MEDIA STATEMENT

Funding Reform Directions

The legislation governing Commonwealth funding for Catholic schools for 2014 passed the Parliament on 26 June.

Catholic systems and schools require time to plan budgets, fee levels and staffing arrangements for 2014.

Budget processes normally begin in July and conclude around September to provide certainty to schools.

There is a short time remaining. Schools and systems need certainty in relation to both funding and regulation for 2014.

The significant issues for Catholic education include:

1. Preservation of ability of Catholic education systems to determine funding distribution.
2. The introduction of new, potentially burdensome and punitive, compliance requirements in the form of implementation plans.
3. The possibility that national policy directions could be prescribed through regulation without reference to the arrangements of states and territories who register and regulate schools.

These significant outstanding issues with funding and regulation will have to be addressed quickly to provide certainty for school authorities, schools and the families they serve for 2014.

If these concerns cannot be addressed quickly serious consideration will need to be given to the appropriate timetable for funding reform.

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