MEDIA RELEASE

CATHOLIC SCHOOLS ARE NOT OVERFUNDED

The article in the Canberra Times today suggesting that ACT Catholic and independent schools receive Australian Government funding that they are not entitled to is wrong. Non-Government schools receive funding in accordance with Australian Government policy and funding maintenance is an integral part of that policy.

The article quotes a flawed and biased report by the Save Our Schools organisation convenor Trevor Cobbold arguing that non-government schools are ‘overfunded’ by comparing just part of the Australian Government’s socio-economic based funding model to actual funding. The simple facts in respect of ACT Catholic schools are:

- Catholic schools attract funding according to Australian Government policy. They are not overfunded.
- When both Australian and Territory Government funding is taken into account, an ACT Catholic school student attracts substantially less government funding than an ACT Government school student.
- The parents of ACT Catholic schools have a similar socio-economic status to the parents of ACT Government schools yet the level of funding available to Catholic schools from governments and fees is less than Government schools.
- Catholic System schools are not funded individually. Funding attracted by Systemic schools is distributed among member schools on the basis of need.
- The ACT Catholic Schools System receives the lowest level of Australian Government funding per student of any Catholic System in Australia and one of the lowest levels of State/Territory Government support.

Moira Najdecki, Director of Catholic Education in the ACT said. “School funding is a complex issue. It is important that funding from all sources is identified in order to see the whole picture. It is also important to remember that every child, regardless of the school he or she attends, is entitled to the best education that our nation can provide and that requires adequate and equitable resources for all students.”

Mrs Najdecki said she hoped the current Australian Government review of funding for schooling would better recognise the real costs of education and the needs of all students.

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