

The Alliance of Girls' Schools Australasia

The Alliance of Girls' Schools Australasia is a non-profit organisation which aims to promote the education of girls in single sex girls' schools, and increase public awareness that single sex schools provide the optimal learning environment for girls. There are currently 132 girls' schools which are members of the Alliance, through their Principals. These schools are located in Australia, New Zealand, Singapore and South Africa; they are schools which enrol girls only, whether they be government, independent or Catholic schools, are eligible for membership.

There are several goals which the Alliance seeks to uphold:

- To provide leadership in girls' education to ensure the best opportunities and outcomes for girls in girls' schools
- To promote the education of girls in girls' schools through creating public awareness of the philosophy and practice of girls' schools
- To act as a voice and advocate for girls' education
- To connect the educators of girls in girls' schools
- To support aspiring leaders in girls' schools
- To conduct, publish and disseminate research that supports the mission and vision of the Alliance

Each year the Alliance runs a number of international, national and state events. The annual Student Leadership Conference brings together girls from member schools for a week of leadership development. Every two years the Alliance holds a conference for principals and senior staff; this is the only conference in Australasia which is specifically related to girls' education. In the 2010 conference entitled *Skating on the Glass Ceiling*, keynote speakers included Germaine Greer, Cheryl Kernot, and Dale Spender. An interesting variety of seminars, lectures, workshops, and tours of international and national speakers are organised by the Alliance.

In Alliance is a twice yearly magazine distributed to all member-schools, which covers areas of interest related to the education of girls. Each edition focuses on a theme, and members share with one another programs and items of interest. In 2010, the theme for the April edition was *The Brain and Learning*. An extended research article is included in each magazine. Another publication entitled *Why a Girls' School?* is produced and regularly updated by the Alliance for distribution to member schools.

The Alliance provides a network for educators in girls' schools to learn from the experience of their colleagues. There are strong affiliations with similar groups in the United States and Great Britain. Among several notable female patrons, is the Governor-General, Her Excellency Ms Quentin Bryce, who is Patron-in Chief.

The Alliance website contains resources of interest; from biographies of *Women of Achievement*, to abstracts of the latest research, gender articles and book reviews. Further information can be found by visiting the website: <http://www.agsa.org.au>. The Alliance is a vibrant and vital body within the Australian education sector. Its support for 'variety, quality and choice' and the specialist education offered in girls' schools has led to its recognition and endorsement within the education community in the last decade.