Report on COAG Meeting

The Council of Australian Governments (COAG) held a meeting on 2 October.

The following topics are of relevance to the Independent school sector:

- The roles and responsibilities of the Commonwealth and States and Territories in the areas of community and residential care for the aged, people with disabilities and people with mental illness are to be reviewed.

- COAG signed the first National Partnership (NP) covering Indigenous Childhood Development which will establish a co-operative program to improve the early childhood outcomes of Indigenous children. The NP comprises $564 million of joint funding over 6 years to address the needs of Indigenous children in their early years. This will include the establishment of 35 Children and Family Centres to deliver integrated services.

- COAG agreed to the establishment of the National Curriculum Board as a statutory authority under Commonwealth legislation accountable to all Australian governments. Its role has been expanded to include national curriculum, assessment and data management, analysis and reporting at a national level.

- It was agreed to establish new protocols for information sharing between Centrelink and child protection agencies and to include Centrelink in the national Child Protection Alerts System by the end of 2008.

- COAG received an update on the development of a plan to facilitate inter-jurisdictional exchange of criminal history information for people working with children.