

# Media Release

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## Which School? My School Important As 'Starting Point'

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Independent Schools Victoria (ISV) welcomes research showing that many parents are using My School as a 'starting point' when making a decision about the education of their children.

ISV Chief Executive, Ms Michelle Green, says it is a valuable resource based on seven years of data updated annually. However, an evaluation by the national research company Colmar Brunton for the Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority (ACARA) released today says parents are also demonstrating they understand that My School is just one of many resources that feed into decision making. None of the parents participating in the research had made a decision based solely on information from My School.

Michelle Green says 'we have always emphasised that visits to a prospective school, examination of its website and discussions with other parents are an essential part of research to find the right school for each child.'

Colmar Brunton's report says that My School can be used to identify schools within a given area, to compare the performance of local schools from different school systems, to short-list schools of a particular size or to identify local schools with the highest NAPLAN scores.

While My School provides some useful information, it cannot, in isolation, give parents a comprehensive view of a school that many are seeking; for example, it does not provide information on programs and achievements.

The report says much of the information contained on the My School website is already publicly available in websites and annual reports, but My School does gather information into one location making it more accessible to parents.

Colmar Brunton warns however that NAPLAN data could potentially be misinterpreted 'if a parent misreads the information due to a lack of statistical knowledge or does not understand the wider context in which the school operates in, for example the socioeconomic profile of school community'.

Ms Green said: 'Our message to parents has always been that in addition to the long-term educational investment in the future of your children and their wellbeing, you need to ensure that the school you choose meets your family's religious and cultural values'.