

School Fees Report

2020



Overview

Edstart's School Fees Report is an annual report designed to help you understand the trends in private school fees across the country. Our 2020 report analysed fees from 335 schools, covering tuition, compulsory additional fees and boarding fees.

Key trend

The rate of increase in private school fees fell in 2020 with the average increase across Australia at 2.8%, down from 3.1% last year. This continues the downward trend in the average school fee increase over the past 3 years. Some schools have even reduced fees by more than 10%.

We also saw a larger percentage of schools that kept fee increases below national inflation and wage growth rates. This is likely a response to increasing pressures on the family budget in an environment with low wage growth and a softening economy.

The East-West divide

Similar to last year, our state-based analysis found significant geographic variances. Although Victoria, Queensland and NSW continued to lead the way with increases above 3%, those states experienced a lower rate of increase compared to 2019. There was also a notable fall in the ACT after experiencing a sharp increase in fees last year.

In contrast, we saw the rate of fee increase rise in Western Australia and South Australia, with the average fee increase in the west rising above 2%. There was also a fall in the number of schools in those states where fees remained the same or were reduced.

Lower-fee schools driving lower fee inflation

Middle and lower fee schools drove the overall rate of fee increase lower in 2020, reversing the trend from 2019 when these schools had above-average rates. Many of these schools made larger fee adjustments in 2019 to compensate for changes to government funding models. Government funding typically has a greater impact to these schools since it represents a larger proportion of total income.

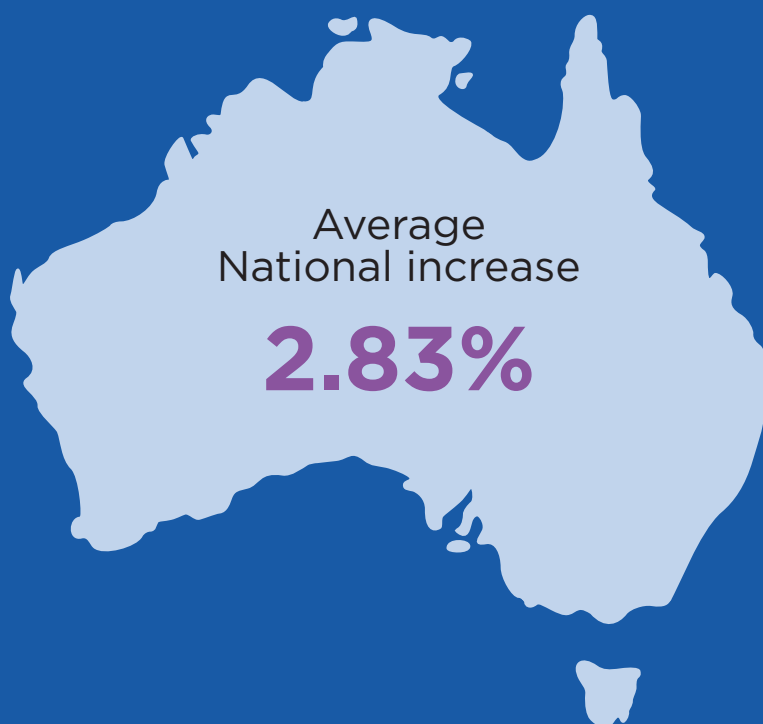
Higher fee schools (Year 12 fees of \$30,000 and above) maintained a relatively consistent trend of fee increases between 3% to 4% with little variance in fee increases noted among most of this group.

We hope you find our analysis informative.

Jack Stevens
CEO, Edstart

National trend

Private school fees across Australia have risen by an average of 2.8% in 2020, which is down from 3.1% in 2019.



% of schools with no increase

7.53% (-1.27%)



% of schools with increases below inflation

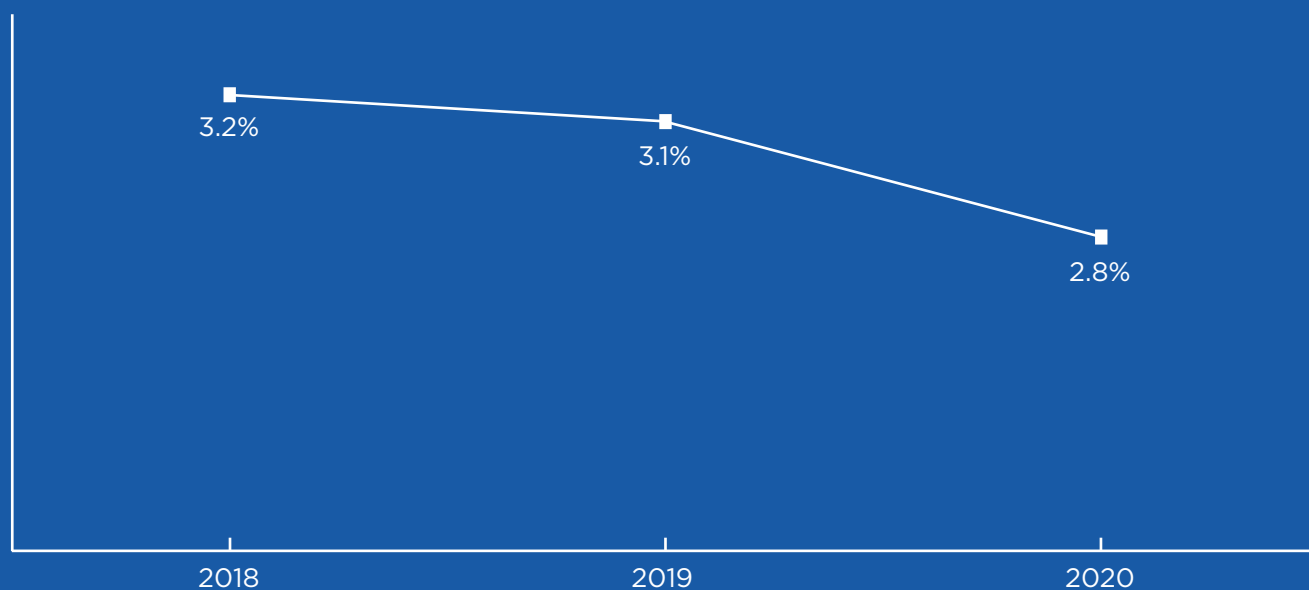
17.77% (+2.49%)



% of schools with increases less than av. wage growth

28.92%

Over the past 3 years, there has been a gradual drop in the percentage increase in school fees from 3.2% in 2018 to 2.8% this year.



Higher-fee schools leading the increase

While overall school fee inflation has been falling, they were bigger increases at higher-fee schools with fees above \$30,000 per year.

Higher-fee schools

Year 12 fees above \$30,000



Average increase

3.15%



% of schools with no increase

None



% of schools with increases below inflation

6.98%



% of schools with increases less than average wage growth

11.63%

Lower and middle-fee schools

Year 12 fees below \$30,000



Average increase

2.78%



% of schools with no increase

8.50%



% of schools with increases below inflation

19.05%



% of schools with increases less than average wage growth

30.95%

Boarding fees follow trend

The average increase in boarding fees was 2.48%, down slightly from 2.61% in 2019. There was an increase in schools that either did not increase their boarding fees or kept fee increases below inflation.



Average increase

2.48% (-0.13%)



% of schools with increases below inflation

27.78% (+10.49%)



% of schools with no increase

18.06% (+11.77%)



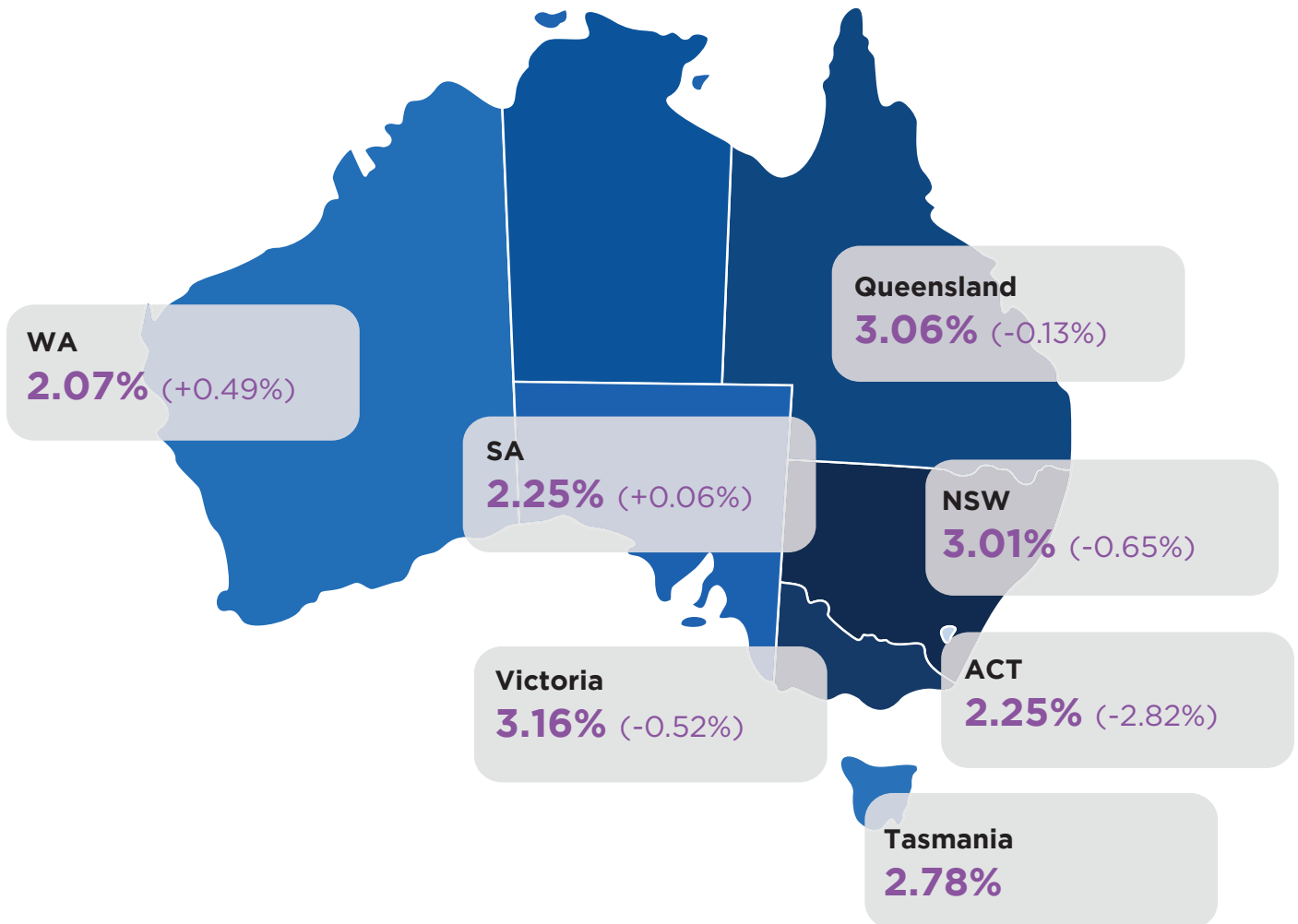
% of schools with increases less than average wage growth

43.06%

Differences between states

School fee trends varied between states, with much larger increases in the three biggest eastern states compared to the rest of the country.

Average increase in school fees



Percentage of schools with no increase or a decrease

State	% of schools with no increase	Compared to previous year
New South Wales	6.73%	+3.54%
Victoria	6.12%	+3.34%
Queensland	3.09%	+1.72%
Australian Capital Territory	9.09%	+9.09%
South Australia	7.46%	-2.93%
Western Australia	5.77%	-7.74%

State by state

NSW



Average increase

3.01% (-0.65%)



% of schools with increases below inflation

9.62%



% of schools with no increase

6.73% (+3.54%)



% of schools with increases less than average wage growth

15.38%

Victoria



Average increase

3.16% (-0.52%)



% of schools with increases below inflation

9.18%



% of schools with no increase

6.12% (+3.34%)



% of schools with increases less than average wage growth

14.29%

Queensland



Average increase

3.06% (-0.13%)



% of schools with increases below inflation

10.31%



% of schools with no increase

3.09% (+1.72%)



% of schools with increases less than average wage growth

11.34%

ACT



Average increase

2.25% (-2.82%)



% of schools with increases below inflation

9.09%



% of schools with no increase

9.09% (+9.09%)



% of schools with increases less than average wage growth

18.18%

South Australia



Average increase

2.25% (+0.06%)



% of schools with increases below inflation

22.39%



% of schools with no increase

7.46% (-2.93%)



% of schools with increases less than average wage growth

47.76%

Western Australia



Average increase

2.07% (+0.49%)



% of schools with increases below inflation

25.00%



% of schools with no increase

5.77% (-7.74%)



% of schools with increases less than average wage growth

30.77%

About Edstart

At Edstart, we believe education is the world's most powerful investment. Our mission is to help people pay for it.

Edstart makes it easy for parents to manage their education costs with flexible payment plans. We offer options to help families spread large upfront school fees into more manageable payments, so that school fees don't hold back their family's finances.

Our payment plans can cover any education-related expenses including tuition, boarding, uniforms, laptops, textbooks, tutoring, excursions and extra-curricular activities.

We're helping families across Australia take the stress out of the household budget while their kids get a great education.



1300 139 445



contact@edstart.com.au



edstart.com.au

The Edstart School Fees Report is based on an analysis of 335 non-Government schools in Australia. Schools that haven't made their fee schedule available to the general public as at 10 January 2020 have not been included. Data relating to inflation and wage growth was sourced from the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS). Whilst all the information and statements have been prepared with all reasonable care, no responsibility or liability is accepted by any member of Edstart for any errors or omissions or misstatements however caused or arising.

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