Greater opportunity

THE reported remarks of the chief executive of the Department of Education, Chris Robinson (The Advertiser, 30/8/08), relating to the profile of families who enroll their children at private schools, do not reflect the reality.

We reject any criticism that the growth of independent schools has only benefited middle and higher-income families.

The growth of independent schools across South Australia has expanded the opportunities for low-income families to have choice of schools within their communities.

Many of these families are eligible for School Card under exactly the same criteria as the families who send their children to government schools.

These schools perform extremely well by any recognised measure of the quality of education, as demonstrated by publicly available data.

There are now about 87,000 children attending non-government schools in SA. These schools make a significant contribution to the overall education and care of young children in this state.

Children from disadvantaged backgrounds deserve to receive high-quality education regardless of the school sector they attend.

GARRY Le DUFF, Executive Director, Association of Independent Schools of South Australia, Malvern.