



ADVOCACY BY ACT CATHOLIC SCHOOLS WINS ADDITIONAL FUNDING

STATEMENT BY ROSS FOX, DIRECTOR OF CATHOLIC EDUCATION – CANBERRA & GOULBURN

*Interview opportunity at Holy Trinity Curtin between 12 noon and 12.45pm.

On behalf of Catholic Education I acknowledge the hard work of Liberal Senator Zed Seselja to negotiate additional funding that recognises the needs of non-government schools in the ACT.

I believe this funding is sufficient to ensure no child who enrolls in a Catholic school in 2018 will face pressure on fees or funding cuts during their time in a Catholic school.

I wish to thank the Labor Party for their support of the cause of Catholic education through this difficult legislative process.

With the Gonski 2.0 funding model now set to become law, Catholic education in the ACT has strengthened its resolve to seek a genuinely fair funding model for all schools, students and systems.

Parents of Catholic education have spoken loudly over the last two months in their bid to uphold equity, quality and choice in education in Canberra and throughout NSW.

The uncertainty created by the Government's approach has caused significant distress for many parents and school leaders who value highly the contribution Catholic education in their children's growth.

Catholic schools remain committed to the core mission of low-fee, high quality schooling.

I want to assure families who seek enrolment in a Catholic school in 2018 that this additional funding secured by Senator Seselja should mean there is no additional fee increases for their child's education.

The commitment of Catholic schools to providing for the needs of every child whatever their background, will not change.

I want to thank the dedicated staff, teachers, school leaders and thousands of parents who have contacted our political leaders over this time to express their heartfelt concern.

The effort of parents has been incredibly effective in emphasising the importance of a choice, for all families, in school education.

The additional funding is welcome however the legislation that has passed does not fix the long-term problems in the funding model for Catholic schools.

Catholic education will continue to work with families and school communities to achieve fair funding for all schools and students.

For almost a century in this region, Catholic education has provided an inclusive, low fee education opportunity that has been the choice of one in five children, including from all religions, incomes, and backgrounds.

We won't let the passage of the legislation deter our advocacy for fair funding for all children despite the Government's legislative intent to reduce funding to Catholic schools in the long term.

This new legislation takes the funding model further away from the Gonski recommendations as they applied to school systems. The funding of systems enables systemic schools to keep fees low for families.

Catholic education will participate in the review of SES with the hope of securing fair funding that recognises the genuine needs of students across Catholic schools and keeps fees low.

The Gonski Review supported system funding and it should continue.

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