MEDIA RELEASE

CABOOLTURE SCHOOL AT CAPACITY AS DEMAND FOR INDEPENDENT SECTOR RISES

A special assistance school in Caboolture is at capacity and in desperate need of new premises, highlighting the growing demand for Independent schools that provide inclusive and relevant education for young people who have not suited mainstream schooling.

Horizons College of Learning and Enrichment has outgrown its buildings and has more than 120 young people on its waiting list for this year. A critical shortage of teachers is also straining the college and schools across the state.

Enrolments at Independent schools in Queensland increased 22% between 2018 and 2023, with more than 13% of school students in Longman attending an Independent school. Enrolments in special assistance schools have surged across Queensland by 280% since 2018, from 1,520 enrolments to 5,773 in 2023.

Horizons College opened in 2014 and supports young people from grades seven to 12 who have disengaged from education for a range of reasons.

Principal Jane Robinson said the school, which is on the site of the former Caboolture Butter Factory, is at capacity.

important to have schools like ours to offer an alternative, positive experience that can support young people to reach their full

10 alone. The demand is high, but unfortunately we only have capacity for 220 students. If we are able to secure a new location, we could increase our capacity to

while we have made the space work for over 10 years, we need to be in a new premises by

Ms Robinson said she was also concerned, for the first time, about filling teaching vacancies at the school, due to the shortages across the state.

three



funding to encourage and support students to complete their placement in a special

Mr Catt said ISA would continue to work with the Australian Government to ensure Independent schools are supported to deliver strong learning outcomes and serve their communities.

Key facts

Over the past 50 years, the Independent sector enrolment share has risen from 4% to 18%

There are more than 110,000 students enrolled in 143 Independent special and special assistance schools across Australia that cater to students with disability and other needs

1 in 6 students are enrolled in an Independent school