



CATHOLIC EDUCATION WEEK 2010 FOCUSES ON SUSTAINABILITY

Catholic Education Week celebrations from July 25-31 this year will centre on the theme: *Called to be stewards of a sustainable future*.

As part of God's creation, the environment has always been recognised as sacred in the Catholic tradition. In his message for the World Day of Peace last year, Pope Benedict XVI said that 'the environment must be seen as God's gift to all people' and reminded us that we have a shared responsibility to care for it.

2010 is also an important year for the Catholic education community to share in the *Year of Environmental Sustainability* declared for all Queensland schools by the Minister for Education and Training Hon Geoff Wilson.

For further information and to access a range of resources to support Catholic Education Week celebrations in 2010 please visit: www.catholiceducationweek.com.au

DIRECTOR OF CATHOLIC EARTHCARE AUSTRALIA NAMED AMBASSADOR FOR CATHOLIC EDUCATION WEEK



The National Director of Catholic Earthcare Australia, Jacqui Remond, is the official Ambassador for Catholic Education Week 2010.

Queensland Catholic Education Commission Executive Director, Mike Byrne, said he was delighted Ms Remond had accepted the invitation to be Ambassador.

"This year's theme was chosen in recognition of Catholic schools' strong focus on ecological responsibility and our call as Christians to care for creation," he said. "Jacqui has more than a decade of experience as an environmental educator and advocate and I believe will be a wonderful role model for both staff and students in Catholic schools," Mr Byrne said.

As Ambassador of Catholic Education Week 2010, Ms Remond will participate in a number of official functions as well as visit school communities across Queensland where possible. She has a special interest in the *One Earth* activity which all Catholic schools in Queensland are encouraged to participate in as part of Catholic Education Week celebrations. *One Earth* is a school-based activity developed by Catholic Earthcare for students of all ages to promote the message of sustainability within their school and wider communities.

Catholic Earthcare Australia was established by the Australian Catholic Bishops Conference to develop partnerships and ecological conversion programs to enable the Catholic Church in Australia to play a leadership role in sustainability.



New Chair of the QCEC Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) Subcommittee, Bede Ritchie.



Dean Duncan, newly appointed Chair of the QCEC Indigenous Education Subcommittee with Mrs Joan Hendricks, former chair.

NEW CHAIRS FOR QCEC COMMITTEES

Dean Duncan, Academic Coordinator for Weemala Higher Education Unit and Associate Director of Centre for Indigenous Research and Education at ACU McAuley campus, has been appointed as Chair of the QCEC Indigenous Education Subcommittee. Following a career in the Australian Army, Dean worked as a Community Education Officer and a Senior Policy Officer for Indigenous Education before assuming his current roles at ACU.

Bede Ritchie, Chief Executive Officer of CENet (Catholic Education Network), and General Manager of Catholic Network Australia (CNA), is the new Chair of the QCEC Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) Subcommittee. Bede has had extensive experience in Catholic schools as both a teacher and administrator and has worked in industry assisting with the design, marketing and implementation of virtual learning tools for the K-12 education sector both in Australia and overseas.

FROM THE EDITOR

Many thanks to all who contributed to this edition of "With Vision and Spirit". Please forward any suggestions and/or feedback to:

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WITH VISION & SPIRIT



WINTER
NEWSLETTER
2010

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SCHOOL LEADERS ENCOURAGED TO MEET WITH POLITICIANS

Principals and parent leaders of Queensland's 288 Catholic school communities have been encouraged to form delegations to meet with their local federal MPs and candidates in the lead-up to this year's federal election.

QCEC Executive Director, Mike Byrne says there are a number of very significant issues on the federal agenda at present and it is vital that political representatives are well informed about issues affecting Catholic schools.

"A review of federal schools' funding scheduled for later this year or early next year will be particularly important because it will likely determine funding arrangements for the next four year period 2013-2016," he said.

"Catholic schools educate around 20% of all Australian children.

"However, even when parent contributions are included, Catholic schools on average operate at only 87% of the resourcing level of government schools.

"We are seeking some commitments from both sides of politics to improve this situation for our schools into the future," Mr Byrne said.

Mr Byrne said QCEC and the Federation of Parents and Friends Associations have jointly developed a suite of materials spelling out the key issues and these have been distributed to Catholic school communities across the state's 30 federal electorates.

"The materials, entitled *Catholic education in Queensland – A key partner in our nation's future*, will ensure our school community leaders are fully briefed on all the facts before they meet with the politicians," Mike Byrne said.

The National Catholic Education Commission (NCEC) has also identified six specific commitments seen as necessary to ensure Catholic education in Australia remains sustainable into the future.

NECESSARY COMMITMENTS FOR SUSTAINABLE CATHOLIC EDUCATION IN AUSTRALIA

Prior to the 2010 federal election, Catholic schools and systems are seeking the following commitments to ensure Catholic education remains sustainable:

1. Catholic schools and systems have a direct relationship with the Commonwealth Government, underpinned by legislation.
2. Catholic schools and systems from 2013 have, at the very least, access to the same funds, indexed to government school costs, as currently available.
3. Catholic systems have the capacity to distribute funds to schools according to need.
4. Funding levels must be indexed annually, using a transparent mechanism, to ensure that Catholic schools and systems are able to meet the rising costs of education.
5. Funding for students with disabilities must be increased towards parity with government school funding.
6. Capital funding should be increased for educationally disadvantaged communities and areas of population growth.



FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Welcome to the second edition of *With Vision and Spirit* for 2010.

Life in the education sphere is never static. This has been highlighted for us over the past few months, with both state and federal governments requiring our involvement in consultation on initiatives that have potentially far reaching consequences. Many hours have been spent in engagement with the consultation processes of both governments, followed by the collation of data that has emerged. Although time-consuming, our involvement as a Catholic education sector is vital. We value the opportunity to provide feedback from proposal to implementation stages to both the Australian curriculum and the State Government's Green Paper *A Flying Start for Queensland Children*.

In the coming months we will be gearing up for Catholic Education Week at the start of Term 3 (25-31 July). This is an especially important time for Catholic education. It provides the opportunity for the statewide Catholic education community to celebrate and promote not only the great work being done in our schools, but also our special ethos.

I have enjoyed a number of visits to schools and dioceses across the state since the year began and I am always conscious of the sense of pride which our staff and students rightfully have in their educational communities. Best wishes to all Queensland Catholic school communities for your continued work in this important ministry.

Mike Byrne
QCEC Executive Director

Queensland Catholic Education Commission

PRINCIPALS DISCUSS PLANS WITH QCEC

Principals of 17 Catholic schools across the Diocese of Toowoomba had the opportunity to discuss their development plans and raise relevant issues directly with the QCEC when Commission members visited the diocese on Thursday 29 April.

QCEC Executive Director, Mike Byrne, who visited St Joseph's College and Mater Dei Primary School in Toowoomba, as well as St Francis de Sales School, Clifton, said the annual visits were designed to help the Commission stay 'in touch'.

"In the Commission's role of distributing government funding and contributing to policy at state and federal levels, it is essential we understand what is happening 'on the ground' in Catholic schools," he said.

"I was especially interested to listen to the perspectives of principals and staff around recent government moves such as the national curriculum and the Digital Education Revolution.

The QCEC meets monthly in Brisbane, however commits to meet and visit schools in one of the five Queensland dioceses annually. The 16 members of the Commission broke into six groups to visit 17 Catholic schools across the Toowoomba diocese, including schools in the rural and remote areas of Allora, Clifton, Oakey, Roma and Cunnamulla.

The Toowoomba meeting also included the joint annual meeting with the State Committee of Parents and Friends Federation of Catholic Schools.



At St Francis de Sales School, Clifton – Mike Byrne (QCEC Executive Director), joins Brett Pollard (Acting Principal), Fr Thomas Areekuzhy (Parish Priest, St James and St John parish, Clifton), Shane Meara (P and F President), Pat Tickner (Assistant to the Principal – Religious Education), Coral Way (Coordinator of Indigenous Education, Catholic Education, Diocese of Rockhampton), and Suzanne Cavanagh (Senior Education Officer, Catholic Education, Diocese of Toowoomba).



Students from St John's School, Roma with Professor Sue McGinty (Commission member) and Michael Newman (Principal).



At St Ursula's College, Toowoomba – Christine Clarke (Assistant Principal, Spirituality and Community), Mary White (Assistant Principal, Business and Finance), Judy Finan (Acting Principal), Cathy Kratzmann (Acting Assistant Principal, Administration) with David Hutton (Executive Director, Catholic Education, Archdiocese of Brisbane).



John Borserio (Director, Catholic Education, Diocese of Toowoomba) – second from left – farewells Lisa Kimmins (Catholic Education Office, Diocese of Toowoomba), Professor Sue McGinty (Commission member), Mike Wilkinson (Executive Secretary to the Commission) and Pauleen Tibble (Catholic Education Office, Diocese of Toowoomba) before their flight to visit St John's School, Roma.

LAUNCH OF RURAL AND REMOTE POLICY STATEMENT

The QCEC policy statement *Catholic Schools in Rural and Remote Areas in Queensland* was officially launched by Bishop William Morris in Toowoomba on 30 April. The revised policy statement re-affirms the commitment of the Queensland Catholic Education Commission (QCEC) to Catholic schooling in rural and remote areas.

QCEC Executive Director Mike Byrne says the policy articulates a clear commitment to Queenslanders living in isolated areas that Catholic school authorities will continue to do whatever is possible to ensure they have access to quality Catholic educational services.

"The challenge is to ensure that this policy commitment does not remain mere words but reinvigorates action planning to ensure its principles translate into real educational opportunities for families living in rural and remote parts of the state," Mr Byrne said.



Bishop William Morris launches the QCEC policy statement on Catholic schooling in rural and remote areas of Queensland in Toowoomba.

QCEC HOSTS FORUMS

Digital Education Revolution Forum

Around 50 principals, curriculum specialists, business managers and IT staff representing Catholic school authorities across the state attended a two-day forum on 19-20 April to address various issues associated with the Digital Education Revolution and the roll-out of the National Secondary Schools Computer Fund (NSSCF).

Forum organiser Liam Garvey (QCEC Executive Officer – Information and Communication Technologies) said that given that the Department of Education Employment and Workplace Relations (DEEWR) has set December 2011 as the target date for schools to reach a 1:1 computer:student ratio there are a number of issues around implementation and teaching and learning strategies that participants valued being able to discuss.

Keynote speaker Kaye Byrne (Chair, Catholic Network Australia Contemporary Learning Working Group) led in to the days' presentations, speaking on models of contemporary learning. An online forum was used to share ideas, contribute resources and identify future action areas.

Indigenous Career Pathways Forum

The QCEC Indigenous Career Pathways Forum held on 18 March attracted 70 participants from around the state, including coordinators of Indigenous education, vocational education and training (VET) and curriculum coordinators, principals, guidance officers and Indigenous workers from schools and diocesan Catholic education offices.

Dena Dodd-Ugle (Indigenous Education Pathways Project Officer) said this was the first time that QCEC had held such a forum and the positive response indicated that there was a very real need for the event.

"In 2010, there are 4,158 Indigenous students in Queensland Catholic schools.

"While the completion rate for Indigenous students has increased markedly during the past decade, we must continually work to ensure that we optimise the opportunities for these students to enter the workforce.

"We are particularly grateful to the government representatives who conducted a series of workshops during the afternoon around the theme 'Maximising support' and to the industry representatives who spoke on topics ranging from 'preparing Indigenous students for the future' to 'industry and employer opportunities and emerging issues,'" Ms Dodd-Ugle said.



Antoinette Cole (Education – Officer Indigenous Education, Catholic Education Office, Cairns).



Liam Garvey (Executive Officer – Information and Communication Technologies), with members of the Digital Education Revolution Working Party – Ron Hamilton (Catholic Education Office, Rockhampton), Robie Jayawardhana (Catholic Education Office, Townsville), Michael Norman (Catholic Education Services, Cairns) and Patrick MacDermott (QCEC Executive Officer, Strategic Resourcing).



Mrs Dale Morrow (Principal – St Rita's College, Clayfield) and Mr Troy Bates (Head of ICT – St Rita's College, Clayfield) at the Digital Education Revolution Forum.



Georgina Kadel (Consultant – Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education, Catholic Education Office – Archdiocese of Brisbane) and Will Cassells (VET Coordinator – St Patrick's College, Mackay) at the Indigenous Career Pathways Forum.



Participants at the Indigenous Career Pathways Forum.