The 345th meeting of the Catholic Education Commission, New South Wales was held on 24 April 2013 in the Clancy/Gilroy Rooms of the Polding Centre. The meeting was chaired by Deputy Chair Commissioner Peter Turner.

A Summary Report of the Commission meeting is provided below:

1. Commonwealth Schools Funding Model

Discussions took place in the context of the 22 April 2013 decision by Premier Barry O’Farrell to implement Gonski funding reforms in New South Wales.

Commissioners noted that Commissioners Brian Croke and Danielle Cronin have met with the Hon Adrian Piccoli MP, the NSW Minister for Education. Attention on schools funding reform has now shifted from the Commonwealth only to the States as well. NSW has the largest gap between existing resources and the Gonski standard so has the most to gain potentially from the new National funding model. The NSW government is negotiating on behalf of the three education sectors in the State.

It appears that NSW does not have to contribute 3 per cent indexation in 2014 and 2015 but will commence 3% indexation in 2016. TAFE fees will increase in 2014 as part of these arrangements. These arrangements will also be made available to the other States.

There is uncertainty about the quantum of new schools money which is to be made available for 2014. To understand the real increase in funds in 2014, adjustments for the folding in of targeted programs and National Partnerships need to be made. The 2014 Commonwealth Budget will be handed down on 14 May 2013 and may give some better indication of funds available for 2014.

The NSW government over time will be required to distribute State grants for non-government schools consistently with Commonwealth grants.

2. Australian Charities and Not For Profit Commission

Commissioners focused on two implementation issues from amongst the eight canvassed in the paper. Focus issues were

- Confirmation of Entity Registration by 2 June 2013; and
- Emerging Annual Information Statement requirements.
With respect to Entity Registration issues, the following points were stressed:

- For ACNC purposes an “Entity” can be a person, an unincorporated association, a company or a trust;
- For ACNC purposes responsible entities and persons should be identified applying the Makinson and d’Apice advice as provided; and
- Systemic schools can be grouped for ACNC Registration purposes but the grouping entity must be in a position to then exercise the ongoing ACNC compliance requirements which arise including full reporting and governance requirements from 2016.

Commissioners noted that the CEC will hold discussions with other Catholic entities and will shortly issue advice in the CEC eBulletin on how to register with the ACNC.

3. Schools Counsellors Catholic Schools Working Party Update

Commissioners reviewed this Working Party progress report and agreed that it provides the basis for the final report expected in June 2013.

Discussion focused on:

- Potential legal liabilities which could arise from poor practice in this area;
- The diversity and complexity of current service arrangements;
- The growth of service provision in recent years being driven by demand rather than by coordinated planning;
- Lack of boundary clarity in relation to Pastoral Care; and
- Related industrial relations issues and the need to involve CCER.

Commissioners then agreed that the core issues for advice are:

- Who are the Counsellors?;
- Record Keeping and sharing, particularly the role of the School Principal in record management and access; and
- Self-Referral by children / students and the role / rights of parents.

Other key matters identified included:

- Counsellor / Student ratios. Is there a required ratio?;
- Supervision, including role of School Principals; and
- Role of Year Advisors, Pastoral Care, Coordinators, Chaplains i.e. their relationship to Counselling.

In summary, Commissioners agreed that the advised scaffold does provide an acceptable basis for the drafting of the final report. It was also noted that the Catholic Education and Social Welfare Coordinating Committee is providing advice on report scope and content issues.
4. **Commission Strategic Planning**

Commissioners reaffirmed their commitment to holding a Commission Strategy Day in August 2013 to:

a) identify and explore key strategic issues for the Commission in 2014;

b) provide a planning tool for the CEC Secretariat; and

c) plan the Commission agenda for 2014.

Commissioners agreed *in principle* to the engagement of an external facilitator for the Strategy Day. Commissioners also agreed to consider the involvement of key external stakeholders in the planning process in order to give views on ‘what is over the horizon’ and to provoke debate.

A Working Party was established and will report back to the Commission by June 2013.

5. **Commission Decisions**

The Commission:

- endorsed the Annual Report on Road Safety Education for NSW Catholic Schools 2012;
- endorsed the Literacy and Numeracy National Partnership Implementation Plan and associated documentation, noting that school level implementation is to commence Term 2 2013 and be completed by Term 4 2013;
- endorsed the third Progress Report for the *More Support for Students with Disabilities* Initiative;
- noted the NSW Catholic Aboriginal Education Focus Schools Accountability reports; and
- endorsed the 2013 NAPLAN and SMART Service Level Agreement, noting the per pupil total cost of $40.00 incl. of GST.

6. **NSW Non-Government Schools Advisory Council**

The most recent meeting of the NSW Non-Government Schools Advisory Council was conducted by teleconference with the Commission represented by Ian Baker. The meeting was devoted to the implementation of *Great Teaching, Inspired Learning: A Blueprint for Action*. The next meeting of the Council will be held on 29 April 2013.

7. **NSW Schools Remember ANZAC**

On 10 April, the 2013 RSL and Schools Remember Anzac Ceremony was held at the Anzac Memorial in Hyde Park, Sydney. The cross-sectoral ceremony is entirely conducted by the students. Again the ceremony was very well attended with 25 Catholic schools participating. This year, Catholic schools provided the Speaker, Tristan Veliz, Patrician Brothers’ College, Fairfield and the Assistant Speaker, Savannah Russo, St Ursula’s College, Kingsgrove. The Bugler was Cadet Nathan Elliot, St Leo’s College, Wahroonga. St Aloysius’ College, Milson’s Point, provided the Cadet guard, commanded by CUO Justin Mowbray, in the centenary year of the school’s cadet unit.

8. **Great Teaching Inspired Learning**

The Executive Director gave a verbal update on *Great teaching Inspired Learning* including the establishment of a Ministerial Advisory Group. The Minister is anxious to progress implementation.

John Kitney
Commission Secretary
14 May 2013
Catholic Block Grant Authority NSW (CBGA) Briefing to the Commission

The Commission noted the briefing from the CBGA:

GENERAL CAPITAL GRANTS PROGRAM

2013 Commonwealth General Capital Program

Dioceses and Congregational schools made thirty five applications (total bids of $119 million) to the CBGA for the 2013 General Capital Funding. Only $29.5 million in funds is available. The State Priority Committee will meet and make site visits over the next three months then make recommendations to the Commission for funding by the CBGA.

DIGITAL EDUCATION REVOLUTION

DEEWR paid CBGA half of the sustainment funding in early March and CBGA passed the funding onto diocesan systems and congregational schools that had submitted DER claims. DEEWR is due to pay the remaining $8.8 million DER funding soon, now CBGA has sent to DEEWR a six-monthly report on type and cost of equipment purchased.

Commissioners noted at all Dioceses must acquit all their DER related expenses to CBGA well before the 30 September 2013 when the DER program will end.

TRADE TRAINING CENTRES

The “TTC Assessment panel” comprising CBGA and Diocesan representatives reviewed all final applications to make sure they provided all the necessary information in the format required by DEEWR. Subsequently CBGA and the relevant TTC applicants have answered successfully any questions from DEEWR. DEEWR have not announced when they will offer TTC Round 5 funding.

John Kitney
Commission Secretary
14 May 2013