, the average government per FTE student expenditure was \$6,607."

"This means a student in a government school receives almost double the funding from taxpayers than that of a non-government student."

In 2007/08 the government schooling sector received 79% of recurrent expenditure on schooling while the non-government sector received 21%.

Dr Roulston said the total savings in government expenditure from students attending non-government schools was more than \$7 billion in 2007-08.

"In other words, if there were no non-government schools in Australia, governments would face additional recurrent (eg. teacher salaries) costs of more than \$7 billion annually. In addition, governments would face significant additional capital (eg. infrastructure) costs in providing schools," he said.

Dr Roulston said the funding information comes on top of data showing increasing numbers of Queensland families are choosing independent schools to educate their children.

National school census data recently released by the Australia Bureau of Statistics (ABS) revealed the independent sector was the fastest growing in Queensland with enrolment growth of 3.2% in 2009 compared to the Catholic sector (2.8%) and public schools (1.0%).

A record 105,203 students were enrolled in independent schools in 2009, with primary enrolments jumping by 4.1% to 52,665 while secondary enrolments increased 2.2% to 52,538.

"2009 was a difficult year for many families with significant financial uncertainty, however, this has not stopped parents exercising their right to choose the best education for their child in greater numbers," he said.

Dr Roulston said the ABS data reflects a continuing strong growth pattern in independent school enrolments.

"Over the past five years enrolments have increased by nearly 30%".

"More parents are recognising the quality and diversity of education programs on offer in independent schools and the ability of independent schools to cater for and meet the unique needs and abilities of students."

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