Catholic Education Commission NSW (CECNSW) today welcomed the NSW Government’s decision to invest $1 billion in new government schools and classrooms over the next decade.

CECNSW Executive Director Brian Croke said he supported the Government’s commitment to expand and improve the state’s public education infrastructure.

“All NSW students need modern schools to ensure they can access the high quality educational services needed in a competitive, innovative economy,” Dr Croke said.

“We commend the Government on this investment and hope that it can be extended across all education sectors, including to non-government schools which educate one third of the state’s students and more than half of all secondary students.”

Dr Croke said parents currently funded most of the building works in more than 900 NSW Catholic and independent schools – on top of the taxes they paid that helped fund schools and other services.

“Non-government schools rely on parents repaying loans to meet most of the costs associated with expanding and upgrading schools and classrooms.

“But as building costs, land prices and enrolments rise, non-government schools will need increased Government support to help accommodate the growth in student numbers.”

Dr Croke said the number of students in all NSW schools is forecast to grow by 267,000 by 2031, with 94,000 additional students expected to be enrolled in non-government schools.

“The Government will need the non-government schools sector to accommodate its share of this growth, otherwise taxpayers will be required to fully fund the construction -- and operation -- of more government schools and classrooms than is currently forecast.

“The Catholic sector looks forward to working closely with Education Minister Adrian Piccoli to address the state’s needs for more classrooms and schools.”

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