Review of Education and Early Childhood Development: Discussion Paper No 3

The State Government is undertaking a major review of the regulation of school education and early childhood services. The AISSA has already made submissions on the review of the SSBSA Act and the regulation of schools and children’s services.

A third discussion paper (Education and Early Childhood Development Legislation Reform) has been released for public consultation covering a range of topics that predominantly cover administrative and governance matters for government schools and early childhood services, including the roles and responsibilities of the Director-general of Education and Director of Children’s Services, determination of curriculum in government schools, religious education and activities in government schools, governance arrangements for government schools and materials and services charges for government services.

The introduction to the discussion paper makes reference to national policy directions through COAG, particularly in relation to children’s services, that may impact on the State regulatory context; for example the state registration process could be used to ensure compliance to Commonwealth requirements.

Reference is also made to the integration of the delivery of government education and early childhood development.

Areas that could impact on member schools include the sections on provisions about compulsory schooling and education, objects and principles of the legislation, safe environments for schools and children’s services and role of the Director-General of the proposed integrated department in relation to non-government schools.

Reference is made in the paper to the extension of the role of the Chief Executive of DECS across all schooling sectors; AISSA has strongly opposed this proposal in all its previous submissions. The role of the Director General in relation to Commonwealth legislation as it applies to Non-government schools should also be monitored.

The paper examines the advisory structure established to advise the Minister on a wide range of matters; currently some of the committees are clearly differentiated between government and non government school sectors. Reference is made to reducing duplication. The AISSA examine which committees should remain separate from any attempts at integration and what committees could be amalgamated to enhance efficiency.

The paper raises the question about the role of the Director of Children’s Services in the regulation of early childhood development services; AISSA has raised the issue of separation of the public provider from the regulation role of all providers on a number of occasions.

It is proposed to legislate to ban corporal punishment in all schools. The AISSA Board has an endorsed policy position on this matter; it states: The Association does
not condone the use of corporal punishment; however it respects the right of school communities to determine their behaviour management policies.

The paper proposes that the legislation consider reference to an *education entitlement* which defines the State’s commitment and obligations in respect of access to public education. No reference is made to non-government education.

The paper can be accessed via a website at: [http://www.edlawreform.sa.gov.au](http://www.edlawreform.sa.gov.au) . A copy was provided to Board members for the October meeting.