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## **MEDIA RELEASE**

### **Deputy Prime Minister recognises top quality teachers**

“The Deputy Prime Minister, the Hon Julia Gillard MP, last night recognised the efforts of the first group of independent school teachers to be recognised as top quality teachers under a new industrial arrangement that rewards teachers for displaying excellence in the classroom”, said Dr Geoff Newcombe, Executive Director of the Association of Independent Schools of New South Wales.

Dr Newcombe said that twenty-six teachers from independent schools around Sydney were awarded certificates of accreditation at the level of Classroom/Professional Excellence, the first group of teachers to reach this level under the new system. The Deputy Prime Minister awarded the certificates in a ceremony held at St Andrew’s Cathedral School.

“Well over 150 independent schools in NSW have now adopted this particular model of standards-based assessment which works to keep good teachers in the classroom and acknowledges their expertise through higher remuneration”, Dr Newcombe said.

“The teachers recognised last night were required to demonstrate to a panel of their peers and to their school principal that they are classroom practitioners of the highest quality. In doing this, they have to show how they engage their students and also work closely with their colleagues to make a positive difference in the classroom and in their school as a whole”, said Dr Newcombe.

The Deputy Prime Minister said in her address that: “... independent schools are already in the vanguard of the education revolution in some areas, particularly in improving already high standards of teacher quality.”

She also commended the Association of Independent Schools and the Independent Education Union for developing an agreement for teachers that rewards and encourages excellence.

“This type of recognition will also help to attract new entrants to teaching and, equally importantly, it will help to retain them in the profession. As more and more schools and school systems place a stronger emphasis on developing and recognising their excellent teachers, it is the students who will benefit most from the quality teaching that takes place. This is the imperative and also the reward”, said Dr Newcombe.

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