

Media Release



CATHOLIC EDUCATION COMMISSION OF VICTORIA LTD

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Catholic schools welcome funding commitment by Guy-led opposition

The Catholic Education Commission of Victoria Ltd (CECV) has welcomed today's announcement by the Liberals and Nationals party to commit \$175 million per annum over four years for non-government schools.

CECV Executive Director Jim Miles said more than 211,000 students and their families will benefit from dedicated capital funding that will see new schools built and upgrades to existing facilities.

'On behalf of Catholic education in Victoria, we commend the Matthew Guy-led Liberals and Nationals party for their commitment of significant capital funding ahead of the state election', Mr Miles said.

'This \$700 million investment over four years is a 75% increase on the \$402 million commitment by the opposition and government in the current term. It will go a long way to ensuring that Catholic education will be well-placed to meet future growth, particularly in Melbourne's west and north, and around Geelong.

'It will see more schools being built and urgent upgrades provided across many of the 499 Catholic schools in our network, while supporting hundreds of local trade and construction jobs.

'Importantly, it will ensure almost a quarter of a million Victorian students can continue to receive high-quality learning that can evolve to meet the changing educational needs of the future.'

Mr Miles said that, with one in four Catholic students coming from low-income families, it's critical non-government schools remain affordable while offering high-quality learning environments for families who choose a faith-based education for their children.

'This funding will see greater equity and access for all Victorian students, no matter what school they attend, and it ultimately benefits the wider education sector to build a world-class system where no child is left behind', he said.

'In addition, this funding will also mean less overcrowding in classrooms and provide teachers with a broader range of tools they can use to effectively implement the Victorian school curriculum, creating a more manageable work environment for them to operate.'

Mr Miles said that, while the Andrews Government is yet to make a public commitment, the CECV is hopeful this will occur over coming weeks.

'We look forward to continuing our constructive and well-established discussions with the Andrews Government, and are hopeful for a bipartisan commitment', he said.

'In addition to capital funding, we are also seeking a commitment to recurrent and capital kindergarten funding, access to public health and transport programs including the Smile Squad dental program, and the government's free bus program for regional and rural students.

'Finally, we hope both sides commit to targeted funding for teacher recruitment at a time of national skill shortages and in recognition of the significant contribution they make as educators of the next generation of Victorians.'

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