

with vision and spirit



Winter Newsletter 2012

Student protection 02

Commission school visits 03

Empowering local schools 03

Leo Dunne Memorial Award 04



Mike Byrne Executive Director
Queensland Catholic Education Commission

From the Executive Director...

On June 20, Speaker of the House Fiona Simpson MP will facilitate a function for the Catholic education community in Queensland to meet with the new State Parliament.

This is a wonderful opportunity for us to engage with both the re-elected and the many new MPs and invite their participation in Catholic education at all levels.

We are grateful to the Speaker for her assistance with this event and I look forward to meeting as many MPs as possible on the occasion.

Catholic Education Week will be celebrated around the state from 22-28 July. This year the focus is on the importance of community, especially among families, parishes and schools. I encourage all schools and Catholic education agencies to join in this important event.

General Peter Cosgrove will add a special dimension to the celebrations as official ambassador for the week and will visit all five Queensland dioceses.

Work towards the move of Year 7 continues to gather momentum. In particular, our capital committee has been busy with 14 Colleges seeking funding to commence building projects in the first round. The committee is confident that the 85 eligible Catholic secondary Colleges will be ready for the Year 7 intake in 2015.

With best wishes,

Mike Byrne
QCEC Executive Director

Minister Assures Catholic Sector of Support

Minister for Education, Training and Employment John-Paul Langbroek assured the Catholic sector of his support when he attended the annual joint meeting of the Queensland Catholic Education Commission and the State Committee of the Federation of Parents and Friends Associations on 4 May.

"I am not only the Minister for Government schools, I am the Minister for all schools. Be assured of my support," Mr Langbroek told the two peak body groups.

"Catholic schools have always been an important part of the education system in Queensland.

"Many people who are not Catholic like what Catholic schools offer.

"My own children attended Catholic schools on the Gold Coast," he said.

The Minister also reaffirmed his support for the promises made by the LNP prior to the election. He noted that a School Planning Commission is being developed, building on the pre-election

work of Dr Bruce Flegg MP who was the Shadow Minister.

"Now that we have been elected, we need to make sure that we do what we have said we will do.

"If there is a timeframe associated with a promise, we will stick with that promise," Minister Langbroek said.

QCEC and Parents and Friends members raised a number of issues with the Minister including the need for increased capital funding to cater for growing enrolments and for the expansion of boarding schools as a result of the Year 7 move. Uncertainty around future Federal funding arrangements is also of concern.



Pictured at the joint meeting of QCEC and the State Committee of Parents and Friends Federation are: outgoing Chair of the State Committee of the Federation David Taylor, Executive Director of the Federation Carmel Nash, Minister for Education, Training and Employment John-Paul Langbroek, QCEC Executive Director Mike Byrne and QCEC Chair Professor Peter Sheehan

Catholic Sector Discusses Weapons in Schools



Professor Paul Mazerolle

The Queensland Catholic Education Commission met with Professor Paul Mazerolle on 29 May to discuss the issue of weapons in schools after it was brought into sharper focus by a recent incident at a Catholic school and an earlier decision by Education Queensland to ban all knives in State schools.

This meeting will be followed by a wider forum for Catholic education leaders to be led by Professor Mazerolle on 13 July.

Professor Mazerolle is an expert in the field. His report, *Weapons in schools in Queensland - The nature, causes and responses*, was commissioned as part of the Queensland Schools Alliance Against Violence (QSAAV) and released in March this year.

QCEC Executive Director Mike Byrne says the issue of weapons, and knives in particular, is a complex social and mental health issue that requires ongoing consideration not only by schools, but also by the broader community.

He said the Catholic sector is committed to ensuring that students have the safest possible school environment.

"This meeting and forum process, with Professor Mazerolle's input, provides an opportunity for Catholic school authorities to further consider their policies and procedures in relation to weapons.

"Each of the 22 school authorities periodically reviews its policies and procedures and decisions around student safety and risk management are a matter for each of them in the context of their local communities," Mr Byrne said.



Professor Graham Martin, Director of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry at the University of Queensland.



Deb McGuire, Principal of St Joseph's Catholic Primary School, Blackall

Facebook Safety Among Topics Tackled at Student Protection Training Day

The QCEC Student Protection Subcommittee in-service training day on 18 May covered contemporary student protection issues ranging from the benefits and potential pitfalls of social networking to dealing with self-injury and legislative requirements for schools.

Around 90 representatives from Catholic school authorities across the State heard three keynote presentations from leaders in their fields. Input was also provided by members of the QCEC Student Protection Subcommittee who facilitated the annual event.

Presentations were delivered by:

- **Professor Graham Martin** (Child and Adolescent Psychiatrist) - *Mental Health and schools; the challenges of self-injury in the context of current regulations for Non-state schools*
- **Andrea Josipovic** (Senior Advisor Sexual Abuse Counselling Service, Department of Communities) - *Recognising and responding to sexual abuse and likely sexual abuse*
- **Mia Garlick** (Head of Communications and Policy Facebook Australia and New Zealand) - *The benefits and pitfalls for children with Social networking and Facebook*
- **Mike Wilkinson and Sue Diggles** (QCEC Student Protection Subcommittee) - *Requirements for revising Catholic school authorities written procedures for student protection and related training procedures*



Tim Morrison (Assistant Principal Student Welfare), Terry Finan (Deputy Principal) and Jane Phelan (Student Counsellor) from Downlands College, Toowoomba



Peter Hill (Director of Employee Services, Catholic Education Archdiocese of Brisbane), Mike Wilkinson (Executive Secretary to QCEC) and Sue Diggles (Senior Education Officer - Student Protection, Catholic Education, Archdiocese of Brisbane)



Sue Curtis (Principal), Mike Wilkinson (Executive Secretary QCEC) and Dr Cathy Day (Director of Catholic Education Diocese of Townsville) with students from St Kevin's School, Benowa



Pictured during the QCEC Commission visit to St Edward The Confessor School, Daisy Hill is Principal John Spillane, QCEC Chair Professor Peter Sheehan, Assistant Principal - Religious Education Joe Tracey and Assistant Principal Bronwyn Buckley



Principal of Chisholm Catholic College, Cornubia Chris Leadbetter with QCEC Chair Professor Peter Sheehan

Commission Members Keep in Touch

To help keep in touch and better understand issues facing school communities 'on the ground', members of the QCEC undertake to visit schools in a different diocese each year.

This year the Commission members were hosted in the Archdiocese of Brisbane and visited twelve schools in the Brisbane South and South Coast areas on Thursday 3 May.

Sincere thanks to the following school communities for their hospitality and participation in this program:

- St Luke's Catholic Parish School, Capalaba
- St Anthony's School, Alexandra Hills
- St Mary MacKillop Primary School, Birkdale
- St Kevin's School, Benowa
- St Francis Xavier School, Runaway Bay
- Chisholm Catholic College, Cornubia
- St Edward the Confessor School, Daisy Hill
- Star of the Sea Primary School, Cleveland
- Villanova College, Coorparoo
- Seton College, Mt Gravatt East
- St Mary's School, Beaudesert
- St Augustine's Parish Primary School, Currumbin Waters

Minister Announces Initiative to Empower Local Schools

Federal schools Minister Peter Garrett visited St Thomas More College Sunnybank on 27 April to announce \$2million in funding for the Queensland Catholic sector as part of Phase 1 of the government's Empowering Local Schools initiative.

Thirty Queensland Catholic schools will benefit from the funding that aims to support activities focusing on school decision-making capacities and improving the involvement of parents and the local community in their schools.

Queensland Catholic Education Commission Executive Director Mike Byrne, who joined the Minister at St Thomas More College welcomed the funding, saying Catholic education prioritised the engagement of parents as partners in school communities.



Hon Peter Garrett, Minister for School Education, Early Childhood and Youth and Mike Byrne Executive Director QCEC at St Thomas More College, Sunnybank

Year 7 Building Program Underway



Bill Dixon is the Manager Capital Programs at QCEC

Fourteen Catholic secondary Colleges have had projects recommended for approval in Round 1 of a capital funding program to develop facilities to accommodate Year 7 from 2015.

A further 71 Colleges will apply for funding in rounds two and three of the program in November 2012 and May 2013 respectively.

QCEC Executive Director Mike Byrne says that most Catholic secondary schools are already operating at or near full capacity and will require significant capital works to accommodate the additional year level.

"Around 11,000 extra students will need to be accommodated in the 85 eligible secondary Colleges across the State," he said.

"Developing facilities in time for the start of the 2015 school year will be a challenge. However, Catholic school authorities have good local level processes in place and I am confident that the facilities can be delivered on time."

Mr Byrne said the Catholic sector had received \$105 million from the State government to assist with construction of classrooms and flexible learning areas as well as exemption from Local Government infrastructure costs estimated at \$24 million.

"Some boarding schools will require additional facilities to accommodate the extra year level and the Catholic sector is still in discussions with the State government about what funding might be available for this purpose," Mr Byrne said.

He said some schools would also need to expand facilities such as staffrooms, toilets, libraries, administration and specialist teaching areas, and parking and set down spaces.

St Joseph's Nambour Receives Inaugural Award for Parent Partnerships

St Joseph's Primary School Nambour has been awarded the inaugural Leo Dunne Memorial Award for its plans to establish a book club that encourages all aspects of literacy and reading among its student and parent bodies.



The work of the late Leo Dunne OAM is honoured through an annual award for school/parent partnerships

parents on a social level and also invite their participation in student activities where possible.

"Activities planned include traditional book review gatherings, mums/dads and sons/daughters nights with a focus on gender directed themes, along with a mentoring program amongst parents to support those with literacy challenges," she said.

The annual award is presented jointly by the Federation of Parents and Friends Associations and the Queensland Catholic Education Commission to encourage new and innovative ideas that further develop parent engagement in Queensland Catholic education communities.

It is named in honour of former longstanding President and Executive Officer of the Parents and Friends Federation Leo Dunne OAM, who passed away in February last year.

Principal Marg Pont said the guiding principle of the St Joseph's book club is to engage



Chair of the St Joseph's School Board Tony Vella (2nd from left) is pictured with Executive Director of the Federation of Parents and Friends Associations, Carmel Nash, outgoing Chair of the State Committee of the Federation of Parents and Friends Associations, David Taylor and Executive Director Queensland Catholic Education Commission, Mike Byrne

Parents and Friends Federation Executive Director Carmel Nash said the Federation was delighted to be able to recognise and support the program.

"This book club is unique because it also provides a forum within the school community to encourage and support parents struggling with literacy to develop their own skills.

"It clearly reflects the ideals of the Parents and Friends to not only work in partnership with their schools but also with each other in support of their children," Mrs Nash said.

QCEC Executive Director Mike Byrne said working to establish strong partnerships with parents is integral to the philosophy of Catholic schools.

"I congratulate the St Joseph's school community on this wonderful initiative," he said.

The \$4000 award to assist with the book club program was presented to St Joseph's school board Chair Tony Vella during the P&F Federation's biennial conference at the Gold Coast on 5/6 May.

Catholic Education Week 2012 • 22 - 28 July

Catholic Education Week 2012 will be held from Sunday 22 July - Saturday 28 July and will focus on the theme:

Celebrating Community Family Parish School

"Celebrating Community" invites Catholic schools and education agencies to highlight and celebrate the value of "community" and affirm its presence as a central aspect of the life and strength of the Catholic Christian tradition.

"Community" is at the heart of the Catholic tradition. For two thousand years people have come together in community to share the story of Jesus, to nurture and strengthen each other, and to commit themselves to continuing his mission.

Catholic school philosophy embraces this sense of community, evidenced by the positive relationships which exist between families, parishes and schools.

Activities and programs that nurture and develop these life-giving relationships permeate the life of the Catholic school and enrich the learning environment in which students and staff operate.

True communities should also be outward focussed and recognise their valued partnerships with the wider community in a spirit of service and welcome.



Visit www.catholiceducationweek.com.au to find out more about Catholic Education Week 2012.

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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