

with vision and spirit



Autumn Newsletter 2011

Commission members 2011	02
QCEC welcome function	02
Farewell Vic Lorenz	03
CEW ambassador named	04



Mike Byrne Executive Director
Queensland Catholic Education Commission

From the Executive Director...

Welcome to the first edition of *With Vision and Spirit* for 2011.

The start to the year has certainly been a tumultuous one. Our thoughts and prayers remain with all those affected by the floods and Cyclone Yasi. A long road to recovery is still ahead for many. However, I am heartened by the community spirit that has come to the fore across the state to help those in need.

Notwithstanding the challenging start, the year ahead promises to be another busy one. In terms of education policy, 2011 will go down as a watershed year with the likely decision to move Year 7 to secondary school and the continuing roll-out of computers in schools to reach a 1:1 ratio in Years 9-12 by the end of the year. These initiatives, along with ongoing preparation for the implementation of the Australian curriculum, the finalisation of the Building the Education Revolution (BER) program and the review of federal funding arrangements, will make for an interesting year ahead.

I would like to take this opportunity to welcome our new Education Minister in Queensland the Hon Cameron Dick. I have already met with the Minister and have appreciated his expressions of support and openness to engaging with us. On behalf of the Commission and the Catholic education community, I offer my best wishes to him as he begins this period of stewardship of education in Queensland.

With best wishes to all for a happy, safe and productive year 2011.

Mike Byrne
QCEC Executive Director

My School 2.0 Further Highlights Catholic Sector Resource Needs

Queensland Catholic Education Commission Executive Director Mike Byrne says the recent publication of financial information on the My School 2.0 website has helped clarify the facts about school resourcing and is welcomed by the Catholic sector.

"I believe the information on the website will assist communities to not only understand their own school's situation, but also contribute to a more informed debate about how schools should be funded into the future," Mr Byrne said.

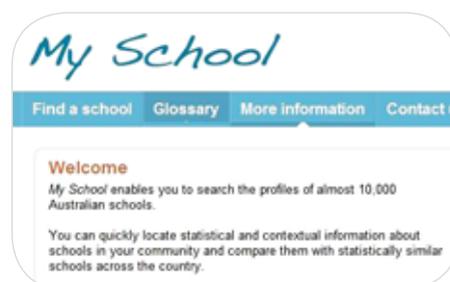
Mr Byrne said that according to the Productivity Commission's latest figures, Queensland Catholic schools on average receive only about 60% of the government funding provided to government schools.

"Even when parent contributions are included, Queensland Catholic schools operate, on average, at only about 80% of the resourcing levels of State schools," he said.

"All Australian children deserve an equitable share of government support to access the type of education their parents want for them, regardless of whether they attend a Catholic, State or Independent school.

"It is my hope that the Gonski review of Australian Government funding currently underway will help close the gap between the amount of government funding received by Catholic schools and that received by government schools," Mr Byrne said.

However, Mr Byrne says it is also important that the reasons why levels of resourcing vary between schools are clearly understood.



"There is a range of factors affecting the level of income each school receives and I urge caution in making direct comparisons between individual schools using the website because every school is unique in its circumstances," he said.

"Some reasons for variations include whether a school is primary or secondary, the programs it offers, its rural or remote location, its number of students with special needs, and its capacity to generate private income, among others.

"A small school in a remote area or a school with high numbers of students with special needs for example will have much higher per student income needs.

"The financial data publication process is clearly a 'work in progress', but I believe it can make a constructive contribution to the school funding debate," he said.

Commission Members - 2011

Two new members have been welcomed to the QCEC for 2011. Sr Pauline Robinson has stepped down from the Commission after seven years service as she takes on a new leadership role as Australian leader of the Missionary Franciscan Sisters of the Immaculate Conception. She is replaced by Queensland Regional Director of Marist Schools Australia Peter McNamara as Representative of Catholic Religious Australia, Queensland (CRAq).

Dr Sue McGinty has completed her term as Chair of the Townsville Diocesan Education Council and, as is the practice in the diocese, passes the QCEC membership baton to Marie Radford as the new council Chair. Sue had served on the Commission for six years.

We also congratulate Dr Lee-Anne Perry who takes over Sr Pauline's role as Deputy Chair of the Commission.

QCEC 2011

- Professor Peter Sheehan
Independent Chairperson
- Mr Mike Byrne
Executive Director – QCEC
- Dr Bill Sultmann
Diocese of Cairns
- Mr Paul Campbell
Diocese of Cairns
- Dr Catherine Day
Diocese of Townsville
- Ms Marie Radford
Diocese of Townsville
- Miss Leesa Jeffcoat
Diocese of Rockhampton
- Ms Coral Way
Diocese of Rockhampton
- Mr John Borserio
Diocese of Toowoomba
- Ms Diana Carrigan
Diocese of Toowoomba
- Mr David Hutton
Archdiocese of Brisbane
- Dr Tracey Sanders
Archdiocese of Brisbane
- Mr Peter McNamara
Catholic Religious Australia (Queensland)
- Dr Lee-Anne Perry
Religious Australia (Queensland)
- Mrs Carmel Nash
Federation of Parents & Friends' Associations
- Bishop Joseph Oudeman
Bishops of Queensland
- Mr Mike Wilkinson
Executive Secretary to the Commission

QCEC Welcome to 2011 Function

Around 100 guests from key stakeholder groups and partners in education and government gathered for the QCEC 'Welcome to 2011' function on 11 February.

Guests were welcomed by QCEC Deputy Chair, Dr Lee-Anne Perry, and speeches were delivered by the Honorable Geoff Wilson, Minister for Education and Training, and QCEC Executive Director Mike Byrne.

Among those attending were Dr Bruce Flegg, Shadow Minister for Education, Julie Grantham, Director General of Education Queensland, Auxiliary Bishops of Brisbane Brian Finnigan and Joseph Oudeman, along with representatives from various government departments, Independent Schools Queensland and Queensland Studies Authority.

Mr Byrne said the event was an important opportunity to engage informally with key partners and stakeholders as the year gets underway.

"There are many significant issues on the agenda that will require good professional conversations and co-operation across the education sector in Queensland to be successful," he said.

"Events such as this function contribute to the spirit of partnership that has long been a hallmark among educators in Queensland."



QCEC Assistant Director Administration, Communications & Employee Services, Gabrielle Power West, Principal, St Ursula's College Toowoomba, Ann Marie Pawsey and Deputy Chair of QCEC and Principal of All Hallows' School, Dr Lee-Anne Perry.



QCEC Executive Officer Administration and Financial Services, Wendy Williams, Mr Allan Todd President of the Independent Schools Queensland Board with Auxilliary Bishop of Brisbane and QCEC member, Bishop Joseph Oudeman.



Donna George, Education Officer, Edmund Rice Education Australian Northern Region and Vic Lorenz, QCEC Assistant Director Finance and Resourcing.



Anne Kuhneman, Executive Director Strategic Education, Department of Education and Training with Mandy Anderson, QCEC Assistant Director Education.



Julie Grantham, Director-General, Department of Education and Training and Mike Byrne, QCEC Executive Director.



Steve Montgomery, St Gerard Majella Primary School Cairns; Associate Professor Judith Mulholland, Head of School of Education, Australian Catholic University Brisbane Campus and David Hutton, Executive Director, Catholic Education Archdiocese of Brisbane.

QCEC Farewells Vic Lorenz

QCEC Assistant Director Finance and Resourcing, Vic Lorenz, will retire on 21 April after 24 years service.



Vic was appointed to the position of Financial Advisor by then Executive Director Alan Druery in 1987 to provide analysis and advice on all school funding and accountability issues. He has held the role of Assistant Director or similar since the late 90's.

Current QCEC Executive Director Mike Byrne said Vic's vast experience along with his unwavering commitment to Catholic education will be greatly missed.

"Vic is widely regarded as one of the country's foremost experts on education resourcing," he said.

"Some of the key programs Vic has engaged with on behalf of the Catholic sector over a long period include the State basket-nexus funding model, the arrangements for the state capital assistance suite of programs, including the roll-out of the Prep year, and developing the accreditation process for Non-state schools.

"On the Federal scene, Vic's knowledge of the Education Resource Index (ERI) and more recently the SES funding models has been a great asset to the Catholic sector.

"He was also a key contributor to the successful case for the re-categorising of the Queensland Catholic sector under the ERI (Education Resource Index) model in the late 90's which led to significantly increased funding.

"One of Vic's final tasks could well be one of his most important, as he, along with other members of an NCEC working party, put the final touches to the Catholic sector submission to the Gonski review of school funding.

"On a more personal note, we will miss Vic's good humour and genuine concern for people - especially his staff.

"On behalf of the Catholic education community in Queensland, we wish Vic, his wife Chris and their family, every best wish as he moves on to this next phase of his life," Mike Byrne said.

Reflecting recently on his career with QCEC, Vic said he had particularly enjoyed the opportunity to handle the full range of financial management issues, "which has brought its own challenges and excitement," he said.

"It has also been gratifying to see the improvement in how our Catholic schools are resourced over the years.

"Even in my early days in the 80's, many schools were struggling to provide the quality facilities and services most now enjoy.

"Here at QCEC our resources have also improved and expanded and hopefully the level of service we provide to school authorities has improved accordingly.

"I think it is part of our heritage to understand the 'value of the dollar' and we have always taken great pride in efficient use of funds.

"I believe there is a wonderful culture within Catholic education - people are generally pulling in the same direction - that should never be taken for granted

"It has been an interesting professional journey and one I have thoroughly enjoyed," Vic Lorenz said.

Around 160 family, friends and colleagues, including Education Minister Hon Cameron Dick, representing the Premier, and Archbishop John Bathersby, attended a function to farewell Vic at the Francis Rush Centre on Monday 21 March.



Catholic schools such as Holy Name Primary School, Toowoomba are committed to sustainable practices.

QCEC develops sustainability position statement

Following a recommendation arising from a Sustainability Forum for Catholic Education held in March last year, the QCEC has now developed a formal position statement on sustainability.

Speaking after the statement was approved for publication at the Commission's February meeting, Executive Director Mike Byrne said, "the 'Year of Environmental Sustainability' in 2010 provided a wonderful opportunity to remind us of the need to act now to achieve a sustainable future."

"As Catholics, we are called to recognise that creation is sacred and endangered and must be protected and sustained for present and future generations yet unborn.

"It is our hope that this position statement will provide the stimulus for the implementation of more sustainable practices within our education communities into the future," Mr Byrne said.

The statement can be found on the QCEC website under QCEC and Committees/policies and positions.

Spirit of Catholic Education Awards 2011

Catholic schools and agencies are encouraged to nominate members of their communities for a Spirit of Catholic Education Award. The awards were initiated by the QCEC in 2006 to recognise staff members, parents, clergy or volunteers who are making outstanding contributions to the life of a Catholic school community or other Catholic education agency. The awards will be presented by Queensland Governor Penelope Wensley as part of the official launch of Catholic Education Week 2011 on July 27. All nominees will receive a certificate of recognition to be presented within local communities. Nominations can be made by accessing the form on the Catholic Education Week website at www.catholiceducationweek.com.au. This year, for the first time, nominations can be submitted electronically. Nominations must be received by May 13.

Sr Margaret Madden named Catholic Education Week Ambassador

A Brisbane Sister of Mercy who has educated teachers in Pakistan for the past 16 years has been named as the official Ambassador for Catholic Education Week celebrations this year.



Sr Margaret Madden has taught at the Notre Dame Institute of Education (NDIE) in Karachi since 1995 and been Director since 2001. She returns to Australia permanently in June this year.

With its broad mix of ethnic, religious and political groups, Karachi is often described as a mini-Pakistan. While most people are hospitable and simply trying desperately to make life better for their children, it is a volatile environment where terrorism and violence are commonplace

Against this backdrop, Sr Margaret has been working to deliver a teaching program to young men and women that she believes can make a real difference to the country's development.

"There has been ongoing political unrest during my time here," she says.

"In the late 90's it was more or less a state of civil war on the streets of Karachi.

"I was once trapped in traffic and had a gunman firing from under my vehicle. I just put my head down and hoped for the best. I remember struggling to work the clutch on the car because I was shaking so much.

"But it is amazing how you adapt to the circumstances.

"Our Institute, like others in the city, is frequently in lock-down because of the level of violence.

"However, the students and faculty are always prepared with contingency plans of working from home and it motivates us to make the most of the times that are more 'normal' working days."

Sr Margaret is adamant that education is central to creating positive change in Pakistan and sees her work as being a trigger of hope to many.

"You're not going to root out violence with violence but through more constructive means, and education is basic to that," she says.

"Our students come from all over Pakistan and from different ethnic and religious groups and work together in a spirit of co-operation and faith.

"They study to be teachers who can go back into their communities and offer new opportunities and horizons to children who might otherwise have no hope. If we're doing this for the teachers, then the hope and the belief is that perhaps the next generation of Pakistanis will become more tolerant," Sr Margaret says.

Before leaving for Pakistan, Sr Margaret taught at Catholic schools in Gympie, Toowoomba, Brisbane and Stanthorpe. She was Director of Religious Education for Toowoomba Catholic Education from 1981-88 and a member of the Brisbane Sisters of Mercy Leadership Team from 1988-93.

More recently she has completed a PhD researching Australian women's contribution to teacher education in Pakistan.

Sr Margaret will share her story with students, teachers and parents across the State during Catholic Education Week from July 24-30. On her return to Australia, she is also looking forward to participating in celebrations to mark 150 years of the Sisters of Mercy in Queensland.



Sisters of Mercy Celebrate 150 years in Queensland

In 2011, the Brisbane Congregation of the Sisters of Mercy will celebrate 150 years of ministry in Queensland.

Congregational leader Sr Sandra Lupi said "the theme chosen for the sesquicentenary is Living Mercy – a theme that encompasses our past, present and future."

"It is a time for rejoicing and celebrating the vision, courage and fidelity of the past; the passion for mercy that sustains and motivates us in the present; and a call that inspires us to look to a "future full of hope" as the legacy of mercy continues," she said.

The year will be marked with activities and events to celebrate the Sisters' presence in Queensland and will share the celebrations with All Hallows' School, the first school established by the Sisters on their arrival 150 years ago.

Information, news and events can be found at the "Living Mercy" website:
www.livingmercy.org.au



Sr Margaret Madden in the Year 2 classroom at the Mercy Education Service School at Baldia, Karachi.

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:

Gerard Delaney

gerardd@qcec.catholic.edu.au

Queensland Catholic Education Commission

GPO Box 2441 Brisbane 4001

Ph: (07) 3336 9350 Fax: (07) 3229 0907



www.qcec.catholic.edu.au