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## **Catholic Education sector welcomes funding to support additional hygiene measures in schools**

The National Catholic Education Commission has welcomed the Australian Government's announcement today of an additional \$10 million to improve COVID-19 hygiene measures in non-government schools.

National Catholic Education Executive Director Jacinta Collins said the additional funding will be welcomed by school communities who are spending significantly more of their operational budgets on stronger hygiene and cleaning protocols.

"We anticipate that the majority of Catholic schools will fully reopen in a matter of weeks with most students back in the classroom, presuming efforts to suppress the virus continue to succeed and, once again, providing it is supported by consistent health advice," Ms Collins said.

"To help reduce the risk and ensure the safest environment for students and staff, our schools are implementing additional hygiene and cleaning procedures, and are seeing increased usage of hand sanitisers, soap and cleaning products that are not accounted for in their normal school budgets.

"The additional funding will go some way towards covering these additional costs and ensure stronger hygiene protocols do not impact on the funds available for learning and teaching resources," she said.

We thank the Australian Government for listening to the concerns of non-government schools and also recognise the government's work with industry to increase domestic supplies of soap, sanitiser and cleaning products to ensure our schools have adequate access to hygiene supplies.

Nationally, Catholic schools educate more than 764,000 students – or one in five Australian students - in 1,746 schools, the vast majority of which are low-fee schools.