
IMPROVING TEACHER EDUCATION WILL IMPROVE LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES

The executive director of the National Catholic Education Commission has welcomed the initiative of the Australian Government to establish the Teacher Education Ministerial Advisory Group (TEMAG), culminating in the release of the group's report and the Australian Government's response today.

The report is sound and represents a solid basis to improve teacher education for the long-term benefit of all Australian school students, NCEC executive director Ross Fox said.

The Commonwealth Government's acceptance of the majority of the reports 37 recommendations on improving teacher training should lead to better learning opportunities for students, he said.

Federal Education Minister Christopher Pyne said TEMAG's report, *Action Now: Classroom Ready Teachers*, is "a blueprint for critical and lasting reform of teacher education".

Mr Fox said TEMAG's work, led by Australian Catholic University vice-chancellor Professor Greg Craven, seeks to strengthen teacher education programs and ensure teachers are adequately prepared for the important task of educating young Australians.

"Initiatives to ensure that every beginning teacher is equipped to provide great teaching and learning in classrooms around Australia is a foundational step in ensuring quality in school education in Australia," he said.

"Catholic education welcomes TEMAG's finding that the personal qualities of a teacher – as well as academic success – are an important aspect of a successful teacher."

The TEMAG report recognised that there is a continuum of learning for teachers that extends beyond the university, into the classroom and beyond. In its submission to TEMAG, the NCEC emphasised the importance of understanding teachers do not emerge from their university course fully formed as teachers. They are beginning a professional journey that requires attention.

Successfully implementing the report's recommendations will require the close cooperation of universities, school systems as employers and governments to ensure the quality of teaching in Australian schools is further improved.

State and territory Catholic education commissions and Catholic education school authorities will carefully consider the implications of the report in their own jurisdiction and context.

"A high-quality national teaching profession is vital in shaping excellent student learning outcomes. This responsibility is shared across the many contributors to school education in Australia, including 1,728 Catholic schools," Mr Fox concluded.