State government ‘freezes’ Catholic school funding for 4 years

By now you would be aware of the State Government’s announcement to cut education funding to all sectors. For Catholic Schools this amounts to a “capping” of our present funding for the next four years, the equivalent of a 3% reduction in funding in real terms.

Of greatest disappointment is the cut to education funding, regardless of the sector. Education spending in Australia is already below the average for similar countries and this decision will bring about a further impact. As Bishop Anthony Fisher has stated, “... the Australian community needs to spend more, rather than less, on education across the board if our young people are to have the opportunities they deserve”.

In announcing the capping of funding, the government has responded to the strong voice of the Catholic community and I would like to take this opportunity to thank families, Principals, school and CEO staff and all others who are committed to the cause of Catholic education for their engagement in that process.

I remain concerned, however, for the future of funding arrangements in light of this decision, and would urge your active involvement as we continue to state our case.

Although this announcement at least gives some certainty of our income for the next four years, the situation is far from ideal and we will begin planning for the necessary adjustments to meet this challenge. This decision obviously puts pressure on Catholic school finances, especially as enrolments will continue to increase in future years, as will our costs of operation.

Our priorities remain clear. Our Diocese has a strong commitment to quality teaching and learning that is evident in the classrooms across our school system, and to affordability for parents who work hard in support of their choice to seek a Catholic education for their child. Our planning into the future will continue to focus on these priorities.

I thank you for your ongoing support and will keep you informed as this issue progresses.

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