SUMMARY REPORT

The 341st meeting of the Catholic Education Commission, New South Wales was held on 24 October 2012 in the Clancy/Gilroy Rooms of the Polding Centre. The meeting was chaired by Bishop Anthony Fisher OP.

A Summary Report of the Commission meeting is provided below:

1. National Partnership Teacher Quality: Reward Funding for Catholic Schools

Commissioners noted that some National Partnerships attract Reward funds upon achievement of key performance indicators which are paid to the State by the Australian Government and in turn distributed at the sole discretion of the State Government. The National Partnership Teacher Quality is one such National Partnership.

Commissioners at their 19 September 2012 meeting noted that the NSW government had received Reward funds for achieving key performance indicators under the Teacher Quality National Partnership and that these funds were to be distributed across the education sectors based upon FTE teaching staff.

Commissioners discussed options for distributing the NSW Catholic schools share of $11.13 million and decided to adopt the NSW government methodology. It was, however, agreed that when the second Teacher Quality Reward grant is received in April/May 2013, the Commission will reconsider its allocation criteria.

2. NSW Government Per Capita and Capital Grants

Commissioners noted NSW Budget Paper No. 2 in which NSW Treasury appears to be opining about where to find inefficiencies. Commissioners noted that the particular reference to capping of NSW non-government schools Capital grants was the first that the NSW non-government schools sector became aware of this identified saving by NSW Treasury. The Chairman advised that he would write to the NSW Premier about the future of the State Capital Grants Program.

Commissioners noted that the intention of education budget cuts was to trim “outside the school gate” administrative expenditures. There is an assumption that all NSW school sectors are equally resourced and that “administrative support” can be equally trimmed to find savings.

Commissioners noted that the CEC and the AIS are modelling options in order to submit a proposal to the NSW Premier as to how the desired savings can be found in the NSW non-government schools sector without impacting on classroom teaching.

Commissioners speculated that cuts in government support programs could result in increased enrolments in NSW Catholic schools, particularly students with disabilities.
3. **Commonwealth School Funding Model**

Commissioners noted:

- indexation is likely to be based upon actual school costs and not on a generalised education measure such as AGSRC;
- the Australian Government’s approach to the Gonski recommendations is likely to be incremental;
- a new funding model will be introduced in 2014;
- a loading for low SES is likely to be based upon “direct” parent education and occupation data collected by ACARA through school enrolment processes;
- ACARA is planning changes to its ICSEA calculations to improve accuracy;
- Improved National SWD data will not be available in 2014 and perhaps not for some considerable time; and
- The Schooling Resource Standard is intended to be used by the Australian Government for determining its total recurrent funding for both government and non-government systems.

4. **Commission Decisions**

The Commission:

- approved:
  - the 2013 CEC Budget; and
  - the 2013 CEC Strategic Directions,
  - for formal submission to the NSW/ACT Bishops;
- agreed the Memorandum of Understanding allowing for individual Congregational schools to request entry into the NSW Catholic Schools System for funding purposes only;
- endorsed:
  - the allocation of $2,355,951 for the AITSL Principal Professional Development Program to Dioceses and also to Congregational schools as a group on the basis of the number of schools per diocese/group, being a proxy measure for number of Principals; and
  - the *Third Quarterly Report on Road Safety Education for NSW Catholic Schools 2012*.

5. **Overseas Visa (571) Students – CRICOS Registration**

With the Commonwealth Register of Institutions and Courses for Overseas Students (CRICOS) responsibilities at the State level moving from the now defunct Vocational Education and Training Accreditation Board (VETAB) to the NSW Board of Studies (BOS), legal responsibility for the enrolment of Visa 571 students is moving from CEC NSW to Diocesan and Congregational Schools Authorities.

Commissioners noted that given that not all registrations will be formalised by 31 December 2012 CEC NSW has had its CRICOS registration extended through first term 2013. BOS has provided assurances that CEC NSW can continue in its role as CRICOS Provider until all relevant NSW Catholic Schools Authorities have by May 2013 received their CRICOS registrations.
6. **Launch of NSW eSyllabuses for K-10 English, History, Mathematics and Science**

On Tuesday 16 October 2012, the Minister of Education and Communities, Adrian Piccoli launched new NSW syllabuses for English, Maths. Science and History K-10 at Ultimo Public School. These syllabuses contain the Australian Curriculum content developed by the Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority (ACARA). The syllabuses are available in digital and in print form. The digital version (http://syllabus.bos.nsw.edu.au/) allows teachers to:

- view syllabuses in a variety of ways including by stage or subject;
- search across syllabuses and stages;
- filter content by learning across the curriculum areas;
- clarify terms via an embedded hyperlinked glossary when viewing content;
- download syllabuses in full or in part as PDF or Word documents;
- access interactive Mathematics equations and diagrams.

7. **Support for Teacher Development for the Australian Curriculum**

At the launch of the new K-10 syllabuses at Ultimo Public School on 16 October, Minister Piccoli also announced that funding would be provided for teacher development in preparation for the introduction of the new syllabuses. The Minister announced that the Department of Education and Communities would be provided with $22.8 million and non-government schools would be given $2.2 million. It is quite unclear on what basis the unequal proportions of funding have been determined and this matter is being pursued with the Minister’s Office.

8. **Senator Jacinta Collins**

Bishop Anthony invited Senator Jacinta Collins, Parliamentary Secretary for Education and Employment, currently assisting the Prime Minister and Minister for Education on the development of the new funding model, to attend the Commission meeting.

The timetable and the mechanism for the implementation of the new post-2013 model for funding Australian schools, both government and non-government, will be contained in the forthcoming Australian Education Act.

John Kitney

**Commission Secretary**

20 November 2012
Catholic Block Grant Authority NSW (CBGA) Briefing to the Commission

The Commission noted the briefing from the CBGA:

GENERAL CAPITAL GRANTS PROGRAM

Commissioners noted that all Catholic and Independent Block Grant Authorities from around Australia are meeting in late October 2012 to discuss amongst themselves and with DEEWR operational and strategic issues relating to the capital programs. The NSW Catholic State Priority Committee and Diocesan Priority Committee members are meeting in early November 2012 to discuss operational issues relating to the Capital Programs. Results of these meetings will be presented to the 21 November 2012 Commission meeting.

BER P21 PROGRAM

The status of the P21 projects as at 30 September 2012 is as follows (figures presented to the 19 September 2012 Commission meeting for August are bracketed):

- 699 (686) at full acquitted status;
- 22 (34) at completed status

Commissioners noted that during September 2012, there has been steady progress in fully acquitting and completing BER P21 projects with all 721 projects now completed. All funding must be fully acquitted by 31 December 2012.

TRADE TRAINING CENTRES

The CBGA paid over $1.5 million in project funds during September.

Construction has commenced on the TTC project at St John’s College, Woodlawn.

Commissioners noted that there is no new information about if or when Round 5 of TTCs may commence. In May 2012, the Government announced that funding of Round 5 of TTCs was delayed until 2013/14 – with no funding budgeted for 2012/13.

Several schools have lobbied Government to advocate for the continuation of the TTC program, including Chevalier College. The Association of Independent Schools supports this initiative, while the CBGA has not formally endorsed the approach. TTC’s are direct contracts between the Government and the school or the group of schools responsible for the TTC – there is no contract between the Government and the CBGA or the school/schools and the CBGA.

DIGITAL EDUCATION REVOLUTION

The CBGA is still waiting for DEEWR to release the sustainment funding. This funding is based on replacing Round 1, 2 and 2.1 computers at a rate of $700 per computer.

The CBGA understands that schools will already have started to purchase replacement computers and requests that invoices seeking reimbursement should be entered on to the NSSC website.

John Kitney
Commission Secretary
20 November 2012