

Catholic school salary agreement reached, but funding fears prevent longer deal

The Catholic Education Commission of Victoria Ltd (CECV) and the Independent Education Union Victoria Tasmania have agreed to pay rises for the state's 28,000 Catholic school staff, CECV Executive Director Stephen Elder says.

However, ongoing funding uncertainty created by the Turnbull government's Gonski 2.0 education package and the yet to be unveiled review of school socio-economic status scores mean only interim arrangements covering 2017-18 have been reached, keeping the current enterprise agreement in place.

'We want to acknowledge the contribution of Catholic school staff and ensure their efforts are properly rewarded,' Mr Elder said.

'Unfortunately, Malcolm Turnbull and Education Minister Simon Birmingham have made this task next to impossible.

'Despite all their comments to the contrary, we know we will be facing significant funding challenges in the years ahead.

'This means we have only been able to make interim arrangements covering 2017 and 2018.'

Under the agreement, Catholic school staff will receive salary increases for this year backdated to April, followed by increases in April and October next, consistent with the government sector.

Mr Elder said that the interim arrangements would also improve conditions for staff and, importantly, provide certainty for schools and principals in 2018.

'We remain committed to constructive negotiations on a new EBA for Catholic school staff and talks will continue,' Mr Elder said, 'but have had these interim arrangements forced upon us by the federal government.

'We have not been able to reach a four-year agreement as it is impossible to foresee the funding future for Catholic education under Malcolm Turnbull and Simon Birmingham.

'Our 28,000 staff, along with parents and pupils, are victims of this uncertainty.

'Senator Birmingham has been singularly disinterested in the concerns of Catholic education authorities nationally with his new funding arrangements.

'While his promised review of the SES scores system offers an opportunity to tackle many of these issues, there are some worrying preliminary signs the Minister is more interested in

Media Release



CATHOLIC EDUCATION COMMISSION OF VICTORIA LTD

conducting a Sir Humphrey-style exercise in bureaucratic box-ticking rather than a rigorous re-examination of a key funding measure the original Gonski Review said should be replaced.

'We are committed to a positive outcome for our sector – that means for our students and our staff.

'We look forward to being able to continue negotiations on the EBA once we overcome this funding impasse.'

Further information: Christian Kerr, Media Adviser, 03 9267 0411 or 0402 977 352