

Media Release

Thursday 13 June 2024

Supporting student outcomes through an education inquiry

TASSO, the Tasmanian Association of State School Organisations, has voiced support for an independent inquiry into education in Tasmania.

"The Tasmanian education data should greatly concern everyone," TASSO President Krissy McCance stated.

"Retention to Year 12 is at 53%, attendance is decreasing, NAPLAN results show Tasmanian students lagging behind other states in almost all categories, school refusal is increasing, students studying STEM are decreasing, students are entering Year 7 with poor literacy, and there is a massive shortage of teachers," Ms. McCance continued.

"There comes a point when reviewing one component of the education system or implementing a program to fix an issue has to be examined. A system-wide inquiry into education in Tasmania will provide the opportunity to examine education as a whole," said Ms. McCance.

"An education inquiry should encompass education from birth to the completion of university, TAFE, or apprenticeships/traineeships. It should evaluate current initiatives and programs to determine their benefits to education," Ms. McCance added. "However, the inquiry cannot come at the cost of the current commitment to funding education."

"We recognise the concerns raised by those opposing an independent education inquiry...

Yes, there are many reviews not fully implemented.

Yes, there are ignored recommendations.

Yes, our schools are underfunded and under-resourced.

Yes, our teachers are overstretched and need support.

And TASSO agrees, we shouldn't need another inquiry, but student outcomes are not improving and something needs to change," Ms. McCance stated.

"TASSO calls on the government to establish an external steering committee of key educational stakeholders responsible for setting the terms of reference for the inquiry, appointing independent reviewers, and establishing any necessary parameters," said Ms. McCance.

"Throughout the inquiry, the voices of parents and students must be heard and considered. School Associations understand their school community and should be included at every layer of the inquiry. TASSO offer their support and guidance to achieve wide ranging parent voice".

"It goes without saying that recommendations from the inquiry must come with measurable outcomes and evaluations. Key recommendations should be resourced and implemented, regardless of political popularity, with ongoing accountability and transparency with the community," said Ms. McCance.

"Let's, as a state, ensure that all students can excel in education," concluded Ms. McCance.

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