

MEDIA RELEASE

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BUDGET DELIVERS BETTER TARGETED FUNDING TO IMPROVE LEARNING

The National Catholic Education Commission (NCEC) has welcomed the Government's formal budget commitment to better target funding for Australia's low-fee schools.

NCEC Executive Director Jacinta Collins acknowledged Education Minister Dan Tehan's focus on low-fee schools which educate so many disadvantaged students.

"Now that the Government's funding package is locked in the Budget, the NCEC looks forward to seeing the detail of Labor's plans for Catholic schools," Jacinta said.

"Labor has been raising concerns about government funding for Catholic schools for several years now, and promising a better deal. Catholic schools appreciate Labor's support and are keen to see the detail.

"As always at election time, the NCEC will let families know what the parties are offering Catholic schools, so parents can make informed decisions when they vote."

Jacinta said Catholic schools were focussed on addressing students' future needs, particularly in early childhood education.

"Early childhood education is so important and Catholic schools are well placed to meet this demand," Jacinta said. "We are building preschools next to primary schools, which helps families and puts our pre-schoolers at the heart of our school communities."

The Federal Government needs to significantly increase capital funding to the non-government sector so that Catholic and other schools can meet their share of increasing enrolments and maintain choice for parents.

"Non-government schools educate one in three Australian students, with Catholic education the largest school provider outside of government," Jacinta said. "We are partners with government in giving families a quality and affordable schooling choice.

"But governments need to support Catholic school parents, who fund more than 80% of the cost of building and upgrading their children's schools. As the cost of land, construction and technology rises, government must lift their contribution."

Jacinta said the NCEC would continue to seek more funding and resources to improve education for its 765,000 students, particularly disadvantaged students.

“That motivates everything we do,” Jacinta said. “Without government funding, Catholic schools would only be affordable to wealthy families, forcing hundreds of thousands of students into the government school system, which is already stretched.”

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