

SUSTAINING CATHOLIC EDUCATION IN AUSTRALIA INTO THE FUTURE

ELECTION 2010 COMMITMENTS SOUGHT FROM POLITICAL PARTIES

PRIOR TO THE 2010 FEDERAL ELECTION, CATHOLIC SCHOOLS AND SYSTEMS ARE SEEKING COMMITMENTS FROM THE MAJOR POLITICAL PARTIES TO ENSURE THAT CATHOLIC EDUCATION WILL BE SUSTAINABLE INTO THE FUTURE.

1. Catholic schools and systems have a direct relationship with the Commonwealth Government, underpinned by legislation.

Catholic schools and systems are a large and genuinely national enterprise, educating one in five Australian children. They therefore require a solid basis for funding certainty - a direct relationship through Commonwealth legislation.

2. Catholic schools and systems from 2013 have, at the very least, access to the same funds, indexed to government school costs, as currently available.

To allow schools and school systems to survive, general recurrent and targeted program funds for Catholic schools and systems in 2013 must be at least the same level of funds, indexed, as currently allocated.

3. Catholic systems have the capacity to distribute funds to schools according to need.

Catholic systems must be able to retain their well-established structures to allocate funds in a flexible, responsive and transparent manner to best meet the needs of schools and students.

4. Funding levels must be indexed annually, using a transparent mechanism, to ensure that Catholic schools and systems are able to meet the rising costs of education.

Indexation must be linked to government school recurrent costs via an index that measures rising costs and expectations.

5. Funding for students with disabilities must be increased towards parity with government school funding.

The number of children with a disability enrolled at Catholic schools is rising substantially. Increased funding is required to ensure that these students are able to be educated to an excellent standard with appropriate dignity and respect.

6. Capital funding should be increased for educationally disadvantaged communities and areas of population growth.

Catholic schools and systems are committed to serving students from educationally disadvantaged communities and from fast-growing communities, and so seek increased capital funding to provide facilities and resources in these areas.

