MEDIA STATEMENT
NCEC EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, ROSS FOX

Agreement on Commonwealth Government Funding for Catholic Schools

The National Catholic Education Commission has today welcomed the commitment of all state and territory Catholic education Commissions to the Commonwealth Government’s funding arrangements now known as the ‘Better Schools Plan’.

This ongoing constructive engagement with the Australian Government enables planning to commence to implement the ‘Better Schools Plan’ funding arrangements arising from the Australian Education Act which was passed on 26 June.

Catholic schools will now have greater clarity on Commonwealth funding in 2014 and will be able to plan accordingly.

Catholic education is confident that under this legislation no school will be worse off and these funding arrangements will deliver significant increases over time for every child in the Catholic system.

Catholic education is appreciative of the constructive way in which both the Minister for Education, Bill Shorten and Prime Minister, Kevin Rudd have engaged in discussions to resolve these matters.

Catholic Education South Australia will continue to work with the South Australian Government to revise the current agreement that results in minimal additional funding for several years from 2014. Catholic Education in South Australia is pleased with the constructive way in which the Australian Government has approached this issue and confirmed its willingness to address it.
Catholic education in Western Australia has unique needs and two outstanding funding issues remain unresolved. Catholic education in Western Australia will continue discussions with the Australian Government to ensure funding reflects the needs of students and schools in Western Australia.

The arrangements will progressively deliver increased Commonwealth funding to each State’s Catholic education system based on common measures of student need across all education sectors. To achieve full implementation of the plan, the Catholic sector will participate in the key scheduled reviews, particularly of indexation and SES methodology that are scheduled to occur between 2014–16.

Under these arrangements, Catholic education systems, like participating government education systems, will preserve their autonomy and ability to distribute funding according to identified local need.

Catholic education aims to act in the best interests of its schools, students, staff and families. It works constructively with government and all political parties to best meet the needs of Catholic school students.

1 in 5 or 735,403 Australian students currently attend 1,706 Catholic schools across the country.

ENDS

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