

## Catholic students to benefit from a re-elected Labor Government

The Catholic Education Commission of Victoria Ltd (CECV) has today welcomed the commitment by a re-elected Andrews Labor Government of \$717 million for non-government schools and kindergartens.

CECV Executive Director Jim Miles said more than 211,000 students and their families across 500 local communities will benefit from new schools being built and upgrades to ageing facilities.

‘On behalf of Catholic education, we welcome the Andrews Government’s significant package of support ahead of the election which reflects the importance of our schools’, Mr Miles said.

‘This is good news for thousands of families who choose a high-quality education and faith-based learning environment for their children.’

The \$450 million towards school capital and infrastructure works will see an initial five new schools built in growing suburbs across Melbourne’s north and west, and expanded capacity at 13 others.

Mr Miles said there are many more Catholic primary and secondary schools that require access to funding so they can upgrade their existing and ageing buildings.

‘For our youngest students, we are pleased to see \$250 million in dedicated funding for kindergartens that will be able to be built or upgraded at Catholic schools. This will mean children who begin their school life at a Catholic kindergarten can easily transition to a Catholic primary school.

‘The \$17 million expansion of the Smile Squad dental program as part of today’s announcement is much needed and long overdue at a time where cost of living remains high for many Catholic families.

‘We know this initiative will lead to better dental outcomes for thousands of young Victorians, and would be ready to enable this program to be rolled out sooner for Catholic students.’

Mr Miles said it was pleasing to see both major political parties in Victoria recognise the value of Catholic education, with the Liberal–National Coalition committing \$700 million towards capital infrastructure for non-government schools if elected.

‘We look forward to unpacking the details of these commitments in the coming weeks and what this looks like for the growing number of schools in our sector which all deserve facilities that are fit for purpose’, he said.

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