



**Catholic Education Commission**  
Archdiocese of Canberra and Goulburn

**MEDIA RELEASE**  
**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**ACT BUDGET IGNORES MOST VULNERABLE STUDENTS IN  
CATHOLIC SCHOOLS**

Director of Catholic Education in the Archdiocese of Canberra and Goulburn, Mrs Moira Najdecki, will seek an urgent meeting with the ACT Chief Minister and Treasurer, Mr Andrew Barr to express her extreme dissatisfaction and that of the Catholic Education Commission with the lack of investment in Catholic Schools in the ACT Budget.

The Government's Budget briefing yesterday included no new initiatives for Catholic Schools in the ACT. The Budget delivered \$21.5 million in funding for public schools to respond to recommendations of the 'Schools for All' report whilst not providing a single dollar to enable Catholic Schools to meet the same outcomes for their students. Catholic Schools and the parents of students in our schools are committed to achieving the recommendations of the Shaddock Review; the budget expresses disdain for the needs of students in Catholic Schools and their parents.

Chair of the ACT Catholic Education Commission, Associate Professor Patrick McArdle said 'Governments have a core responsibility to meet the needs of all students in the Territory, especially those with particular and complex needs regardless of the choices of their parents about the type of education that meet their family requirements. Since over 25 per cent of all students in the ACT attend Catholic schools, Government spending should reflect this distribution of students. In this Budget the Government is showing that education funding for ACT Catholic schools is a low priority.'

Mr Paul Compton, Chair of Catholic School Parents for the Archdiocese said, 'Parents who have a child with a disability or complex need should not be disadvantaged because they choose a Catholic education for their child. These families must be supported.'

The latest ACARA Financial data on the MYSCHOOL website shows that for each dollar of Territory funding going to a student in an ACT government school a student in a Catholic school receives less than 17 cents. This is the lowest amount provided by any State or Territory Government in the country. The ACT Government is demonstrating a continuing lack of respect of for the choices of ACT families, ACT teachers and the requirements of over 17000 ACT students most particularly those with complex needs.

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