



TASSO
INCORPORATED

POLICY DOCUMENT

Updated August 2016

Tasmanian Association of State School Organisations Inc.

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Updates Conference 2016

SECTION I, 1.3

Moved that this Conference reiterate Section I, 1.3 of current TASSO Policy **CARRIED**

SECTION J

Moved that this Conference writes to the Minister for Education and Training reiterating Section J, paragraph 2 of TASSO current policy and raising the Conference's concerns with the changes to the minimum school starting age contained in the Draft Education Bill 2016, including that the changes will:

- have a significant negative impact on our schools, the staff, our children and our families;
- put significant additional strain on both school infrastructure and staff; and
- in many cases radically reduce valuable parent-child time during a key developmental period

CARRIED

SECTION L, 1.1 (a)

Moved that Section L 1.1 (a) of the Transport Policy be amended as follows:

1. School Buses

1.1 TASSO believe

- (a) the Government should provide free transport to all students attending the nearest or designated Government school of appropriate level and that the safety of students in transit is of the utmost importance. Where Year 11 and 12 is being provided at the local school, free bus transport must be provided to that local school and the designated Year 11 and 12 government College

CARRIED

Tasmanian Association of State School Organisations Inc.

Policy Document

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PREFACE

"The Tasmanian Association of State School Organisations hold that an education should be provided to all which enables the development of their abilities.

This provision should ensure that all achieve their maximum potential irrespective of capacity to pay, class, disability, gender, culture, level of ability or where they live.

The school system should provide a broad curriculum to enable the student to participate fully in society; a learning environment that encourages them to build on their culture, experience and skills and an education setting which is safe, nurturing and welcoming.

TASSO holds as a tenet that an effective school system is a partnership of students, parents, teachers and ancillary staff and as such can best meet the needs of all its participants."

SECTION A

EDUCATION, SOCIETY AND THE INDIVIDUAL

1. Australia is a democratic society in which every individual has a right to a realistic opportunity to achieve personal fulfilment.
2. The society as a whole, through its education and welfare provisions has responsibility for providing each individual with the opportunities and skills needed for full personal development.
3. In the provision of the opportunities and the skills needed for personal development, educators have a major but not sole responsibility. The society as a whole - its institutions, structures and practices - provides a social environment which can either contribute to or obstruct the social objective of full personal development for each individual.

The aim of education is to help the individual to develop their full potential as a person and as a member of the society, to adapt and grow in the rapidly changing circumstances of modern living.

Education is therefore seen as a lifelong process which includes but does not end with formal schooling or formal education.

SECTION B

FUNDING OF EDUCATION

Premise:

TASSO believe in a free and universal state education system. TASSO believe education must be a top priority. As parents we reiterate the importance of maintaining teacher numbers, of specialist teachers in primary schools, of keeping class sizes reasonable and as well, the need for maintenance and upgrading of our schools. We believe support for state education is vital to the future of our children and of our country.

TASSO believe that it is not the responsibility of parent organisations to fund the employment of staff, basic maintenance of school buildings and any like expenditure. It is the role of Government to fund its own education system. It is not the role of government to fund non-government education systems.

Policy:

1. General

- 1.1 TASSO believe Governments' primary educational obligation is to meet the needs of State Schools. This should be done by:
 - (a) adjusting the global budget for education according to variations from enrolment predictions in the State education system.
 - (b) maintaining commonwealth special purpose programs with the moneys directed to the grass roots of education;
 - (c) providing adequate financial assistance to students forced to live away from home to pursue their studies;
 - (d) the continuation of small kindergartens particularly in country areas where children would be socially disadvantaged to a greater extent than children living in city areas.

- 1.2 TASSO believe that Government needs to make a commitment to ensure that:
 - (a) the individual class student/teacher ratios are maintained at 1:25 and in inclusion situations 1:15;
 - (b) levels of literacy and numeracy be maintained and effectively addressed in all sectors;
 - (c) health and physical education programs are maintained in all schools;
 - (d) the needs of gifted and talented students are addressed;
 - (e) a full compliment of specialist teachers are in all state schools;
 - (f) inclusion be implemented and resourced to a high standard in State Schools.

- 1.3 The formula for calculating the Educational Needs Index (ENI) should be based on average incomes of parents of students attending the school, estimated using the latest and most appropriate statistical data.
- 1.4 TASSO believe that special needs funding should reflect the enrolments in the school.

3. Financial Support for Students

The Federal Government should provide financial support for students continuing their education beyond year 10.

4. New Schools

TASSO believe that Governments should not allocate funds for the establishment or expansion of Non Government schools.

5. Retention in Years 11 and 12

- 5.1 TASSO believe the government should make available accommodation, transport and allowances to ensure rural and remote students have equal access to secondary colleges.
- 5.2 TASSO believe that both district schools and high schools in country areas should be funded to enable those schools to offer a full range of year 11 and 12 subjects to allow students to remain within their own communities.
- 5.3 TASSO believe all students should be encouraged to complete years 11 and 12 or a recognised educational pathway

6. Student Assistance Scheme (STAS)

TASSO believe the State Government should set the Student Assistance Scheme (STAS) at a level based on the real costs of educating a student to ensure schools are not disadvantaged by the number of students receiving assistance. Governments should:

- (a) increase all education allowances annually in line with CPI (consumer price index);
- (b) publish and distribute to school communities the criteria for Student Assistance (STAS);

7. Fees And Levies

Premise

TASSO believe that state schools should be free of fees and levies.

- 7.1 TASSO believe that the State Government should annually publish its policy on fees and levies stating clearly;
- (a) whether fees and levies are compulsory;
 - (b) Whether schools are authorised to enforce the collection of fees and levies;

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- (c) advising how students are to be treated if their families cannot afford, or do not pay, the said fees and levies;
 - (d) indicating which school subject, or activity, fees and levies may be charged for.
- 7.2 TASSO believe that the capping of levies should not be adopted as government policy.

8. Fundraising and Voluntary Contributions

- 8.1 Parents fundraise money to provide extras for their child's education.
- 8.2 Parents and Friends, School Associations and other parent groups will not tolerate being expected to make up shortfalls in their school's budget. Principals must not request specific amounts of money from their parent organisations to "balance the books".
- 8.3 TASSO believe that the Secretary of the Department should give clear directives to Principals at the beginning of each school year that
- (a) funds raised by Parents and Friends Associations may not be used in school budgets;
 - (b) all Parents and Friends Associations are to retain the rights to allocate their fundraising profits and continue to do so for the benefit of all school children.

9. Commercial Sponsorship

Premise:

TASSO reaffirms that the Government has the responsibility for the full funding of our state school system.

TASSO recognises that schools have benefited in many ways from resources and services provided by industry and service clubs, teacher/industry exchange programs, assistance with work experience programs for students, as well as the provision of awards for students and schools.

Policy:

- 9.1 TASSO does not support:
- (a) the use of school buildings and grounds for advertising purposes;
 - (b) the use of the school or its students to promote a particular product or service;
 - (c) activities which involve students in commercial promotions;
 - (d) acceptance by schools of resources which may have the effect of compromising the schools policies, programs or strategies;
 - (e) the linking of schools with commercial enterprises in a way which would undermine the principles of public education;

- (f) activities which would cause tensions in a community because of the school's identification with a particular commercial interest;
- (g) sponsored activities which promote competition between students or schools;
- (h) changing the name of any government school to incorporate the name of a sponsor;
- (i) the inclusion of the name of a commercial enterprise on school stationery or the sign indicating the name of the school;
- (j) sponsorship which would lead to unacceptable differences in resource levels between schools in our public education system;

9.2 TASSO believe that it is the responsibility of school associations to:

- (a) consider all proposals for school/industry links;
- (b) authorise activities and/or linkages which fall within these guidelines and are consistent with school policy, if they are in the interests of students at the school.

9.3 TASSO does not, through its own organisation, directly promote or endorse any commercial product or service

SECTION C

EQUALITY OF OPPORTUNITY

Premise:

TASSO asserts that all children have the right to a State School education,

TASSO believe that the *Education Act* should direct the Department to accept the obligation to education all children and provide appropriate funding.

1. TASSO believe:
 - (a) Schools should provide every student with an equal opportunity to develop creative, academic and physical abilities.
 - (b) All students should be valued equally in all aspects of schooling.
 - (c) Schools should provide a learning environment which is socially and physically comfortable for all students.
 - (d) School uniform should be appropriate for a learning environment without creating financial hardship or compromising propriety in any activity.
 - (e) Schools should develop, with their school communities, appropriate policy to deal with situations which allow all students and staff to feel safe and secure
 - (f) Schools should provide programs that develop a holistic approach to student health and wellbeing.
2. TASSO believe country areas should be provided with specialist teachers, and facilities to enable teachers to cater for the needs of exceptional students.

SECTION D

STAFFING

1. General

1.1 TASSO believe that

- (a) the Department and the Australian Education Union should review the practice of allowing a person to accept a substantive position as Principal when that person is unable, or unwilling, to take up the position at the beginning of the following year.
- (b) the Department should change the staffing formula for small high schools and district schools so that pupils of these schools have opportunities which are comparable to those of larger high schools, particularly in relation to:
 - diversity of choice of optional subjects;
 - reasonable class sizes;
 - maintaining independent grade 9 and 10 groups.
- (c) staffing of primary schools should be implemented in such a way as to limit the number of tandem teaching appointments to a level acceptable to both the Department and the individual schools involved.
- (d) the Department should pro-actively address any inequity of gender in the teaching profession, especially in primary education.
- (e) staffing of schools should be implemented in such a way as to minimise disruption to children's educational programmes caused by short term teacher transfers and long service and/or parenting leave occurring during the year.
- (f) if a teacher in a secondary school resigns, is transferred, or goes on leave, then the replacement teacher must have equivalent qualifications.
- (g) the Department should review fluctuations in the number of students enrolled in schools at least once per term, so that if an increase in teaching staff is indicated adjustments can be made immediately without any detrimental effects to the existing students' learning environment.
- (h) Parents have the right to expect that there is stability of effective staff in all Government schools.
- (i) Parents have the right to expect that government schools are provided with sufficient competent, experienced teachers, ancillary and support staff, who receive effective in-service training and that promotions are based on merit.

2. Class Size

Premise:

TASSO believe that the Department should ensure that, economic strictures notwithstanding, class sizes are not increased; and that cost-cutting measures are directed so as not to threaten, but rather enhance, the educational opportunities of our children.

Policy:

- 2.1 TASSO believe that the Government should address:
 - (a) the problems associated with an increase in class size;
 - (b) the issue of teachers teaching out of area;
 - (c) the issue of combined year groups in many subjects.
- 2.2 Parents have the right to expect that the class size will be adjusted to suit specific needs.
- 2.3 TASSO believe that all class sizes for practical lessons should be a maximum of 15 students.

3. Specialist Teaching

- 3.1 TASSO believe:
 - (a) the Government should provide all schools with specialist teaching staff in physical education, art, music, library services, early childhood and special education as a basic entitlement, separate from the school's entitlement to classroom teachers provided in accordance with an enrolments-based formula;
 - (b) provide additional funding to implement the entitlement to specialist teachers, in order that there be no increase in average class sizes;
 - (c) that the Government should make a commitment to provide more specialist teachers to all schools statewide without loss of classroom teaching allocation in accordance with recommended Australian Education Union class sizes.
- 3.2 TASSO recommends the provision of qualified specialist teachers and support staff to cater for the needs of lower grades in primary schools.
- 3.3 Schools should have access to adequate special teachers, together with sufficient rooms and units, to enable satisfactory treatment of exceptional children.
- 3.4 With changing technologies and access to information from new sources such as the Internet, TASSO believes the Government should make an ongoing commitment to fund teacher librarians in all schools to assist students navigate and use information sources.

4. Special Education

- 4.1 TASSO believe
- (a) that the Minister for Education should ensure the employment of qualified Special Education teachers state-wide over and above normal staff complement.
 - (b) the Government should ensure the provision of Special Education Teachers in all infant and primary schools to assist classroom teachers in identifying children with special needs and, in liaison with parents, developing individual programmes for them.
 - (c) the Department should ascertain the number of children with individual and special learning needs in our state schools and then accordingly staff schools with sufficient specialist teachers to meet their needs.

5. Welfare/Guidance

- 5.1 TASSO believe that
- (a) each high school should be provided with social workers who can also work with their associated primary schools.
 - (b) The allocation of Guidance Officers or School Psychologists should align with the recommendations of the Australian Psychologists in Schools.
 - (c) Special Schools should have sufficient access to Guidance Officers or School Psychologists to enable each child to be assessed on a regular basis and consideration be given to the time required to assess these children.
 - (d) The Government should ensure that the number of speech pathologist and social worker positions adequately serve the needs of children in these crucial areas.

6. Teacher Transfer

- 6.1 TASSO believe that transfers should only occur when it can be demonstrated to be in the best interests of students without causing undue hardship to teachers.
- 6.2 TASSO believe the policy on Teacher Transfers should include consultation with the local school community in respect of each exit transfer of teachers who have had an association with that school community.

7. Acting Positions

- 7.1 TASSO insists that the disruption to schools and students caused by the inadequacies of the promotion system be minimised

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- 7.2 Promotional positions should be advertised and filled promptly to ensure stability within the school.

8. Relief

- 8.1 TASSO believe that
- (a) the Department should ensure the provision of adequate relief staff, both teaching and non-teaching to minimise disruption of students' programmes and reduce the stress on both students and staff caused by such disruption.
 - (b) the Department should provide part-time relief for all full time teaching Principals to allow time for necessary administrative duties. This allocation is not to be used for determining staff levels but to be an additional entitlement.

9. Professional Learning

9.1 Student Free Days

- (a) With the agreement of the school community TASSO supports the granting of 2 student free days per year for the purpose of teacher professional development.
- (b) School communities may only be surveyed once in any year for the purpose of gaining support for student free days.
- (c) Surveys are to be conducted by secret ballot of both staff and families of the school, with a minimum 75% agreement from each group being attained before student free days can be requested.

9.2 Changes to the School Day

- (a) With the agreement of the school community TASSO supports changes to the school day to allow for ongoing teacher professional development.
- (b) School communities may only be surveyed once in any year for the purpose of gaining support for changes to the school day.
- (c) School communities must be re-surveyed two (2) years after the implementation of changes to the school day in accordance with Departmental guidelines.
- (d) Surveys are to be conducted by secret ballot of both staff and families of the school with a minimum 75% agreement of each group being attained before changes to the school day can be requested.

9.3 TASSO believe that teachers should, wherever possible

- (a) access professional learning outside normal school hours
- (b) schedule professional learning days before the start of each term.

9.4 Student Free Days

TASSO believe that every day counts in a child's education and does not support student free days or similar changes to the school day that interrupt regular student learning programs.

10. Principals

- 10.1 TASSO believe assessments of Principals should be compulsory and that:
- (a) there be provision for School Associations to contribute to this performance assessment;
 - (b) where performance is unsatisfactory, the Department will provide further training, redeployment or provision for rehabilitation.
- 10.2 TASSO supports the introduction of five (5) year tenure for Principals with the option of a negotiated contract or further employment. Provision to be made for the School Association to be part of re-negotiating employment contracts based on performance.
- 10.3 TASSO believe The Department should ensure that Principals of small schools (less than 100) pupils are supported in carrying out the wide range of administrative tasks required by the department and the school community, through the provision of an extra 0.2 (1 day per week) staffing quota being added to their school quota.

11. Administrative and Support Staff

- 11.1 TASSO believe that the Government should give clear guidelines on the employment of Teacher Aides.
- 11.2 TASSO believe that the formulated ratio of administrative staff hours to student enrolments should reflect the changes within schools and the Department's requirements

SECTION E

BUILDINGS, GROUNDS AND FACILITIES

Premise:

In the management and development of school buildings, grounds and facilities, the local school community and the school representative bodies should play a focal role.

School bodies should develop and regularly review a management plan for buildings, grounds and facilities, involving wide consultation with local community, planning and education authorities. Resources for such reviews, their facilitation and communication with the local community should be the responsibility of the Department.

Policy:

1. Buildings

- 1.1 TASSO believe
 - (a) the Government should conduct an annual survey and publish a register of the physical resources of every State School and take urgent corrective action regarding any essential physical needs not presently being met, or adequately planned.
 - (b) that in rectifying these deficiencies and delays it calls on the Federal Government to make available substantial additional “untied” funds for education to be allocated by the State to areas of greatest need;
- 1.2 TASSO believe the Department should recognise the importance of maintaining the buildings and grounds of all schools to meet standard OH&S requirements, and urges maintenance requests be dealt with promptly, prioritising health and safety risk assessment.
- 1.3 TASSO believe
 - (a) it is important that a regular maintenance check be carried out on all school buildings.
 - (b) there should be an effective and efficient approach to the maintenance of school buildings;

2. Grounds

- 2.1 TASSO believe
 - (a) the Department should appoint safety officers to inspect and recommend care and maintenance of the playground equipment and provision of safety fences.
 - (b) the Department should ensure that old unsafe playground equipment be discarded and replaced with suitable and approved equipment
 - (c) the Department should ensure that all State Schools are effectively sign-posted, both externally in their geographical area and internally within the school environs.

- (d) that road traffic speed limits should be enforced near all Tasmanian schools and that school pedestrian crossings should also be available.

3. Facilities

3.1 TASSO believe

- (a) the Department should provide change room facilities, with showers and toilets for all schools and colleges.
- (b) TASSO believe that hand driers should be provided as standard equipment in all schools.
- (c) that the Department should carry out regular inspection of all manual arts classrooms.

4. Furnishings, Heating and General Facilities

TASSO believe:

- 4.2 That facilities and equipment in existing schools should be maintained or upgraded to compare with new schools.
- 4.3 The Department review its policy on the issue of equipment to schools with a view to meeting new standards and demands, and that a list of equipment which the Department will provide be available to school associations.
- 4.4 That school associations should be consulted regarding the floor plans of new classrooms for approval.
- 4.5 The Department should examine the possibility of furniture and equipment being more practically designed to complement children of all sizes, and not to be of a standard size.
- 4.6 The Government should give consideration to the provision of assembly hall/gymnasium facilities at primary schools where inadequate indoor facilities justify the need for same.
- 4.7 The Department should implement the necessary procedures to ensure that facilities and equipment are continuously upgraded throughout the life of the school, so that children attending older schools are not disadvantaged in comparison with those attending schools that have been recently built.
- 4.8 The Government should give an undertaking that school Parents and Friends bodies will not be asked to provide maintenance for equipment or facilities donated to the school.
- 4.9 The maintenance component of the School Resource Package should take into account the age, condition and type of school buildings to ensure an

equitable allocation of resources.

5. School Libraries

- 5.1 TASSO believe the Department should endorse as a statement of minimum resources required in government schools, those published by the Australian School Library Association and Australian Library and Information Association.

- 5.2 Where a joint school and community library exists, priority should be given to the quality of service to students of the school and to ensuring unrestricted access to the library and its materials to those students.

SECTION F

CURRICULUM AND ASSESSMENT

1. General

- 1.1 TASSO believe that parents should be notified individually when their children are to be assessed by a guidance officer or specialist teacher so that they would have the opportunity to discuss the result with the testing officer.
- 1.2 There should be a seamless articulation of curriculum from K-12.
- 1.3 Parents have the right to ongoing information on their child's progress through schools.
- 1.4 Parents have the right to expect the Government school system to have certain standards that govern good practice including the provision of a balanced curriculum focused on students' future needs.

2. Literacy and Numeracy

- 2.1 TASSO believe the Government should provide the resources necessary to provide continuing literacy and numeracy support to all students throughout their schooling. These resources are to be over and above existing allocations. Voluntary parent tutor programs are not a substitute for children who are significantly delayed in their literacy development.
- 2.2 TASSO supports
 - (a) the core teaching and development of English skills through primary and secondary schools
 - (b) co-operation and continuity between secondary schools and their feeder primary schools in developing maths curricula.
- 2.3 TASSO believe the government should provide funding to extend literacy programmes to meet the needs of all children in grades 1-6 who are significantly delayed in their literacy development
- 2.4 TASSO supports the concept of regular literacy and numeracy tests if such tests are started in lower primary level. These tests should be used for diagnostic purposes and sufficient support staff should be made available to carry out any remedial work.

3. Languages Other Than English (LOTE)

- 3.1 TASSO supports the teaching of Languages Other Than English in Tasmanian primary and secondary schools and colleges.
- 3.2 TASSO believe the programme must be implemented and maintained with sufficient commitment on all sides.

- 3.3 TASSO believe the Minister for Education should:
- (a) allocate sufficient funds to schools to ensure LOTE programmes can continue;
 - (b) ensure that a guaranteed pathway exists including Grade 12 for students in their chosen language, provided they do not move out of a cluster;
 - (c) continue to allocate resources for in-service training for the provision of highly qualified language teachers, i.e. teachers who have a major or equivalent qualification in the language.

4. Middle Schooling

- 4.1 TASSO supports the middle schooling concept for years 5 to 8 in accordance with the following guidelines:
- (a) middle schooling in Tasmania is compatible with individual school community's needs and with developments in the rest of Australia;
 - (b) curricula specific to middle schooling, but consistent with the new Tasmanian Curriculum, are developed, controlled and monitored;
 - (c) middle schooling is evaluated to determine student needs and the effectiveness of the model;
 - (d) there are enough teachers trained for implementation and teaching in middle schooling;
 - (e) sufficient resources are provided to effectively meet the different needs of middle schooling programs.

5. Assessment and Reporting for Parents

Premise

Assessment is the evaluation of students' learning, based on processes of gathering and analysing information. Reporting is the process of communicating assessment.

Assessment and reporting are undertaken for a variety of purposes depending on the areas being assessed, and the recipients of the information. Rationales include:

- motivating and monitoring individual progress in learning with a view to diagnosing strengths and weaknesses;
- for verifying student progress against various curriculum goals and other objectives;
- for ranking students for the next stage of education or for employment;
- for helping to improve teaching in areas where it needs strengthening, or in new curricula; or
- for providing evidence of 'standards' and system accountability.

Policy

- 5.1 Assessment should always be based on valid and reliable methods developed in a rich variety of contexts, and which reflect parent priorities consistent with parent participation in school policy frameworks. Parents should have ‘ownership’ of the assessment process in the sense of access to knowledge about the procedures, a right to consultation with their children’s educators, to receiving regular and confidential reporting, and on the part of education systems, guarantees of adherence to a code of standards for the application of broad testing programs.
- 5.2 The following key principles apply to assessment and reporting processes:
- (a) At the local school level:
- Parents are entitled to continuing, quality information regarding their children’s education through a variety of reporting mechanisms.
 - Any form of assessment should be integral to the curriculum and designed to inform, support and improve learning outcomes.
 - Parents have the right to regular reporting on all areas of the taught curriculum.
 - Individual students assessment must be confidential to the student, his/her parents and the appropriate school staff.
 - Parents have a right to meet with all those who educate their children in order to collaborate on better learning outcomes.
 - Assessment and reporting processes should give parents the opportunity to share knowledge of their children’s experience of school with their children’s teachers.
- (b) At school, system, State and National levels:
- Parents and their organisations must have an active role in developing and implementing assessment and reporting policies and processes at the school, the system, the State and National levels.
 - Schools, systems and government, State and Federal, must make explicit and public the purposes for which they wish to collect assessment data.
 - Assessment data must not be used for the purpose of establishing and publishing competitive judgements about schools / systems / states or territories.
 - Parents must be informed by all those who seek such data about student performance, of the uses to which such information will be put.
 - Parents have the right to withdraw their children from specific system, statewide and national testing.

- Assessment data for state wide or national purposes should be collected by statistically valid, light sampling procedures only.
- Appropriate appeal mechanisms should be established and made public to protect the rights of students and parents in matters of student assessment and reporting at the school, State and National level.

6. Personal Relationships

6.1 TASSO believe parents have the right to choose to be directly involved with their children in matters relating to personal relationships. TASSO adopts the following guidelines:

That

- (a) Parents be given the curriculum before it is taught to students;
- (b) Full parental involvement should be encouraged;
- (c) Teachers must have correct expertise to conduct the course so that a sincere, true reflection of life can be given fairly and honestly;
- (d) Parents must provide permission for their child to participate.

7. Religion

- 7.1 Religious education should fit within the overall curriculum and intended learning outcomes and should not be intended to evangelise.
- 7.2 Request for externally delivered religious instruction in a State school by an outside provider must be approved by the School Association.
- 7.3 Externally delivered religious instruction in schools must be provided by persons who are approved by the school association and in accordance with Division 3 Section 34 (3a) of the Education Act 1994. A Registered Teacher must be present at all times
- 7.4 Parents must provide permission for their child to attend externally delivered religious instruction.
- 7.5 The School Principal must
 - (a) Guarantee that time spent in externally delivered religious instruction will not be deducted from normal course time.
 - (b) Ensure that provision of externally delivered religious instruction uses educational principles and relates to children's interest and abilities and complement other areas of learning
 - (c) Ensure appropriate duty of care for students

SECTION G

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

1. TASSO believe that the Department should supply compatible computer hardware for general curriculum use in Tasmanian State Schools to enable all students to have access to, and become familiar with, a computer.
2. The Department should outline its policy in regard to:
 - (a) supply of computers to primary schools,
 - (b) teacher training for computer education,
 - (c) provision of appropriate and adequate internet connections.
4. TASSO believe the Department should provide additional financial provision to ensure up to date and appropriate operating systems and software are provided to all government schools.
5. The Department should provide Information Technology in the form of a computer with access to internet and own email address and relevant professional development to the school association and parent/community group in each school or college. This should not be at cost to the parent group or the existing school budget.
6. TASSO believe the Department should ensure the discretionary restriction of access to certain Internet material of a violent or pornographic nature to all students in Tasmanian Government schools and colleges.

7. Online Safety for Students

7.1 Education & Awareness

- (a) Tasmania's Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) curriculum should include an online safety component throughout Kinder to Year 12. Online safety material in the ICT curriculum should be:
 - based on the best available research; and
 - updated regularly to reflect changes in technology and culture.
- (b) In addition to Tasmania's ICT curriculum, TASSO encourages schools to run programs that promote cyber-safety to their entire student population.
- (c) TASSO recognises that schools can draw on valuable cyber-safety resources provided by the Australian Communications and Media Authority (ACMA).
- (d) The Department should encourage schools to involve their school communities in the development of cyber-safety awareness and

education programs. Program detail should be communicated to school communities through newsletter articles, information sessions and other appropriate means.

- (e) TASSO believes in the importance of educating parents as well as students how to effectively manage the risks associated with ICT access.

7.2 Contact With Teachers Through Social Media

- (a) TASSO believes that social media can be a powerful tool for positive contact between teachers and students, however given the risks involved it should only occur under strict circumstances:
- Parent/guardian permission should be obtained for students under 18 years of age;
 - Teachers should only use social media to contact students who are old enough to use social media under the policy of the relevant platforms (students who are not old enough should be forbidden to access these platforms during school time or using school resources);
 - Teachers should only contact students through social media using accounts set up specifically for that purpose, to which the school has access to monitor the account;
 - Social media should be regarded as a supplement to other methods of communication among students or between students and teachers—students should never be required to use social media to fulfil their assessment requirements.

8. Student Behaviour Online

8.1 General Guidelines

- (a) TASSO believes the Department should make clear in its Discipline and Learner Wellbeing and Behaviour, in what circumstances schools have a responsibility to manage the behaviour of students, particularly outside school hours.
- (b) TASSO believes that managing unacceptable behaviour by students using ICT resources is the responsibility of the school when:
- the behaviour involves the use of school ICT resources or networks;
 - the behaviour is directed by a student towards another student, a teacher or another employee of the Department of Education; or
 - the behaviour occurs during school hours or on school grounds.
- (c) All students, regardless of age, should be required to sign a contract agreeing to the appropriate use of their school's ICT resources and networks. Parents or guardians should be required to co-sign the agreement for students under 18.
- (d) Although some students will be too young for their agreement to have legal force, TASSO believes that the signing of the contract plays an
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important role in reinforcing appropriate behaviour using school ICT resources and networks.

8.2 Cyberbullying

- (a) TASSO believes that cyber-bullying, like other forms of bullying and harassment, is a hurtful and destructive behaviour and must be taken very seriously by schools.
- (b) TASSO believes schools should:
- Raise awareness of cyber-bullying among the school community;
 - Encourage students to report instances of cyber-bullying by other students;
 - Encourage students to keep copies of cyber-bullying messages as evidence;
 - Keep a log of user activity on school computers and networks; and
 - Recognise the unique nature of cyber-bullying—that it is easier to perpetrate outside school hours than other forms of bullying.
- (c) TASSO believes it is appropriate for schools to treat an allegation of cyber-bullying as a criminal matter and involve police where the offence is sufficiently serious.

8.3 Offensive, Illegal or Inappropriate Content Online

- (a) Schools have a responsibility to take all practicable steps to stop their students from accessing offensive, illegal or inappropriate content online either through school ICT resources and networks or personal devices during school time.

Schools should be encouraged to invest in technology to filter inappropriate content and/or keep a log of student activity online.

8.4 Copyright, Plagiarism and Unlawful Copying of Content

- (a) TASSO recognises that access to the internet makes it easier for students to plagiarise.
- (b) TASSO believes that students should be educated about the importance of:
- respecting intellectual property; and
 - acknowledging the source of their research.
- (c) Schools should strongly discourage students from engaging in plagiarism, breaches of copyright or using other people's material without acknowledgment.

8.5 ICT Access Sanctions for Student Offenses

TASSO supports decisions by schools, where necessary, to supervise, restrict or suspend student access to school ICT resources or networks for ICT-based offenses.

8.6 Networked Mobile Devices in Schools

(a) TASSO believes that school associations should have the discretion to determine whether students are allowed to bring privately owned networked mobile devices (eg. tablets, laptops or smart phones) or mobile phones to school.

(b) Where such devices are allowed, the school will have a clear policy outlining who is responsible in the event a device is lost, stolen, or damaged or someone gains unauthorised access. Schools must communicate clearly to students the risks they face by bringing their devices to school.

(c) Such devices should strictly be used for school purposes or emergency contact with parents, guardians or carers.

(d) TASSO does not support students being required to give schools their mobile numbers. In circumstances where a school needs to pass on information out of school hours to a student under 18 it is appropriate to contact their parent, guardian or carer.

8.7 School Communities Communicating Online

(a) TASSO believes that online communication, including social media, is a valuable tool for school organisations to communicate with their school communities. TASSO supports the development of learning resources and training to help school organisations to use such tools to enhance their communication.

(b) While online communication is valuable, schools and school organisations should consider it a supplement, not a substitute, for more traditional forms of communication, particularly for people who have difficulty accessing technology.

8.8 Flexible Learning

TASSO recognises that ICT presents excellent learning opportunities. The benefits of 'flexible learning' approaches using ICT include:

- Access to a more learning resources and specialist teachers, regardless of distance;
- The ability to collaborate with students throughout Tasmania, Australia and the world;
- Overcoming the costs of relocating to access learning opportunities, particularly for regional/remote students; and
- Developing preparedness for the use of online technology in a modern work environment.

TASSO believes the Department should consider the role of technology in delivering education, and:

- Make forward plans for and invest in new technologies and platforms;
- Deliver training which allows teachers to use new teaching technologies and to deliver online classes effectively; and
- Consider the role of online communication in overcoming distance—and how this affects policies such as outside home area enrolment, provision of year 11 and 12 education to remote schools and school viability.

Schools need to recognise the limitations as well as the potential of online learning. In particular, online learning does not substitute for hands on, practical skills. Online learning is pedagogically different to face-to-face teaching and can be disadvantageous to students if not delivered well

SECTION H

EDUCATION RESEARCH

1. TASSO supports research into strategies for the teaching of values in schools, so that guidelines can be developed which lead children to moral autonomy.
2. TASSO supports the need for family impact studies on any policy concerned with education and welfare.

SECTION I

THE COMMUNITY AND ITS SCHOOLS

Premise:

Each individual child has the right through equality of educational opportunity to attain dignity, success and competence, and this right should be recognised through appropriate legislation.

Parents have the responsibility at all times to protect the rights of children and to be concerned for their welfare.

In the interests of the child, the parent shall have the right to be informed, be consulted, be involved and participate in matters relating to that child's education.

Policy:

1. General

- 1.1 TASSO believe that all schools should have the right to view and comment on draft copies of policies within a reasonable time frame before they are implemented. In that way ramifications for each school community and each individual in that school can be evaluated prior to final implementation of the document.
- 1.2 TASSO believe that schools should work with staff, students and the community to establish policies for the use of advertising in the media, school publications and on school property.
- 1.3 Parents have the right to:
 - (a) a government school system which is open, free, secular and appropriate to the child's needs;
 - (b) send their child/children to the state school of their choice;
 - (c) have records and files treated confidentially so that privacy of parents and students is respected;
 - (d) access to professional interpretation of their child/children's records and files;
 - (e) request removal of inaccurate data from records and files and where a dispute over accuracy occurs, access to impartial arbitration;
 - (f) to receive assurances that their school does not allow unauthorised invasions of their child's privacy or property;
 - (g) to expect that parental permission is sought before physiological, psychiatric or medical assessment and/or treatment of the child is undertaken.
 - (h) In the case of separated families, non-custodial parents should be provided with the same degree of communication and consideration as custodial parents unless a court order decrees otherwise.

- 1.4 Children have the right to:
- (a) be treated with respect and dignity by other children, parents, teachers and the community so that they may develop their own self esteem and identity.
 - (b) continue with the learning process without interference from other children.
- 1.5 TASSO believe that
- (a) the Department has an obligation to ensure that a Grievance Procedures Policy is maintained and promoted to assist parents, teachers and principals to resolve disputes.
 - (b) Provided that all procedures outlined in the Grievance Procedures have been followed, the Department should arrange for parents to have access to an independent mediator to assist in reaching a resolution.
 - (c) if mediation is refused either party may request an independent arbitrator be appointed to decide whether mediation is required.

2. Special Education

- 2.1 TASSO supports the continuation of Inclusive Education but only if the government adequately resource children with special needs in mainstream schools to ensure that no child is disadvantaged and all children are educated to their full potential.
- 2.2 Inclusion should be properly and appropriately resourced to maintain a minimum standard of education for each included student.
- 2.3 Children with special needs will have those needs met.
- 2.4 Parents must be consulted regarding programmes for children with special needs.
- 2.5 Special assistance must be provided to parents of children with special needs to enable them to help their children.
- 2.6 Children in corrective or welfare institutions will not be disadvantaged educationally.

3. Behaviour Management Within The School

- 3.1 **Premise:**
Corporal punishment is the infliction of violence on students - there can never be justification for its use.

Policy:

TASSO believe that corporal punishment should be banned in all schools.

- 3.2 All children have the right to:
 - (a) education within a setting which is free from violence;
 - (b) be physically safe and emotionally secure;
 - (c) achieve their full potential in a positive atmosphere where learning and personal development can take place, without disruption.
- 3.3 TASSO believe that schools should work with staff, students and the community to establish policy for the use of mobile phones by students whilst at school.
- 3.4 A Behaviour management policy encourages self-control and appropriate behaviour to all students. This shall be behaviour that the school community agrees is appropriate in any situation.
- 3.5 Protection of the rights of the minority should not discriminate against the rights of the majority.
- 3.6 The management of student behaviour and support for their families should be implemented and maintained through well understood procedures and a supportive school environment. Such policies should:
 - (a) emphasise positive approaches and be consistent with the school's overall philosophy.
 - (b) be the result of discussions and agreements developed through consultation with the school community, including parents, staff and students.
 - (c) include a statement of beliefs about relationships, rights and responsibilities within the school community and clearly enunciate the rules and expectations relating to discipline.
 - (d) clearly state the consequences for increasing seriousness or continuance of misbehaviour.
 - (e) indicate ways of giving recognition for attempts by students to adhere to the school code of behaviour.
 - (f) incorporate formal record taking so that teachers, parents and support services have a pool of information on which to draw before action.
- 3.7 Governments should ensure schools are provided with adequate capital and recurrent funds for specialist support services on a school needs basis, to allow teachers to concentrate on their major task - *TEACHING*.

- 3.8 The Department in partnership with TASSO should establish guidelines to support schools in developing their own policies for the management of student behaviour.
- 3.9 The Government should provide full resources to enable our education systems to manage disruptive and dangerous students in a constructive way in consultation with the school community.
- 3.10 TASSO supports the deployment of on-site police officers where the school community so decides, to develop trust and respect between students and the police force
- 3.11 TASSO supports the establishment of centres in the regions to provide alternative educational programs to better manage children who are incapable of fitting into a formal classroom situation.

4. School Closures, Amalgamation And Annexing

- 4.1 Before any action is taken to close, rationalise or annex a school, a social impact study must be conducted to ascertain social problems associated with transferring or closing of educational facilities.
- 4.2 At least twelve months in advance of any anticipated move the school community should be fully informed and participate in any decision.
- 4.3 If amalgamation of two (2) schools is agreed to by the community, the selection of the site of the new school should be the responsibility of The Department, based on community needs and the resources required to meet the needs of the new school.

5. School Assets

- 5.1 TASSO believe the Government and The Department should exhibit responsibility and equity in managing schools' assets and resources.
- 5.2 TASSO believe that:
 - (a) "assets and resources" include such buildings, grounds and facilities as may be demonstrated as de facto school assets and resources by established patterns of school use;
 - (b) Guidelines should be established to decide on redeployment of assets and resources in response to changing needs; and
 - (c) Parent representative bodies and local school communities must be involved from the outset in a wide ranging consultative process in determining such redeployment;
 - (d) where such processes result in the disposal of assets and resources, affected schools must receive the majority of the consequent proceeds.

6. Sporting Events

- 6.1 TASSO believe that schools should have annual inter-school swimming and athletic carnivals.

- 6.2 TASSO believe that events which form school sports carnivals should be appropriate for the age of the children involved and should encourage all children of all abilities to participate and be recognised.

7. School Uniforms

- 7.1 TASSO supports the establishment of a suitable dress code for students, that has the support of each school community.
- 7.2 No student will be discriminated against for being out of uniform.
- 7.3 Schools must inform parents of available funds, from the Department for provision of uniforms
- 7.4 Compensation should be provided by the government to families for the cost of new uniforms.

8. School Associations

- 8.1 TASSO has fully supported and encouraged the establishment of school associations in all state schools.
- 8.2 The continued role of Parents and Friends organisations in schools should be maintained as open forums where all parents may seek information and have the opportunity for input.
- 8.3 Parents and Friends organisations should provide an electoral base for parent members as representatives on School Associations.
- 8.4 School Association constitutions should make provision for the continued role of Parents and Friends.

9. School Communities

- 9.1 Parents need to be well informed and represented in school level partnership agreement negotiations.

- 9.2 State Government funding should be provided for an ongoing position of parent community liaison officer, based at each school entering such negotiations, to be appointed in conjunction with and responsible to, the parent community.

10. Home Education

- 10.1 TASSO believe that Home Education should be recognised as an acceptable alternative educational option in Tasmania, in exceptional circumstances

- 10.2 Governments should research and annually publish reasons, without identification of individuals, why all students on Home Education programs are unable to attend "regular" schools.

- 10.3 All students undertaking Home Education should be under the supervision of the school of distance Education.
- 10.4 TASSO believe subject offerings of the Tasmanian Open Learning Service School should extend beyond English, Maths, Science and Social Science.

SECTION J

EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION

Premise:

Early childhood education covers the care and education, formal and informal, of all children from birth to eight (8) years of age.

With the increasing number of childcare facilities providing long-day care for children up to the age of 5 years, promoting a structured learning curriculum, specialist early childhood teachers must be supported and maintained in the public school sector

The education of the individual child is critical during these years, as it lays the foundation for the child's approach to and achievement in learning.

The future achievements of an individual are influenced substantially by the learning experiences in these early years.

The early years of formal schooling require the teaching of some socialisation skills to children who have not attained such skills before going to school.

The needs of the child must be the primary concern at all times.

Policy:

1. All children attending state schools in Tasmania should have the opportunity to attend Prep or Kindergarten before entering Grade 1.
2. TASSO supports the following school entry ages:
 - (a) entry age for Kindergarten be 4 years
 - (b) entry age for Prep be 5 years
 - (c) entry age for 1st Grade Primary be 6 years

Furthermore these ages be attained by the 1st January.

3. TASSO believe the needs and wishes of the local community should be taken into account when determining infants and primary starting and finishing times. In particular, times for the two departments in the one school should coincide if the community so requests.
4. TASSO believe each school should be allocated funds to direct specifically into the teaching and learning program for children aged 4-6 years inclusive
5. TASSO believe that funds should be allocated to schools to provide pre-school early educational and transitional programs for children aged 0-4.

SECTION K

HEALTH AND SAFETY

Premise:

A safe and healthy school environment, conducive to effective learning is important to the well being of students and staff.

No child's educational progress should be impeded through lack of proper health care.

Parents are encouraged to play a leading role in the design and implementation of Health and Safety Education programmes in schools.

1. General

1.1. The Department should:

- (a) take appropriate measures to ensure the safety of students and staff at school and on school organised activities;
- (b) address areas of concern in the school environment where research shows adverse effects of unsafe equipment, materials and procedures;
- (c) ensure that all children be instructed in safety precautions and encouraged to achieve survival skills including evacuation drills.

1.2. TASSO believe:

- (a) integrated health services must aim to provide both preventive and corrective health care for all children with appropriate support for parents;
- (b) that the physical, mental and educational development of the child is assisted by co-ordinated services, and that the school is the ideal contact point common to all children;
- (c) that regular physical exercise is beneficial to children and that this should form part of the curriculum at all levels of schooling;
- (d) that the ready access of suitable recreational areas is important to the mental and physical wellbeing and development of children.

1.3. That governments and health education authorities should co-operate in extending Community Health Services to enable them to:

- (a) train and employ registered community health nurses in schools, enabled to refer to all services necessary to maintain physical and mental health (eg. through Community Health Centres);
- (b) ensure that all children receive an annual examination for developmental growth, with more frequent attention where indicated, for the 'at risk' child; and
- (c) maintain a continual medical record of each child from birth, accessible to parents and teachers, including any relevant maternal antenatal information;

- (c) maintain the system of free dental services for school children providing access to services in all areas, on site when necessary
- (d) support a dental therapist training programme as part of the provision of a comprehensive, free dental service for all children in this State.

2. Health

- 2.1 TASSO believe:
 - (a) Health Professionals/Nurses should be employed by the Department to work within schools on a full time basis;
 - (b) Health Professionals/Nurses should be encouraged to visit parents and students at home where necessary;
 - (c) there should be no restrictions on visiting schools in country areas.
- 2.2 TASSO believe the Department of Health should screen grade seven (7) students and recent arrivals from overseas, for the presence of tuberculosis with the Mantoux Test
- 2.3 TASSO believe the Government should ensure that Tasmanian children have adequate iodine levels.
- 2.4 TASSO believe all schools should be smoke free zones.

3. Immunisation

- 3.1 TASSO believe both Federal and State Government Health agencies should maintain education campaigns around the issue of childhood immunisation, presenting both sides of the debate to enable fully informed decisions to be made by all parents.
- 3.2 Governments and health education authorities should encourage immunisation of all children before school entry for polio, diphtheria, whooping cough, tetanus, measles, mumps, meningococcal, TB, and hepatitis B and where recommended by the State Health Department, rubella and cervical cancer at the appropriate age.
- 3.3 Multi-lingual advertisements and advice on immunisation should be regularly conducted through the media.
- 3.3 TASSO believe the Departments of Health and Education should mandate compulsory immunisation for school age children except where medical factors preclude and a medical certificate is provided.

4. School Canteens

Premise:

School Canteens are recognised as food premises under the Tasmanian Food Act 1998. Local Government Environmental Health Officers, Department of Health and

Human Services Public Health Agencies and the Tasmanian School Canteen Association can assist canteens to implement the requirements

School canteens and tuckshops should be established to benefit children and should follow the interdepartmental Canteen Advisory Committee Guidelines.

School canteens should provide access for children to buy nutritious and healthy food at competitive prices during the school day. School canteens contribute to a safer school environment by removing the necessity for children to leave the school grounds during lunch time.

Policy:

- 4.1 School canteens should comply with the requirements of the appropriate legislation.
- 4.2 School canteens are encouraged to work towards the development of healthy school canteens.
- 4.3 TASSO believe Canteen Managers / Supervisors should receive training in the management of canteens, the nutritional value of food, suitability of goods sold, the dangers associated with improperly labelled foods and food allergies, and the successful management of voluntary staff.
- 4.4 TASSO believe consultation should take place between the Department, the school and the Canteen Advisory Committee on the building and furnishing of school canteens.
- 4.5 TASSO believe that school canteens should support the health care education programmes of the schools and be compatible with the diverse backgrounds of all children attending the school.

5. Drug Education

Children's education needs to include information enabling them to make life choices based on knowledge, understanding and the values of the community.

- 5.1 Drug and life skills education programs should be incorporated into the curriculum for state schools, beginning at primary school level and being age appropriate, as part of the health education curriculum taught in the school.
- 5.2 Drug education programs should educate children about the harmful effects of legal (including alcohol) and illegal recreational drugs and the misuse of prescription and "over the counter" medicines and household products.
- 5.3 Drug education programs should be continuous and consistent throughout schooling, and be relative and appropriate to the age of students
- 5.4 All school policies should reinforce the objectives of drug education programs

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- 5.5 Programs should be provided in all schools to assist and inform students with drug dependency.
 - 5.6 Schools should keep parents informed of programs being offered to students
 - 5.7 Counselling should be offered to students, and their parents, where inappropriate drug use at school has been identified.
 - 5.8 Parents should have easy access to support and information that will assist them in providing guidance to their children on the use and abuse of drugs and help them become good role models for children and adolescents.

6. Sun Care and UV Policy

Premise:

Scientific evidence has shown that exposure to sun on a regular basis, particularly during times of high level UV radiation is harmful to the health. Avoidance of exposure and provision of protection is regarded as responsible action. Schools have an important role to play in educating their communities about these risks and ensuring protection and information to their students

Policy:

- 6.1 TASSO believe that this policy is relevant to all school and out of school activities and that:
 - (a) Governments should provide shaded areas within schools to minimise exposure to the sun's UV rays;
 - (b) Schools should promote self awareness and personal responsibility for UV protection by encouraging students to wear appropriate clothing, hats and sunglasses to minimise the risk of:
 - exposure to the sun's ultra violet rays;
 - heat stress;
 - eye damage.
 - (c) Adults in the wider school community should be encouraged to wear appropriate clothing, hats and sunglasses to be good role models
 - (d) School communities should develop their own effective sun care / UV policies.

7. First Aid Officers

- 7.1 TASSO believe all teachers should be qualified first aid officers.
- 7.2 The Department should:
 - (a) provide the necessary funds for the training of first aid officers;
 - (b) provide funds for first aid equipment in schools in accordance with the industrial safety, health and welfare regulations.

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- (c) Provide two (2) qualified first aid officers per 50 students or where a school has less than 50 students enrolled and ensure this ratio is maintained where a school has a divided/dual campus.
 - (d) Take full responsibility for any liable action or complaints taken against a staff member accepting the responsibility for first aid in a school.
 - (e) Ensure that teacher training institutions include recognised first aid certificate in their curriculum.
 - (f) Ensure recurrent training to maintain certification for all staff
 - (g) Schools to ensure First Aid Policy includes a communication strategy to ensure families are advised promptly of incidents and treatment provided.

8. Asthma and Anaphylaxis

8.1 The Department Should

- (a) Ensure that all schools have a sufficient number of staff with competency based training in risk minimisation strategies and preventative management of Asthma and anaphylaxis;
- (b) Ensure that all schools have a sufficient number of staff with competency based training in the use of Adrenaline auto-injectors for the treatment of Anaphylaxis;
- (c) Ensure schools have a Communication strategy in place to aid consultation with families of students with these medical conditions, prior to implementing individualised Asthma and Anaphylaxis plans and any possible minimisation programs;
- (d) Ensure that medications are safely stored where they can be quickly accessed by staff for the treatment of students with Asthma and Anaphylaxis.

9. Learn to Swim

- 9.1 TASSO believe Grades 1 to 3 should receive initial tuition in the areas of water safety and proper orientation as part of the Learn to Swim programmes.
- 9.2 TASSO believe additional funds should be made available to schools disadvantaged by lack of proximity to swimming pools to allow positive discrimination when examining the Learn to Swim programme.
- 9.3 TASSO believe personnel from the Department of Sport and Recreation should be involved in assisting specialist Learn to Swim teachers, ensuring a ratio of 10:1.

- 9.4 TASSO believe The Department should provide an extensive Learn to Swim program for all students in all primary grades and extending into Grade 8. This should be done by allocating extra resources and funds, not by removing resources from other areas.
- 9.5 TASSO believe that the swimming and water safety program requires a co-ordinator in each region if it is to function effectively.

10. Head Lice

TASSO believe the Department's policy on head lice should include a provision that gives schools, where needed, immediate access to local or city health authorities, in providing assistance and education for parents to help eradicate this problem and a firm Departmental policy on the procedure for dealing with infected children, in line with the school's duty of care for other students.

11. Sport

- 11.1 TASSO supports the wearing of approved safety equipment in all sports
- 11.2 TASSO believe the Department must ensure that a qualified first aid officer or life saver is in attendance at all school sporting events and carnivals.

12. Personal Safety

Premise:

School Policies should encourage children to recognise their rights and responsibilities in relation to themselves and to each other.

Policy:

- 12.1 Parents should ensure that their children do not carry potentially dangerous weapons at school.
- 12.2 Parents should support schools in banning the carrying of potentially dangerous weapons by students at school.
- 12.3 Parents must be involved in policy development covering this area.
- 12.4 The State government should ensure that business activities in close proximity to schools, do not expose children to undesirable adult activities.

SECTION L

TRANSPORT

Premise:

The safety of children going to and from school is of paramount importance and shall be afforded the highest priority in any town or transport planning.

1. School Buses

1.1 TASSO believe

- (a) the Government should provide free transport to all students attending the nearest or designated Government school of appropriate level and that the safety of students in transit is of the utmost importance. Where Year 11 and 12 is being provided at the local school, free bus transport must be provided to that local school and the designated Year 11 and 12 government College.
- (b) laws relating to school buses should allow all secondary students to have adult seating allocation as on other public transport.
- (c) the Department should ensure that school associations /school communities have the opportunity to approve contract specifications prior to bus contracts being let.
- (d) that school bus drivers should undergo training in conflict resolution.
- (e) the busing to and from school of students with disabilities attending special schools, should be undertaken in a manner that minimises the time such students spend travelling each day.

1.2 TASSO believe the Government should legislate that buses purchased for the purpose of school transport should have:

- (a) approved safe seating and restraints;
- (b) impact resistant sides and roofs which are at least strong enough to withstand crushing in the event of capsize;
- (c) safety padded interiors and recessed interior fittings;
- (d) dual braking systems fitted;
- (e) a fail safe stopping device fitted to operate in the event of driver incapacity;
- (f) displayed, four flashing amber lights (two at the front and two at the rear) to operate in conjunction with the door control, to signify a legal

requirement that other vehicles are prohibited from passing at more than 40 kph.

- 1.3 TASSO believe that all buses carrying school students:
- (a) should be fitted with the optimum communication device for service of the area, for use in case of emergency;
 - (b) should be limited to carrying one student to each single seat regardless of age of students and with no one standing.
 - (c) should carry a distinctive identification clearly visible to other road users;
 - (d) should have a properly qualified and licensed driver subject to annual health checks and that all drivers of school buses shall have a recognised, current First Aid Certificate;
 - (e) should have as a driver an adult role model for children, demonstrating appropriate conduct, language and presentation.
 - (f) Should undergo a safety check prior to the commencement of each term.

2. Road Safety

- 2.1 TASSO believe that a uniform and consistent Road Safety Education Program should be delivered to all Schools.
- 2.2 TASSO believe that
- (a) road traffic speed limits should be enforced near all Tasmanian schools;
 - (b) traffic speed limits in school zones be uniform throughout Tasmania and set at 8.00 a.m. to 4.00 p.m., Monday to Friday
 - (c) safe pedestrian access should be available for all Tasmanian schools
 - (d) That all Tasmanian schools be fitted with electronic signage to alert motorists that school zones are operating.
 - (e) all signage to be regularly maintained and renewed when necessary

3. Bicycle Safety

- 3.1 Bicycle plans for individual school communities must include education, engineering, enforcement and encouragement programmes.
- 3.2 Specific goals should include:

- (a) the introduction of school and community bicycle education courses with an on road component to develop safe and responsible road use behaviour, tolerant attitudes to other users and survival skills;
- (b) the construction of bicycle paths separated from roads on school property and into school catchment areas;
- (c) the enactment of legislation:
 - * to protect the rights of all road users especially pedal cyclists;
 - * to enable efficient and positive enforcement procedures on pedal cyclists;
 - * to facilitate innovative and cost-effective pedal cycle integration with existing road, footpaths and parks;
 - * compulsory wearing of safety helmets;
- (d) the encouragement of the use of cyclists' visibility devices.

SECTION M

MEDIA AND ENTERTAINMENT

Premise:

Television, radio, the print media, the Internet and the entertainment industry exert a profound influence on society. All mass media should be used as tools to enrich the quality of life. They should act in the interest of, and be accountable to, the consumer, particularly in reference to children's entertainment and educational programs.

The media should exercise responsibility in their choice and use of editorial material, particularly in the field of education. All media have an important role to play in reporting educational matters and presenting educational programs and articles. There is a need to make facilities available solely for the purpose of education.

Policy:

1. Television and Radio

1.1. TASSO believe that:

- (a) It is the responsibility of the Federal Government to provide sufficient funding to the Australian Broadcasting Corporation to ensure production, broadcasting and marketing of their own programs, as well as access to other programs which promote personal growth of individuals and improve the quality of life.
- (b) The Federal Government must ensure that Children's Television Standards are upheld and subject to timely review.

1.2 All broadcasters have a responsibility to provide programs:

- (a) of an informative, stimulating and entertaining nature for children;
- (b) which promote personal growth by ensuring quality and diversity in the available choice of children's programs;
- (c) for all children, especially those in early primary years, which reflect experiences they will encounter in the Australian environment;
- (d) which are sensitive to the multicultural nature of the Australian community;
- (e) which reflect the needs and sensitivities of the family viewing audience;
- (f) which give special consideration to the ages and interests of intended audiences;
- (g) which pay particular attention to the time schedule of children's programs.

1.3. The Australian Communications and Media Authority should:

- (a) ensure programs are presented in a non-sexist manner and that sexist representations, language or inferences are not used during designated children's viewing time ;

- (b) establish and maintain standards for advertising directed to children which show due regard and protection for developing children and which prevent their exploitation
- (c) provide and promote effective and accessible sources of information to the public with regard to broadcasting practices and to public rights in this respect;
- (d) ensure children’s drama and magazine-style programs are regulated to encourage diversity and stimulating experiences for 6-13 year old children.
- (e) abolish advertising for junk food during Children’s Viewing Time and during programs for pre-school children;
- (f)
- (g) ensure a higher proportion of educational content in television programs during Children's Viewing Time.

2. Print Media

2.1 All publishers of print media have a responsibility to:

- (a) present educational news in a responsible and balanced manner;
- (b) provide on a regular basis more mature articles which will inform the general public accurately about educational issues without resorting to sensationalism;
- (c) exercise all possible care in the use of correct language, spelling and syntax in their publications; and
- (d) exercise all possible care in the presentation of news in a responsible and balanced manner.
- (e) present accurate information of State School performance without the use of simplistic League Tables.

3. Videos and DVDs

3.1 Legislation should be enforced to ensure that “X” and R-rated videos are not available to minors.

3.2 Schools must ensure that only age appropriate material is shown to students.

4. Internet

4.1 The Department must ensure that

- (a) internet use in schools is governed by responsible user agreements signed by students, parents and teacher.
- (b) effective filtering systems are in place to protect students from inappropriate internet content

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