



Monday 25 August 2025

Helping students to shine: celebrating teachers through art

Independent school students have shown immense appreciation for their teachers in a statewide art competition, hosted by the Association of Independent Schools of NSW (AISNSW).

Florence Eager and Abigail Medcalf won the Primary and Secondary categories, respectively, with artworks inspired by this year's theme, *Teachers: Empowering every student to shine*.

Their works will feature in social media tiles and Thank You cards for NSW Independent schools to use to celebrate World Teachers' Day on 31 October 2025.

Florence, a Year 6 student at St Andrew's Cathedral School in Sydney, won the Primary category for her representation of teaching as a flower blooming from a book.

"The flowers coming out of the book represent how teachers help us students bloom into a big flower while teaching us everything we need to know," she said.

Abigail's artwork, *The Stairs*, focused on teachers inspiring their students to "keep climbing" and not to give up.

"It takes courage to climb the stairs. Some days, we don't think we can do it," said Abigail, a Year 12 student from Macquarie Anglican Grammar School in Dubbo.

"We all need some encouragement to keep us going. In those situations, it's the teachers we look to who tell us to keep climbing. Even when we don't realise it, they are right there with us, climbing the stairs."

AISNSW Chief Executive Margery Evans said teachers played a key role in empowering every student to shine.

"Teachers nurture curiosity, instil confidence and ignite a lifelong love of learning.

"Through their dedication, teachers help students discover their unique strengths and prepare them for life beyond the classroom."

As well as the two main prizes, AISNSW awarded four other prizes in each category – 2nd & 3rd, and two Highly Commended recipients.

Prizes for this competition have been generously donated by Eckersley's Art & Craft, one of Australia's largest fine art, craft and design supplies retailers.

The annual AISNSW Student Art Competition is part of the *Growing and Nurturing Educators (GANE)* initiative and Teacher Appreciation campaign.

GANE is AISNSW's teacher workforce strategy to attract, retain and develop capable and diverse educators who can build their careers and thrive in Independent schools.

NSW's 430 Independent schools educate 245,452 students, or almost 20% of the state's students, and employ over 33,000 full-time equivalent (FTE) staff, including 21,000 FTE teachers.

Artworks

[The Stairs - Abigail Medcalf, Macquarie Anglican Grammar School](#)

[Book blooming - Florence Eager, St Andrews Cathedral School](#)

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