1. OUTCOMES OF THE STATE ELECTION: IMPLICATIONS FOR CATHOLIC SCHOOLS

The Commission:

1. noted the outcomes of the 2015 NSW State election;
2. formally thanked the CECNSW Secretariat and the CCSP for the running of the campaign for improved capital funding for NSW Catholic schools;
3. requested the Executive Director to submit a report on the post-election program to the 20 May 2015 Commission meeting to raise awareness of the need for capital funds for NSW Catholic schools.

The Liberal-National Coalition was re-elected on 28 March 2015 to govern in NSW until 2019. The make-up of the lower house in the next Parliament is: Coalition 54 seats, Labor 34, Greens 3 and two Independents.

As the Coalition gave no financial commitments to the non-government schools sector before or during the election campaign in response to its submission on capital funding, CECNSW's focus now turns to the next State Budget which is expected to be delivered on Tuesday 23 June 2015.

The NSW Premier announced a new Cabinet before the Easter break. Adrian Piccoli continues as Minister for Education, but loses responsibility for TAFE to Nationals Monaro MP John Barilaro. Leslie Williams, Nationals MP for Port Macquarie, becomes Minister for Early Childhood Education, Minister for Aboriginal Affairs, and Assistant Minister for Education.

Deputy Labor leader Linda Burney becomes Shadow Minister for Education, Charlestown MP Jodie Harrison becomes Shadow Minister for Early Childhood Education and Wyong MP David Harris becomes Shadow Minister for Skills.

Commissioners congratulated the CECNSW and the CCSP in raising the awareness of the need for capital funds for NSW Catholic schools in the lead up to and during the 2015 NSW House of Assembly election campaign. Commissioners requested that the Catholic sector campaign for capital funding continue.
2. **2014 CECNSW HSC ANALYSIS: KEY ISSUES**

Commissioners accepted the report on 2014 HSC Data Analysis and endorsed the continued provision of the HSC analysis to Catholic schools based on HSC and NAPLAN data and approved the publication of the 2014 HSC Data Analysis report on the secure HSC project section of the CECNSW website.

Commissioners requested the Executive Director to form a specialist work group to investigate and report on technical issues, including Sciences ‘high bands’, raised by Dr DeCourcy in his report and requested the Education Policy Committee to report back on issues related to (i) adoption of a Business Intelligence platform for delivery of the HSC Data Analysis, and (ii) public reporting of CECNSW HSC Data Analysis reports.

For each annual Higher School Certificate (HSC) since 2000, CECNSW has sponsored an analysis of Catholic sector HSC student outcomes data for the purpose of improved teaching and learning and to better inform schools’ and systems’ planning. The analysis is conducted by Dr John DeCourcy, previously Diocese of Parramatta, now employed by CECNSW as a private consultant.

The analysis of 2014 HSC data is the first based on cohort NAPLAN data (Literacy and Numeracy for Years 7 and 9), rather than the previous School Certificate (Year 10).

3. **SECTION 83C NOT-FOR-PROFIT COMPLIANCE: UPDATE AND ISSUES**

Commissioners reviewed the new Not-for-Profit compliance requirements and noted that CECNSW implementation support workshops for Congregational schools and Diocesan offices will be held in Term Two 2015 once the Ministerial Guidelines become available.

At their 11 February 2015 meeting, Commissioners considered a paper on *NSW Education Act Section 83C Not-for-Profit Guidelines*. Subsequently at their 18 March 2015 meeting related NSW Education Act Section 47 School Governance issues were discussed.

New BOSTES School Governance compliance requirements have been in force since September 2014. Section 83(c) expanded Not-for-Profit regulation of school transactions has been operative since 29 January 2015.

Commissioners noted that it is expected that Guidelines being developed by the NSW Section 83C Advisory Committee will be published early in Term Two 2015 and that sample audits will be conducted in June/July 2015 in two to three randomly selected sites.

4. **BROTHER JOHN TAYLOR FELLOWSHIP**

Brother John Taylor cfc was the Executive Director of the Catholic Education Commission NSW (CECNSW) from 1984 until his sudden death in 1993. The Brother John Taylor Award was instituted in his memory.

In 2012, the Commission decided to change the Award into a Fellowship modelled on the Churchill Fellowship. The aim of the Fellowship is to encourage research into areas which will benefit school education in NSW.

The Fellowship was made available for the first time in 2014. While there were few applicants, they were of good quality. Its first recipient was Mr Mark Gronow from Stella Maris College Manly who was awarded his fellowship on 8 December 2014.

Commissioners agreed to commence promotion of the Fellowship earlier in 2015 than in 2014. A broader advertising process is envisaged including Notre Dame University and Australian Catholic University promoting the Fellowship. Diocesan Catholic Schools Authorities will be asked to raise awareness of the Fellowship among educationists in their diocese. Bishop Peter Comensoli will formally launch the 2015 Fellowship in early June 2015 and a decision on the 2015 Fellowship is expected in November 2015.
5. CATHOLIC PRINCIPLES IN THE CURRICULUM PROJECT: UPDATE

Since the 19 March 2014 Commission meeting, the Mission and Identity Working Party has been progressing four projects:

- Bishops’ survey of Crossroads outcomes: Report provided to the then Bishop now Archbishop Anthony;
- Diocesan Crossroads implementation case studies: completed and made available online at (http://www.cecnsw.catholic.edu.au/ - Mission and Identity on Home Page);
- Production of a study guide to assist school communities engage with “Educating to Intercultural Dialogue in Catholic schools: Completed and available online at (http://www.cecnsw.catholic.edu.au/ - Mission and Identity on Home Page); and
- Developing Catholic Principles and values support advice for teachers: under development.

Commissioners noted that the development of the sample Catholic Principles in the Curriculum site is being funded from the 2013 NSW Government K-10 syllabus implementation support fund ($100,000) and that initial content for the sample site has been provided by the Parramatta Catholic Education Office.

6. TEACHER ACCREDITATION: BOSTES DEVELOPMENTS

During 2014 the Commission tracked key amendments to the NSW Teacher Accreditation Act 2004. “Accreditation of Pre 2004 Teachers: Teacher Accreditation Act Amendments”. Teacher Accreditation amendments were themselves driven by Great Teaching Inspired Learning (GTIL) policy commitments undertaken by Minister Piccoli in consultation with DECNSW, AISNSW and CECNSW.

With the return of Minister Piccoli to the Education portfolio Teacher Accreditation reform processes are set to recommence. CECNSW progresses all Teacher Accreditation matters in close cooperation with CCER. Consultations are managed through the CECNSW hosted inter-Diocesan TAA Group which meets each Term.

Commissioners noted developments with current BOSTES teacher accreditation and related Great Teaching, Inspired Learning (GTIL) reforms:

- processes for accrediting pre-2004 teachers (a confidential BOSTES proposal will be discussed at the 6 May 2015 Education Policy Committee meeting);
- criteria for the suspension and/or revocation of Teacher Accreditation;
- standards and processes for the accreditation of Early Childhood teachers; and
- development of BOSTES criteria and processes for the cyclical review and renewal of the recognition of Teacher Accreditation Authorities (TAAs).
7. CECNSW CAPITAL AND FACILITIES REVIEW: IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

Commissioners at their meeting of 21 August 2014 agreed that there is a need for a comprehensive review of capital and facilities management across NSW Catholic schools. However, Commissioners decided to defer the commencement of the project until February 2015, following the external review of schools grants funding and finalisation by the NSW/ACT Bishops.

The ‘Building the Education Revolution’ (BER) capital investment, which was managed by the NSW Catholic Block Grant Authority on behalf of NSW Catholic schools, demonstrated the strong capabilities and benefits of Catholic education capital grant funding systems. It also drew attention to the importance of detailed consideration and systematic monitoring of school facilities. Meanwhile, capital grants support has become a major public policy area in NSW and the focus of political and campaigning energy during the 28 March 2015 NSW State election.

The Resource Policy Committee (RPC) at its meetings on 3 March and 7 April 2015 revisited the capital and facilities management review, as drafted in August 2014. The Committee discussed the scope of the review, the expected output and the required technical skills and knowledge necessary to perform the review. The RPC’s view is that this is a once in a generation opportunity to perform a comprehensive and purposeful review of a vitally important process for CECNSW that will have long-term implications on Catholic education in NSW.

At its meeting on 18 March 2015, the Commission approved in principle the engagement of a specialist external firm to undertake the ‘Capital and Facilities Management Review’. The Commission at this meeting approved the proposed Terms of Reference for the Review and the process for its conduct.

Commissioners agreed that the review needs to be comprehensive and look at the state of existing infrastructure for ongoing utility and expansion as well as areas forecast for new facilities due to projected increases in school population.

8. COMMISSION DECISIONS

The Commission:

1) endorsed the finalised 2014 Students First Support Fund Educational Accountability Report and noted that an audited financial statement is being prepared;

2) endorsed the engagement of Protiviti to develop the BoSTES required initial Governance Training modules for Responsible Persons in schools administration, approved the costs of $26,000 to $34,000 and noted that the modules will be available early in Term Two;

3) endorsed the revised Aboriginal Education Core Committee Terms of Reference, pending the outcome of the 2015 Review of CECNSW;

4) agreed that the Catholic Education and Social Welfare Coordinating Committee be renamed the Catholic Education and Social Services Coordinating Committee and that its Terms of Reference be amended accordingly; and

5) endorsed the 2015 distribution of Targeted Programs Funding.
9. ACNC COMPLIANCE: 2014 ANNUAL INFORMATION STATEMENTS DUE 30 JUNE

Through NCEC the ACNC has invited Catholic Education representatives to work with ACNC staff to develop agreed compliance advice for schools, see information paper 13.8 below. The joint NCEC and ACNC Working Party will meet on 21st April 2015. Advice arising from the 21st April meeting will be posted on the ACNC website to assist ACNC Registered Catholic schools complete their 2014 ACNC Annual Information Statements (AIS) by 30/6/2015. It is envisaged that this guidance will be along the lines of an explanation of the transitional arrangements whereby the ACNC and the Department of Education and Training will be sharing each school’s Financial Questionnaire data and pre-populating the financial section of the ACNC AIS.

To make ACNC’s online system operate, education entities will have to complete the top level AIS information but after that only enter zeros in the financial boxes so that the online system will allow them to continue and submit the AIS. CECNSW through NCEC understands that only an entity’s financial information as required by the AIS will be accessible on the ACNC public website.

Meanwhile the Australian Catholic Bishops Conference (ACBC) has worked with ACNC to develop a Governance Template to assist Catholic charities. ACNC registered entities are required to complete their Annual Information Statements by 30 June 2015. For further information contact Ian Baker.

10. DISABILITY DISCRIMINATION STANDARDS AND THE MANAGEMENT OF STUDENTS WITH BEHAVIOURAL CHALLENGES

Commissioners will be aware of the recent controversy surrounding the way a Canberra Government school is alleged to have managed a student with autism. In this context it needs to be remembered that where student behaviour is the consequence of a disability the behaviour must be managed in accordance with the provisions of the Disability Discrimination Act (Commonwealth) Education Standards.

CECNSW has made available an e-Learning tool which assists teachers in the understanding of their Disability Discrimination Act compliance obligations. This e-Learning tool is available at http://www.cecnsw.catholic.edu.au/dbpage.php?pg=view&dbase=programs&id=55

Following the Canberra incident Minister Piccoli’s office contacted CECNSW seeking an assurance that all NSW Catholic schools manage student behaviour resulting from a diagnosed disability in accordance with DDA Standards. The CECNSW Secretariat has given the Minister the necessary assurance.

Commissioners are encouraged to promote awareness and use of the CECNSW e-Learning DDA compliance tool. Finally, it should also be noted that the ongoing implementation of the Nationally Consistent Collection of Data on Students with Disabilities will itself address compliance issues arising.
11. CONSULTATION WITH THE NEW NSW ADVOCATE FOR CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

At their 18 June 2014 meeting Commissioners discussed paper 358/7.1/1 An Advocate for Children replacing the NSW Commissioner for Children and Young People. Mr Andrew Johnson has now commenced duty as the first NSW Advocate for Children and Young People. On Tuesday 5 May Catholic Education and Social Welfare Coordinating Committee members will hold the first Catholic sector consultation with Advocate Johnson.

The advocate has the following powers:

(i) The conduct of special inquiries
(ii) Preparation of a 3 year strategic plan for children and young people
(iii) Remediation of systemic issues impacting children and young people
(iv) Action to promote the safety, welfare and wellbeing of children and young people.

A paper on issues arising from the 5 May 2015 consultation will be prepared for the consideration of Commissioners.

12. AIS GOVERNANCE SYMPOSIUM, 17 APRIL

On 17 April 2015 the Association of Independent Schools (AIS) hosted a symposium on the new requirements and expectations for School Governance at the Sydney Cricket Ground. The program was designed for the information of school board members, principals and others senior staff with responsibilities in compliance and governance. The symposium was opened by the NSW Minister for Education, Adrian Piccoli, and included input from David Gonski on lesson from his experience of school governance and corporate governance, John Hattie (chair AITSL) on what those responsible for school governance need to know about teaching and learning, as well as Susan Pascoe, Executive Director of the ACNC on streamlining of schools requirements for ACNC compliance. Brian Croke and Ian Baker attended for CECNSW.

13. RSL ANZAC ART EXHIBITION

On Thursday 16 April 2015 the RSL Anzac Art Exhibition 2014 was opened by the Governor of NSW, his Excellency General The Honourable David Hurley AC DSC (Ret’d), at Panthers, Penrith. This competition is open to students in all three levels of education. The competition is in its third year. Students from Catholic schools from all parts of NSW have participated and won awards. The theme for this year’s competition, “Army-Navy-Air Force”, has been released. Please see the website: http://rslanzacart.photophuse.com/ for more information.

14. GALLIPOLI 2015 SCHOOL TOUR

The 125 students and teachers and three Tour Directors left Sydney on 19 April 2015. The group, composed of students and staff from all three school sectors, staged through Dubai before arriving in Istanbul at 1800 on 20 April 2015. The group was mostly based in Çanakkale on the Asiatic shore. On 22 April, the group was guided through Anzac Cove. After the Dawn Service and Lone Pine Services on 25 April, the party returned to Australia late on 27 April 2015. Tony McArthur from the CECNSW Secretariat was one of the three Tour Directors.

John Kitney
Commission Secretary
18 May 2015
BRIEFING BY THE CATHOLIC BLOCK GRANT AUTHORITY

CAPITAL GRANTS 2015 APPLICATION ROUND

The closing date for the 2015 application round occurred on Monday 13 April 2015, with the receipt of 43 applications for capital grant funding assistance.

The amount of capital grant funding from both the Australian and New South Wales Governments available for allocation for the 2015 application round is approximately $35m. The total estimated cost based on the 43 applications received is $135m with $87.5m being the approximate value of capital grants required to fund every application.

This year thirty-seven applications were received from nine of the eleven diocesan education systems, with six applications received from congregational schools. These applications were received for a range of purposes with eighteen applications for new schools or additional stages of new schools, schools with increasing enrolments that add an additional stream or streams; or the introduction of new levels of schooling. The remaining twenty-five applications are from schools requiring the upgrading to existing facilities to meet the changing curriculum demands and the introduction of contemporary teaching and learning spaces.

In accordance with past practice, applications are categorised by SES groupings with eight of the applications being from Category A, the most disadvantaged category group; thirty applications from Category B, one application from Category C, three applications from Category D, and one application from Category E.

The CBGA officers are now working through all of the applications to ensure that each application complies with the conditions laid out in the legislation and guidelines. This review of applications prior to the first meeting ensures that any possible errors in applications are addressed prior to each applications assessment by members of the State Priority Committee (SPC).

Where identified, possible errors will be referred to applicants for clarification prior to any changes being made to applications. This includes a review of the forecasted student enrolment information that is based on historical student census data.

TRADE SKILLS CENTRE – UTILISATION REPORTING

The Australian Government released the utilisation reports for 2014 on 13 April 2015. There is a requirement for all trade trade/skills centres that delivered qualifications in 2014 to complete an utilisation report.

These reports will be downloaded by the CBGA/CECNSW and distributed to officers responsible for completion of the utilisation of each centre, or cluster. This requirement for cluster arrangements will relate only to those who were the lead school in the cluster.

As completed reports are required to be submitted to the Australian Government by Friday 26 June, 2015 the CBGA/CECNSW requires reports to be returned no later than 12 June, 2015. Other requirements relating to the processing of the reports will be detailed when the reports are distributed.

- **Trades Skills Centres Under Construction**

Of the eight Trade Skills Centres approved in Round Five Phase One (2014), four of the centres have yet to provide certification of construction completion. For all but one of these projects they are outside of the agreed contractual milestone dates with the Australian Government and risk the possible non-payment of any outstanding grant amount. Officers responsible for the provision of this documentation have been requested to provide the outstanding documentation without delay.