



Australian Secondary Principals Association

“Advocating for public secondary education”

MEDIA RELEASE

The Australian Secondary Principals’ Association (ASPA) welcomes The Smith Family Research Report: Attendance lifts achievement – Building the evidence base to improve student outcomes.

The report analysis of a large national dataset has shown –

1. School attendance and school achievement in English or Maths are closely related.
2. Changes in student attendance and achievement are relatively common as students move through school.
3. Attendance and achievement are early indicators of students who are likely to have poor longer-term outcomes, as they help predict school completion and engagement post-school in work or further study.
4. Targeted and timely support to improve students’ low school attendance and below satisfactory achievement in English and Maths as they move through school is essential.
5. Improvements in attendance and achievement are possible and increase the likelihood of students completing school and being in work or study post-school.

Andrew Pierpoint, President of the Australian Secondary Principals’ Association (ASPA), said: “This report serves as a timely reminder that every day counts in education”.

“This report summarises a large data set and indicates that there is a significant opportunity to improve educational outcomes for Australian students, particularly from disadvantaged backgrounds”.

Mr Pierpoint said that ASPA supported –

1. Tracking students’ individual progress
2. Using educational data to identify, as early as possible, which students need additional support and
3. Targeting support to meet the educational challenges and circumstances of individual students.
4. Education policies that enhance equity.

This report provides an opportunity for governments, educational jurisdictions, parents and schools to participate in the policy development around supporting students – especially those who are disadvantaged. Improvement in attendance is clearly linked to achievement which in turn improves school completion and life opportunities.

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