

# WITH VISION & SPIRIT



SUMMER  
NEWSLETTER  
2010

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## SETTING THE RECORD STRAIGHT ON SCHOOLS FUNDING

Queensland Catholic Education Commission Executive Director Mike Byrne says recent claims by the Australian Education Union (AEU) that two thirds of Australian Government spending on education is being spent on the one third of students in non-government schools are grossly misleading.

"These claims are misleading because they do not recognise that state schools receive most of their funding from state governments," he said.

"The fact is that when funding from both the Australian and State Governments is taken into account, Catholic schools receive on average just 61% of the funding received by students in government schools.

"According to the latest figures available from the *National Report on Schooling 2008*, the Catholic school sector in Australia received on average \$5,673 per student from the Australian Government, \$2,012 from the State Government – a total of \$7,685 per student.

"In 2008/09 government schools received on average \$12,639 per student in government funding.

"Therefore, Catholic schools on average received 61% of the total government funding received by state schools."

Mr Byrne said that even when taking the average parent and community contributions of \$3,059 into account Catholic schools still operate on average at about 85% of the total recurrent resourcing levels of government schools.

*May Jesus always be your joy  
and your hope and may this  
Christmas and each day of the  
New Year be directed by His  
guiding hand of love!*

### SCHOOLS FUNDING INFORMATION PUBLISHED

Under the Australian Government's *Schools Assistance Regulations 2009*, all schools are now required to provide specific information about the sources and levels of income they receive.

This information will be published on the Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority (ACARA) *My School* website from 3 December.

This publication, for the first time, will enable comparisons about resourcing levels of individual schools to be made between Catholic schools and across schooling sectors.

To ensure Catholic school communities are well informed about the complexities of government and other funding, and what the published figures actually represent, QCEC has prepared a series of *Questions and Answers* and other resources that are now available on the QCEC website.



## FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Each year brings its own highlights, but as we near the closure of another year, a few standout items warrant closer attention.

On a national level, QCEC continued to engage with several key initiatives, most notably the development of the Australian curriculum. At a state level, QCEC engaged closely with the consultation process for the government's discussion paper, *A Flying Start for Queensland Children*. Catholic education throughout the state partnered with the Queensland Government in promoting the Year of Environmental Sustainability via a number of activities associated with Catholic Education Week, as well as hosting a Sustainability Forum and beginning initial development of a position statement on sustainability.

For the Catholic community in Queensland, the highlight of the year was undoubtedly the canonisation of Mary MacKillop (St Mary of the Cross) on 17 October. Given the number of schools administered by the congregation she founded, the Sisters of St Joseph, and her personal visitation to schools in the state, we could be forgiven our intense pride on this momentous occasion.

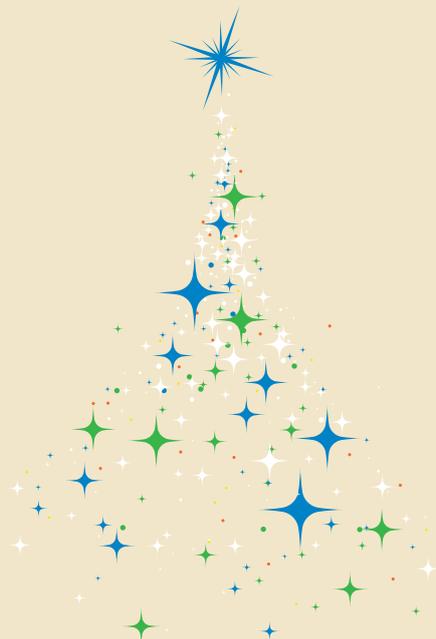
Sincere thanks to all for your wonderful contributions and support for the Commission this year.

Best wishes to you for a happy and a holy Christmas season.

**Mike Byrne**

*Executive Director*

*Queensland Catholic Education Commission*



# CATHOLIC SCHOOLS FOCUS ON 'CLOSING THE INDIGENOUS EDUCATION GAP'

More than 170 delegates gathered in Toowoomba from 14 to 16 September to attend the 5th Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Catholic Education Conference, which had as its theme *Lead, Learn, Teach, Transform*.

In his opening address Queensland Catholic Education Commission Executive Director Mike Byrne said that while significant advancements have been made by Catholic schools, an ongoing commitment to closing the gap between Indigenous and non-Indigenous student outcomes is required into the future.

"Over the past five years the number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students from Prep to Year 12 in Queensland Catholic schools has increased by 25% to 4,158, representing 3% of total school enrolments.

"Queensland Catholic boarding schools now educate over 600 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people from remote and rural communities. This is the largest number of Indigenous boarding school students in any schooling sector anywhere in Australia.

"In 2009, the retention rate of Indigenous students from Year 10 to completion of Year 12 in Queensland Catholic schools was 69%, while for non-Indigenous students it was 87%.

"Last year 81% of Year 12 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students in Catholic schools completed a Queensland Certificate of Education. Across all students the figure was 92%.

Mr Byrne said the most recent NAPLAN test results also showed that the gap between Indigenous and non-Indigenous student outcomes is narrowing.

"Catholic schools across Queensland have clearly achieved much in Indigenous education, but more still needs to be done. We aim to transform through reconciliation and by addressing Indigenous disadvantage in education.

"Indigenous education has moved into a new era and we are all partners on the journey," Mr Byrne said.

The master of ceremonies at the conference was Chris Bartlett (Principal of St Joseph's School Chinchilla), the first Indigenous principal in a Catholic school in Queensland.



MC Chris Bartlett, Principal, St Joseph's School Chinchilla with Elder, Aunty Joan Hendriks.



Youth and Community Learning Centre staff (from left); Mary Tosswell, John Colwell (Principal), Louise Evans and Justin Pengilly.



Elders - Mr and Mrs Eric Law with Aunty Joan Hendriks (centre).

## CATHOLIC EDUCATION SECTOR WELCOMES ALLIANCE AGAINST VIOLENCE REPORT

Queensland Catholic Education Commission Executive Director Mike Byrne has welcomed the *Queensland Schools Alliance Against Violence (QSAAV) Report* that was launched by Premier Anna Bligh and Minister for Education and Training Hon Geoff Wilson on 26 October.

"Bullying and violence have no place in our schools and in our communities," Mr Byrne said.

"The work of QSAAV has highlighted what best practice is and how to implement effective strategies to combat bullying and violence in schools.

"There is no one solution to tackle these issues, so it is imperative that as a community we work together to eliminate bullying and violence.

"The QSAAV report reflects the commitment of the three schooling sectors, along with Parents and Friends and other key agencies in Queensland to work together to address the issues of bullying and violence in schools.

"I congratulate and thank all involved with this work to date. Bullying can have lifelong consequences and we must do all we can to eradicate it from our schools and communities," Mr Byrne said.



Queensland Catholic Education Commission Executive Director Mike Byrne with Minister for Education and Training Hon Geoff Wilson and the signed declaration against bullying and violence in schools.

## FORMATION OF STAFF IN CATHOLIC SCHOOLS COLLOQUIUM

Around 50 representatives of Catholic school authorities from across Queensland gathered for a two day colloquium on 20-21 October to explore contemporary models of staff formation and to develop a framework for staff training in the area of spiritual and religious formation.

The colloquium, organised by the Queensland Catholic Education Commission's Catholic Ethos, Formation and Religious Education (CEFARE) Committee, followed the publication in February 2010 of a QCEC policy entitled *Formation for staff members in Catholic schools*.

QCEC Executive Director Mike Byrne said that during the policy development Catholic school authorities had agreed that all staff members should participate in formation experiences to assist them to understand their ministry as part of the mission of the Church.

"Clearly an awareness of the importance, the richness, and the responsibility of promoting the kingdom of God is a vital dimension of being a teacher in a Catholic school.

"Continuing professional development includes both professional and religious formation and effective formation is holistic, addressing the complete person – human, spiritual, intellectual and pastoral," Mr Byrne said.

CEFARE Committee Chair, Auxiliary Bishop of Brisbane, Bishop Brian Finnigan said that the aim of the colloquium was to encourage a shared understanding of the principles of effective contemporary formation for staff members in Catholic schools in Queensland.

"One of the outcomes of the colloquium is anticipated to be a framework aimed at guiding the development of programs to increase awareness of the person and teachings of Jesus Christ among school staff," Bishop Finnigan said.



Presenter Martin Scroope, Director, Loyola Institute (left) and Andrea Dean (Reflector), Senior Officer, Religious Education and Well Being, Diocese of Canberra and Goulburn.



From left: Joe McCorley, Diocesan Coordinator-Adult Faith, Catholic Education Office, Rockhampton; Di-Anne Rowan (Facilitator), Assistant to the Director-Mission, Catholic Education Office, Rockhampton and Jim Hanley, Diocesan Consultant-Religious Education Secondary, Catholic Education Office, Rockhampton.

## NEW POLICY ADDRESSES RELIGIOUS DIMENSIONS OF CATHOLIC SCHOOL LEADERSHIP

A new policy statement addressing the religious dimensions that underpin the educational leadership of Catholic schools was launched by QCEC on 21 October.

Executive Director Mike Byrne said the policy applies to all those who are appointed to senior educational leadership positions in Catholic schools in Queensland including principal, deputy principal, assistant principal, assistant to the principal, dean or equivalent.

"The policy draws heavily on the principle that effective and authentic leadership, modelled on Jesus Christ, is central to the unique ethos and successful functioning of the Catholic school," he said.

Mr Byrne said the policy complemented the policy statement *Qualifications for Senior Educational Leadership Positions in Queensland Catholic Schools* endorsed by the Commission in July 2009 that focuses on the 'formal accreditation' issues required for senior educational leadership positions.

"Those in positions of senior educational leadership in Catholic schools are called to excellence in their service of education, church and society.

"I believe this is a significant policy statement that will guide future directions for Catholic school employing authorities in this area."



From left: Catherine Foley, Education Officer, Faith and Life, Catholic Education Office, Toowoomba; Chris Fitzpatrick, Religious Education Coordinator/President ASREAP, St Joseph's College, Toowoomba; John Meneely, Education Officer-Religious Education, Catholic Education Office, Toowoomba.



From left: Tony Clarke (Presenter), Director, Spiritual Formation, Marist Schools Australia; Sr Pauline Robinson, Member QCEC Commission; Louise Vella-Cox, Senior Education Officer, Faith and Religious Education, Catholic Education Services, Cairns; Ross Homer, Assistant Director-School Services, Catholic Education Office, Townsville; Di-Anne Rowan (Facilitator), Assistant to the Director-Mission, Catholic Education Office, Rockhampton.



*Terry Creagh, QCEC Assistant Director – Education retires in December after many years of extraordinarily rich contribution to Catholic education.*

## QCEC FAREWELLS TERRY CREAGH

QCEC will farewell a longstanding identity in Queensland Catholic education at the end of the year when Terry Creagh (Assistant Director – Education) retires. In announcing Terry's retirement, Mike Byrne (Executive Director) said, "Terry has made an extraordinarily rich contribution to Catholic education over many years as both a teacher and a senior leader and administrator. She has been closely involved with the introduction of many recent educational initiatives including the State Government's *Education and Training Reforms for the Future* and the introduction of prep. She has worked in four of the five dioceses and served as Director of Catholic Education in both Cairns and Brisbane.

Terry was appointed as Assistant Director – Education at QCEC in January 2007, following a four-year period (April 2002-Dec 2006) as Non-Government School Project Officer – Education and Training Reforms for the Future originally working out of Education Queensland and then out of QCEC.

Prior to this, Terry had served at Brisbane Catholic Education between 1997 and 2001 as Director – Employee Support Services, Deputy Director and for 12 months as Acting Director. Between 1994 and 1996, Terry was Director of Catholic Education in Cairns.

Executive Director Mike Byrne said, "In addition to Terry's enormous contribution to the Commission, Terry continues to be extremely generous with her time in serving on a number of school boards. We wish her well for her retirement".

## DATE CLAIMER CATHOLIC EDUCATION WEEK 2011

Catholic Education Week 2011 will be celebrated from 24-30 July, with the theme *Excelling in education – heart, mind and spirit*.

This theme reflects Catholic education's commitment to providing a high quality education, with opportunities for students to reach their full potential in all aspects of their development – spiritual, intellectual, physical, cultural, social and emotional.



## 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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## CATHOLIC SECTOR READIES FOR AUSTRALIAN CURRICULUM ROLLOUT

Throughout 2010, Catholic education in Queensland has welcomed a close engagement with the development of the Australian curriculum through representation on key stakeholder committees, involvement in consultation forums and trialling of draft K-10 curriculum documents in English, mathematics, science and history. The Queensland response to the draft K-10 curriculum was formed across all schooling sectors and the Queensland Studies Authority for submission to Australian Curriculum Assessment and Reporting Authority (ACARA). It incorporated the feedback in the separate QCEC response to ACARA, which had been generated from input provided by QCEC Australian Curriculum Subject Reference Groups.

In 2011, Catholic school authorities will assist schools to understand the content requirements for each learning area as well as exploring planning, assessment and reporting based on the Australian Curriculum Assessment and Reporting Authority (ACARA) Framework.

### Queensland implementation of Australian Curriculum

The Queensland Minister for Education and Training Hon Geoff Wilson has announced the following timeline for the introduction and implementation of the Australian Curriculum Phase One Learning Areas. Schools may still choose to be early adopters of the new curriculum.

#### Phase 1

2010-2011

Introduce\* English, mathematics and science

2012

Implement\* English, mathematics, science; Introduce history

2013

Implement history

#### Phase 2

Geography, Languages, Arts

#### Phase 3

Health and Physical Education and possibly Design and Technology, ICT, Economics, Business and Civics and Citizenship

\* Introduce = awareness raising, engagement and understanding

\* Implement = teaching, assessing and reporting in accordance with the Australian curriculum