

1 December 2017

Ms Cassy O'Connor MP  
Leader of the Greens  
7 Franklin Wharf  
Hobart TAS 7000

Dear Ms O'Connor,

In the lead up to the State election Catholic Education Tasmania is seeking commitments from all political parties that they will maintain and expand their support for Catholic education to ensure the best possible outcomes for our 16,000 students enrolled in our 38 schools and colleges.

Catholic education is central to the mission of the Church and our schools have a long history of successfully catering for the disadvantaged. Currently, our Catholic schools educate around one in five Tasmanian students, many of whose families are in the lowest two quartiles of the SEA indicator. We seek to ensure that a future state government is committed to funding levels that adequately support excellence in learning and teaching.

Importantly, we need the continued support of whoever forms government through the maintenance of capital and recurrent funding indexed from current levels to ensure families have continued access to high quality, affordable Catholic education across Tasmania.

The Catholic sector has had strong support from successive state governments and we are looking for assurances that this support will continue through a commitment from all parties to maintain recurrent and capital funding indexed from current levels and keeping pace with recent changes in Federal funding arrangements. To this end we are seeking the Greens' position on recurrent state funding post commitments to funding Years 5 and 6 of 'Gonski'. This includes a current State Government's commitment that the \$36 million of additional over six years (2014-19) will be fully delivered and that 2019's funding will complete this commitment.

In particular, as Federal funding gradually increases to 80% of the Schooling Resource Standard (SRS) over the next 6 years we are seeking your commitment to fund the gap in the SRS needed to maintain 100% funding of the Commonwealth SRS.

Starting share based on 2017 rebased funding	Rebased 2017 %	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Federal funding	74%	75%	76%	77%	78%	79%	80%
State funding requested	22%	25%	24%	23%	22%	21%	20%
SRS total %	96	100	100	100	100	100	100

Catholic education is also seeking the retention and extension of the additional capital assistance provided in the 2017-18 Budget, currently worth an additional \$950,000 annually to our sector, beyond the four years forward estimates and to build in appropriate levels of indexation that reflect rising building costs.

In addition to your party's position on recurrent and capital funding, Catholic Education Tasmania is also keen to understand the Greens' position on:

- Funding support for Birth to 4 projects in Catholic schools.
- A commitment to equity of access to all Tasmanian students including those in non-government schools, particularly in the areas of:
  - Literacy and Numeracy initiatives
  - Access to Allied health services for children in the early years (e.g. hearing and sight checks, speech therapy).
- Support for parent engagement strategies.
- Support for solar power infrastructure in Catholic schools.
- Cross – sectoral collaboration for teacher professional learning at the school level.
- A commitment to student access to transport to their school of denominational preference.
- The current extension school (Year 11 & 12) program being implemented.
- Equity of access to TAFE VET programs in Years 11 & 12 students.

During the election campaign, it is our intention to provide our 12,000 families across the state with your responses to the matters raised above. For your interest, I have attached a breakdown on the number of students and families in each of our 5 electorates.

Catholic schools have played a major part in the development of modern Tasmanian society. In seeking your commitments to Catholic education, we are mindful as part of this society, we are expected to meet societies standards with respect to governance transparency and accountability for government funding.

Yours Faithfully

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<p>Hon Michael Polley AM  <b>Chair</b>  <b>Tasmanian Catholic</b>  <b>Education Commission</b></p>	<p>Mr Brendan McManus  <b>President</b>  <b>Tasmanian Catholic</b>  <b>Schools Parents Council</b></p>	<p>Mr John Mula  <b>Director</b>  <b>Catholic Education</b>  <b>Tasmania</b></p>
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Cc: Party secretaries

ATTACHMENT: Distribution of students and families based on electorates

Electorate Overview (2017 data)		
Electorate	Number of Students	Number of Families
Bass	3165	2301
Braddon	3333	2435
Denison	6006	4903
Franklin	3085	2160
Lyons	519	359
Total	16,108	12,158