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## CATHOLIC EDUCATION WELCOMES MINISTER'S REAPPOINTMENT

The National Catholic Education Commission has congratulated Minister for Education and Training Senator Simon Birmingham on being reappointed to his portfolio and said Catholic education looks forward to working with the Minister for the benefit of students in all Australian schools.

Senator Birmingham, who was named Minister for Education and Training last September, was yesterday reappointed to the role by Prime Minister Malcolm Turnbull.

“Minister Birmingham has shown a strong commitment to the education of students in all Australian schools, including the 765,000 students currently being educated in the 1,731 Catholic schools across the country,” NCEC executive director Ross Fox said.

“The Turnbull Government outlined its plan for school education in the ‘Quality Schools, Quality Outcomes’ policy, and Catholic education is ready to work with Senator Birmingham and the Government to ensure that teaching and learning can be supported into the future to help improve an already high-quality education system in Australia.”

Mr Fox said Senator Birmingham’s decision to address the National Catholic Education Commission Conference last month, during the final fortnight of the election campaign, was a sign of the Minister’s support for Catholic education and its important place in school education in Australia.

“Minister Birmingham told the 1,400 Catholic educators at the conference that the schools in which they work are ‘not an appendage, but an intrinsic and essential part of the Australian education system’,” Mr Fox recalled.

“The Minister affirmed the values of Catholic schools as making a positive contribution to the education of hundreds of thousands of young Australians and also providing ‘a steadying influence in an increasingly turbulent world’.”

Mr Fox said as well as making that contribution in classrooms and schools, Catholic education is committed to being a positive contributor to the important policy discussions that will take place over the coming months, particularly as they relate to funding for Australian schools in 2018 and beyond.

Mr Fox offered his congratulations to Karen Andrews on her appointment as Minister for Vocational Education and Skills.

He also thanked Senators Scott Ryan and Richard Colbeck for their contribution to the education ministerial team in the previous Turnbull ministry.