



RAISING
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Catholic Education South Australia

2022 State Election Backgrounder





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Catholic Education SA at a glance...

OUR IMPACT

Catholic Education South Australia (CESA) has been educating children and young people and playing a vital part in our community for **over 175 years ...**

1844: In November 1844, South Australia's first Catholic school was opened in a temporary chapel on Pirie Street, Adelaide.

1866: By 1866, there was a Jesuit School - St Aloysius at Sevenhill - and about 20 parish schools including one at Penola. Now known as Mary MacKillop Memorial School, it is one of the oldest continuing Catholic schools in the country.

2022:	30 Birth to 5 Years Services	103 Schools with 118 Campuses	1 University Residential College	48,149 School Students	9,000 Staff
					

OUR VISION

We meet the needs of young people in our community – wherever they are; whatever they need...

- 65** Primary Schools
- 33** Secondary, Combined & Middle Schools
- 3** Technical Colleges
- 2** Special Schools
- 3** Special Assistance Schools
- 74** OSHC for school aged children
- 30** Services for children from Birth to 5 years (Preschools, ELCs & Occasional Care)
- 1** University Residential College (Aquinas College)



OUR GROWTH

New in 2022

Two new schools opening in 2022

- St Francis of Assisi College, Renmark
- Compass Catholic Community, Davoren Park



Expansion in 2022

4 schools expanding from Primary to R-9

- St Mary MacKillop School, Wallaroo
- St Joseph's School, Peterborough
- St Joseph's School, Clare
- St Joseph's School, Murray Bridge



Fair Funding for Catholic Schools



Our Invitation...

Catholic Education South Australia is committed to working in partnership with government to continue to provide quality education to South Australians and play our part to ensure South Australia is a thriving community of excellence.

Funding principles

The funding of Australia's education system is underpinned by two distinct but related principles:

1. Each child or young person is entitled to a high-quality education funded by the taxpayer.
2. Families, as taxpayers, should be free to choose the school that best fits their children's needs, and matches their own values and beliefs.

Matters of importance to Catholic school communities

As we head towards the 2022 State Election, there are a number of issues of importance to Catholic school communities.

The South Australian Commission for Catholic Schools – on behalf of the tens of thousands of families who choose our Catholic schools and centres for the education of their children – is seeking firm commitments from each political party on each of the important matters outlined in this document.

1 Recurrent Funding



We seek a commitment to...

maintain the state government school funding contribution at 22% of the Schooling Resource Standard (SRS).

The Schooling Resource Standard (SRS) is an estimate of how much total public funding a school needs to meet its students' educational needs.

For non-government schools, per student base funding is means tested. The specific amount of funding for each child is reduced by the "Capacity to Contribute".

The Capacity to Contribute ranges from the minimum 10% funding reduction in 35 of our schools in lower socio-economic areas (one third of all Catholic schools), right through to a 53% funding reduction in a Catholic school with a high proportion of families whose income is deemed to be relatively high. Across the system of Catholic schools, the average funding reduction is 20% and this amount largely comes from parents through school fees and other contributions.

While the Capacity to Contribute settings remain a point of some conjecture, especially the fact that the starting point is 10% - which potentially makes a non-government school education out of reach for some families - a state government contribution of 22% of the Schooling Resource Standard (SRS) helps Catholic schools keep school fees as low as possible. This means that families who wish to choose a Catholic education for their children can do so, even in low socio-economic areas.

A state government contribution of 22% of the Schooling Resource Standard (SRS) is crucial to supporting Catholic schools to be accessible to all families.

For more information about how school funding works www.ncec.catholic.edu.au/schools/school-funding

2 Capital Funding



We seek a commitment to...

increase annual capital grant allocations to Catholic Education South Australia, from \$11.7 million in 2021, to the following amounts over the next four years:

2022 – \$14m
2023 – \$16m
2024 – \$18m
2025 – \$20m

The state government capital grants program is vitally important because government recurrent funding cannot be used for capital works or infrastructure developments in Catholic schools.

Since its introduction following the March 2018 state election, Catholic Education South Australia has welcomed the state government capital grants program, which commenced at \$5.5 million in 2018.

The basis of this original amount was framed on the equivalent Victorian state government payment to Catholic schools, which was \$21 million at the time. Since then, the Victorian government has increased its payments, to \$105 million in 2020. Remaining consistent with the original model, this would equate to \$20 million for South Australian Catholic schools in that same year.

In recognition of demands made on government, Catholic Education seeks that the rate of increment commences at \$14 million this year and reaching \$20 million by 2025.

Noting that there are 103 Catholic schools across 118 campuses, the South Australian Commission for Catholic Schools recommends state government capital grants be provided to those Catholic schools which otherwise could not raise sufficient revenue on their own to undertake major capital works projects. This helps keep fees as low as possible in these schools (often small schools and/or schools in low socio-economic areas and/or new schools), while also providing the necessary infrastructure to enable a high-quality education.

3 Preschool Education



We seek a commitment to...

increase the number of state government funded preschool places in Catholic Education from 420 to 1,000 by 2025.

Families are increasingly seeking a high-quality Catholic education in the early years.

Catholic Education South Australia currently provides thirty education services for children from Birth to 5 years. These services are well regulated, connected to Catholic primary schools and colleges, and have continued to expand in recent years to meet families' desires for high quality education and care provision for their children within the one Catholic community.

Catholic Education currently provides 420 places for four-year-old children across 9 preschools, under a longstanding agreement with the state government. These places and settings are full.

We are now seeking a formal commitment to increasing the number of state government funded preschool places in Catholic Education from 420 to 1,000 by 2025.

The provision of 1000 places would be across multiple new sites prioritising:

- low socio-economic areas where preschool provision is inconsistent
- regional areas, where demand is higher than the available service provision, and
- new areas, where preschool provision has not yet been properly established.

4

Fair Access to Rural and Regional Buses



We seek a commitment to...

increase the state government contribution to support fair access to rural and regional bus services from \$1 million per annum (indexed) to \$1.5 million per annum (indexed).

Access to school buses has been a long-standing issue for Catholic school children and families, and we acknowledge the progress that has been made in respect of this matter since the last election.

Currently, Catholic Education South Australia receives from the state government a grant allocation of \$1 million per annum (indexed) to support children to access bus services in rural and regional areas to take them to a Catholic school.

The grant allocation offsets some of the travel costs for families and, in particular “hotspots” where access to government run school buses has been volatile, the grant allocation has enabled certain schools to provide their own bus service.

Despite these gains, fair access to rural and regional buses for students in Catholic schools remains problematic, and subject to local, inconsistent decision-making.

Catholic Education maintains that children in rural and regional areas should be able to access a school bus without fear of being deemed “ineligible” and denied a place.

We seek a state government bus policy that puts the needs of children first, regardless of their families’ choice of schooling.

5 Year 7 Transition Funding



We seek a commitment to...

allocate \$10 million to recognise the significant costs incurred in the transition of Year 7 students into secondary settings.

In 2018, the Government stated its intent to move Year 7 into secondary settings. In response to that policy commitment, Catholic Education South Australia moved ahead with plans to transition Year 7s into secondary settings in 2019.

Catholic Education South Australia is seeking a commitment of \$10 million to recognise the significant costs incurred transitioning Year 7 students into secondary settings across Catholic schools.

Catholic Education began the transition of Year 7 students with a pilot project in 2018. Most Catholic schools transitioned Year 7 students into secondary settings in 2019, with the remaining Year 7s transitioning at the commencement of 2022.

During that period, the Federal Government has funded all Year 7s in secondary settings in Catholic schools at the Secondary Schooling Resource Standard (SRS).

Despite most Year 7 students being in a Catholic secondary context, the State Government has continued to fund them at the Primary Schooling Resource Standard (SRS). This has created a funding shortfall from 2019-2021 of more than \$6 million.

In addition, Catholic Education South Australia has experienced higher per student education costs and substantial expenditure related to the construction of new facilities in secondary schools and staff training and redeployment.

Catholic Education South Australia has not received any financial support from the State Government during this transition.

Therefore, we are now seeking a commitment of \$10 million in recognition of the SRS funding shortfall and the significant infrastructure costs incurred in the transition of Year 7 students into Catholic secondary schools.

6 COVID-19 Responsibilities



We seek a commitment to...

the continued provision of mandated supplies to ensure the safety of students and staff during the current COVID-19 pandemic.

Catholic Education South Australia has been working closely with the Department for Education to ensure that we are compliant with all SA Health directions. This has included the provision of masks, hand sanitiser and air purifiers.

Rapid Antigen Test (RAT) kits are now an added essential requirement for operating schools, boarding houses and other educational services including early years. A model where critical SA Health requirements are devolved to the various education sectors to manage independently, presents the real risk of varying levels of access to this essential requirement across our schools, both in terms of supply and delivery timelines. Catholic Education requests a review of the devolved management practice currently in operation.

Catholic Education is also seeking a commitment that supply management and all costs associated with the procurement and distribution of RAT kits across all three education sectors are factored into the government's planning and budgeting, ensuring that this mandated and critical requirement to keep students and staff safe is fully funded by the State Government.

7

Vocational Education and Technical Colleges



We seek a commitment to...

work in partnership with Catholic Education to more efficiently expand the provision of vocational education.

We note that the Labor Party has released a policy statement to establish five new technical colleges.

Catholic Education has recently expanded its trade offering, in partnership with the Government, at Mount Carmel College in Rosewater, through the Western Technical College.

Additionally, Catholic Education SA has many other existing trade centres across its school network and has specialist trade education offerings at St Patrick's Technical College and Cardijn College's Marcellin Campus.

We would welcome the opportunity to work together with government to explore opportunities for collaboration and partnership to support the proposed expansion of VET education and training.



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