

with VISION and spirit



Spring Newsletter 2012

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Mike Byrne Executive Director
Queensland Catholic Education Commission

From the Executive Director...

Much of the Commission's focus continues to be on the State and Federal political agendas.

Following recent uncertainty around the State budget situation and how it might impact the education sector, I initiated a meeting with the Treasurer Hon Tim Nicholls and Education Minister Hon John-Paul Langbroek on 23 August.

I was joined for this meeting by Archbishop Mark Coleridge, Brisbane Catholic Education Executive Director David Hutton, P&F Federation Executive Director Carmel Nash and QCEC Assistant Director Finance and Resourcing Steven Jeffery.

The meeting was constructive and we were grateful that the Treasurer was able to provide assurances that he is well aware of the tight funding position of the Catholic sector and is working to minimise any impact in this challenging budgetary circumstance. We now await the detail of the budget when it is handed down on 11 September.

On the Federal scene I was pleased to note Prime Minister Julia Gillard's recent statement to an Independent Schools forum in Canberra on Monday 20 August that 'every independent (and Catholic) school in Australia will see their funding increased' under the government's response to the Gonski report due within weeks.

Through the NCEC we continue to engage closely with the funding review process and look forward to the Government's formal response, which is likely to be delivered early in September.

Finally, congratulations to all Catholic school communities who so enthusiastically embraced the opportunity to celebrate the distinctive mission of Catholic education during Catholic Education Week this year.

Best wishes,

Mike Byrne
QCEC Executive Director

QCEC Hosts Parliamentary Reception

Around 50 Members of State Parliament joined 70 invited representatives of the Catholic education community at Parliament House on Wednesday 20 June for a reception organised by the Queensland Catholic Education Commission.

QCEC Executive Director Mike Byrne said the Commission felt it was timely to host the reception as an opportunity to meet the many newly elected MPs as well as reconnect with those returning to parliament following the March State election.

Mr Byrne said he was delighted with the attendance at the function.

"Both Premier Campbell Newman and Opposition Leader Anastacia Palaszczuk addressed the gathering and expressed strong support for the work and ethos of Catholic schools as well as a willingness to work in partnership with us," he said.

"They both also referred to their personal links with Catholic education. Mr Newman's daughters attend a Catholic school and Ms Palaszczuk is a past student of St Mary's College, Ipswich," Mr Byrne said.

Mr Byrne said Archbishop Coleridge spoke on behalf of the Catholic education community.



Member for Broadwater Verity Barton, Principal of All Hallows School and Deputy Chair of the QCEC Dr Lee-Anne Perry, Treasurer Hon Tim Nicholls MP, and Member for Nanango Deb Frecklington MP.



Most Reverend Mark Coleridge, Archbishop of Brisbane addresses the reception in the Red Chamber.

"The Archbishop delivered a clear message about the contribution of Catholic schools to Queensland society in terms of educational outcomes, 'social capital' and financial savings to the community.

"The Archbishop reminded the gathering that Queensland would be a very different place today if not for the contribution of Catholic schools and he called on the government to provide ongoing support," Mr Byrne said.

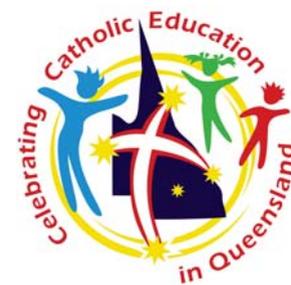
Mr Byrne said it was pleasing that many school principals and representatives of the Parents and Friends Federation had been able to attend the function.

"I thank all who took the time to attend the function and especially those who travelled significant distances.

"I trust that local level relationships with Members of Parliament were also enhanced by this opportunity.

"I particularly thank Speaker of the House Hon Fiona Simpson who facilitated the function for the Commission," Mike Byrne said.

Catholic Education Week 2012



Catholic Education Week was celebrated around Queensland from 22-28 July.

The week is a special opportunity each year for Catholic schools and education ministries to celebrate their distinctive mission and share the great things they are doing with their local communities.

This year's celebrations focused on the theme "Celebrating Community – Family, Parish, School".

Catholic Education Week officially launched

Catholic Education Week 2012 was officially launched on Wednesday 25 July by the Most Reverend Mark Coleridge, Archbishop of Brisbane, at a celebration attended by around 500 students, teachers, parents and friends of Catholic education from across the state.

In keeping with the theme for this year's celebrations, the event was held at St Therese, The Little Flower Church at Kedron, the parish hub for the three school communities of Padua College, Mt Alvernia College and St Anthony's school.

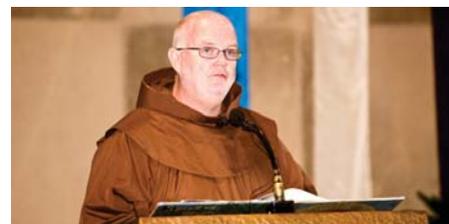
The event combined a liturgical celebration with the presentation of the 2012 Spirit of Catholic Education Awards by Her Excellency Governor Penelope Wensley AC.



Students from Padua College and Mt Alvernia College, Kedron and St Anthony's school participated in the launch event.



Her Excellency Penelope Wensley AC and Most Reverend Mark Coleridge, Archbishop of Brisbane join students of Padua College at a luncheon following the launch.



Fr Stephen Bliss ofm Parish priest of St Therese and St Anthony's, welcomes guests to the launch event.

2012 Spirit of Catholic Education Award Recipients

Her Excellency the Governor of Queensland Ms Penelope Wensley AC presented this year's Spirit of Catholic Education Awards to seven recipients as part of the official launch of Catholic Education Week.

61 outstanding contributors to Catholic education were nominated for the awards from all spheres of the state-wide Catholic education community - clergy, religious, teachers, support staff, parents and volunteers.

All nominees for the awards received a certificate of recognition that was presented as part of local community celebrations.

The 2012 Spirit of Catholic Education Award recipients are:

- **Sr Pauline Robinson mfc (Religious Sister/support staff)**
(Mt Alvernia College, Kedron)
- **Ben Gray (Teacher)**
(St Peter's Catholic Primary School, Caboolture)

- **Dan McErlean (Old Boys Association)**
(St Mary's College, Toowoomba)
- **Sophie Basford (Science Head of Department)**
(Marist College, Emerald)
- **Sharyn Bell (Principal Junior Campus)**
(St Catherine's Catholic College, The Whitsundays)
- **Samantha Andre (Teacher)**
(St Andrew's Catholic College, Redlynch)
- **Karl McKenzie (Parent/volunteer)**
(Catholic Education Office, Diocese of Townsville)
Karl was the inaugural recipient of the *Aunty Joan Hendriks Award for Reconciliation*.



Award recipients and presenters: from left: Aunty Joan Hendriks, Karl McKenzie, Sr Pauline Robinson, Dan McErlean, Governor Penelope Wensley AC, Ben Gray, Sharyn Bell, Tim Basford (on behalf of Sophie), Samantha Andre.



Her Excellency the Governor of Queensland Ms Penelope Wensley AC with Karl McKenzie and Aunty Joan Hendricks.

Minister's Reception

The State Government shared in Catholic Education Week celebrations and recognised the important role of Catholic education in Queensland when the Minister for Education, Training and Employment, Hon John-Paul Langbroek joined with the Queensland Catholic Education Commission to host a reception at Parliament House in Brisbane on 24 July.

Around 120 people including State MPs, Principals, parents and friends of Catholic education from around the State gathered for the occasion.

Guests were entertained on the night by the string ensemble from Brigidine College, Indooroopilly and a vocal ensemble from Clairvaux MacKillop College, Mt Gravatt.



Hon John-Paul Langbroek, Minister for Education, Training and Employment addressed the Reception.



Hon John Paul Langbroek with Emmaus College, Rockhampton Captains and Rockhampton Diocesan Director Leesa Jeffcoat.



Students from Clairvaux MacKillop College performed at the Minister's Reception event.



The string ensemble from Brigidine College, Indooroopilly entertained guests on arrival at the reception.



General Peter Cosgrove with students from the Diocese of Cairns.

Ambassador General Peter Cosgrove AC MC

General Peter Cosgrove was the official ambassador for Catholic Education Week 2012. General Cosgrove visited schools and Dioceses around the state during Catholic Education Week to share his experiences with students, staff and parents.

General Cosgrove's strong Catholic faith, outstanding career, and in particular his well-known peace-keeping work in East Timor, and community rebuilding in Innisfail following Cyclone Larry, made him an ideal ambassador for this year's celebrations.



General Peter Cosgrove addresses a student forum in Rockhampton.



General Peter Cosgrove with students from the Kedron Catholic school 'Franciscans on the Hill' (FOTH) communities at the official launch of Catholic Education Week.

QCEC Responds to Weapons in Schools Issue

As part of its ongoing response to the issue of weapons in schools, QCEC recently made a series of recommendations to Catholic school authorities.

The recommendations followed a process of consultation on the issue led by Professor Paul Mazzerolle whose report, *Weapons in schools in Queensland - The nature, causes and responses*, was commissioned by the Queensland Schools Alliance Against Violence (QSAAV) and released by the Queensland Government in March this year.

The QCEC met with Professor Mazerolle on 29 May to discuss his findings. He then led a full day forum on the issue, attended by some 60 Catholic education representatives from across the State on 13 July. The outcomes of this process were considered by the Commission at its July meeting.

Executive Director Mike Byrne says the QCEC recognises that the issue of weapons in schools, and knives in particular, is a complex social, mental health and student protection issue that requires careful and ongoing consideration by Catholic school authorities, schools and the broader community.

"All Catholic schools must and do act in accordance with State legislation in relation to weapons, including knives.

"However, specific policies and procedures in relation to weapons in schools are a matter for each school authority and are developed taking into account the context of local communities," he said.

Following the process of consultation, the Queensland Catholic Education Commission has recommended that Catholic school authorities consider the following actions:

- Review current policies and procedures in relation to weapons in schools taking into consideration the findings and recommendations of the Mazerolle report.
- Develop policies and procedures as part of each school's Child and Youth Risk Management Strategy and include specific references to the provisions of the Weapons Act 1990 and the Weapons Categories Regulation 1997.
- Ensure policies and procedures clearly spell out consequences for bringing weapons, or any item which could be used as a weapon, to school, which could include notification of the police.



Professor Paul Mazzerolle addresses a forum attended by around 60 Catholic education representatives from across the State on 13 July.

- Ensure that policies and procedures are clearly communicated to staff, students, parents and carers.
- Adopt or enhance 'whole school approaches' to dealing with the issue of student to student violence and weapons, and renew commitment to building and maintaining positive cultures of safety across Catholic schools.

Mike Byrne said the QCEC Student Protection Subcommittee had also undertaken to research and recommend a series of programs and resources to support policies and procedures in relation to student to student violence and weapons in schools, with specific reference to knives.

"These will include the "Mentors in Violence Prevention Bystander Program" developed by Griffith University and already implemented in a number of schools," he said.

"I know that all Catholic education authorities in Queensland are committed to ensuring that students have the safest and most productive school learning environments possible.

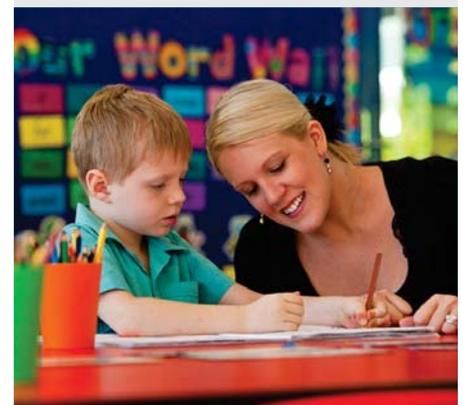
"I assure you that the QCEC will continue to engage with this critical issue and further consider and promote best policy and practice accordingly," Mike Byrne said.

Framework for Staff Formation in Catholic Schools Developed

The QCEC Catholic Ethos Formation and Religious Education (CEFARE) committee has developed a set of guidelines for the development of a framework for staff formation in Catholic schools.

The guidelines were approved by the Commission at its July meeting and they are now available on the QCEC website (CEFARE committee) as a resource for Catholic school authorities.

QCEC Executive Director Mike Byrne commended the Committee on its work saying "this work is vital in order to maintain the strong identity of Catholic staff, and I encourage Catholic school authorities to utilise this valuable resource."



A Guide to Develop a Framework for Staff Formation

In Catholic schools in Queensland



DATE CLAIMER Catholic Education Week 2013

July 21-27

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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