



CATHOLIC EDUCATION  
WESTERN AUSTRALIA

**Media Statement**

**12 February, 2021**

### **Catholic school parents and Catholic Education seek a fairer funding deal**

Catholic Education Western Australia (CEWA) and Catholic School Parents WA (CSPWA) have launched a joint election platform, seeking a fairer funding deal from the incoming State Government.

Executive Director Dr Debra Sayce said the Every Child Counts campaign sought to highlight the current lack of equitable education funding.

“There is a lot of misinformation about school funding. The unfortunate reality is that Catholic school students receive significantly less government funding than students in public schools.”

“In the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic, critical funding for all school students needs to be a priority,” she said.

“Nearly one in every five WA children is educated in a Catholic school, and that number is expected to keep rising as more families choose a Catholic education.”

“Catholic Education makes a very significant social and economic contribution and our students deserve the same access to mental health and support services and ongoing investment in contemporary learning facilities.”

Dr Sayce said successive State Governments had failed to provide an equitable funding model particularly in these two areas. As part of its campaign, CEWA has written to every candidate in Western Australia seeking to secure the following three priorities:

- Equivalent recurrent capital funding, based on CEWA’s proportion of WA schools students and public education capital expenditure, to alleviate the growing capital investment burden that falls disproportionately on Catholic school families compared to State school families;
- Recurrent funding support of \$10 million per annum for the mental health and wellbeing of our students to meet the increased demand for these services in the wake of COVID-19; and
- An \$8 million recovery support fund to COVID-19 affected Catholic schools, representing an equal ratio of COVID-19 recovery funding offered to State schools.

CSPWA Executive Director Siobhan Allen said to secure the support of parties and candidates, parents would hold forums at schools across the State.

“Our parents have made it clear that they will no longer remain silent about critical funding for their children,” Ms Allen said.

“Our parents are keen to engage with candidates from all parties and to ensure their voices are heard at this election.”

“Parents in Catholic schools already make a significant contribution to their children’s education, saving the Government \$611 million every year.

“They should not be penalised for making this choice. It is time their contribution was acknowledged.”

Dr Sayce said WA deserves an educational funding model that is needs-based, sector blind and supports diverse, non-government schools in all communities where they are needed.

“Our students, our staff and our schools deserve to be treated fairly,” she said.

“We need the State to provide equivalent recurrent capital funding to CEWA to alleviate the burden that falls disproportionately on Catholic school families compared to State school families.

“We make a critical contribution and all political parties need to commit to change.”

Dr Sayce said CEWA is the seventh biggest employer in WA, supporting more than 11,000 teaching and non-teaching positions.

“We have 163 schools across the State and every day we educate more than 77,000 students,” she said.

“We need the incoming WA Government to recognise the contribution of Catholic Education in WA, and support our role as a partner in educating tens of thousands of Western Australian children.”

For more information on the Every Child Counts campaign see <https://www.everychildcounts.net.au/>

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