



Media Release

Catholic education welcomes Rob Stokes, thanks Adrian Piccoli

Catholic Education Commission NSW (CECNSW) said today it looked forward to working with new Education Minister Rob Stokes to continue the important work carried out by his predecessor, Adrian Piccoli.

“Adrian Piccoli was a constructive, consultative Education Minister who appreciated and supported all school sectors,” CECNSW A/Executive Director Ian Baker said.

“He oversaw many reforms to school education, including most recently the establishment of the NSW Education Standards Authority. Mr Piccoli also increased emphasis on literacy and numeracy standards, improved teacher quality and oversaw a more rigorous HSC.

“As a rural-based MP, he was genuinely committed to ensuring resources were directed according to need, particularly to disadvantaged schools and students in rural and regional areas.

“Through his innovative Schools Advisory Council, Mr Piccoli also built a level of cooperation, understanding and consultation between the government, Catholic and independent school sectors that will add to his strong legacy.

“CECNSW thanks Mr Piccoli for his energy and cooperative approach over six years and wishes him well in his future endeavours.”

Mr Baker said the Catholic schools sector was pleased with the appointment of Minister Stokes to one of the biggest and most important portfolios in State Government.

“We know from our previous dealings with Mr Stokes as Planning Minister that he is aware of the growth challenges related to schools and we look forward to working with him to develop solutions to meet the rapid growth of the school population in his new role as Education Minister.

“Assuming current trends, NSW Catholic school enrolments are expected to grow by 57,000 students between 2015 and 2031 - requiring 2000 additional classrooms over that period, or 130 extra classrooms per year.”

There were currently 591 Catholic schools in NSW, educating some 258,000 students and employing some 27,000 teaching and other staff.

Mr Baker also said CECNSW was encouraged by Premier Gladys Berejiklian’s publicly stated aim to ensure the Commonwealth committed to the bilateral schools funding agreement signed with the NSW Government in 2013, saying it would benefit all sectors.

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