

Q & As for the ACT SECONDARY EDUCATION STUDY

- 1) **How can I have my say in this Study?**
You can have input by attending one of the meetings in your school (see separate timetable), completing the on-line survey, preparing a submission either as an individual or a group (see separate link for submissions) or talking with members of the Steering Group (see question 6).
- 2) **Will I get feedback on what I and other parents and staff have said?**
There will be information papers prepared throughout the Study and your input through this website will be always welcome. Summary results of the survey will be published. The ACT Catholic Education Commission will report back to participants on proposed recommendations.
- 3) **Why a Study?** A number of key factors have prompted this Study. Firstly, the changing demographics of the Canberra area as new suburbs emerge raises questions about where our schools should be located. Secondly there is downward pressure on enrolments in some areas and this causes us to reflect on our longer term ability to meet the demand for a Catholic education. The need to embrace new and emerging ways of teaching (and that include the integrated use of technologies) and developments in education lead to the re-examination of our provision of secondary schooling. We also want to make sure that we have the best systems and structures to continue to deliver excellent student outcomes well into the future.
- 4) **Are you looking to close schools?**
No that is not the purpose of this study. We want to grow Catholic Education and make sure that we are delivering in a way that best meets the needs of our students. We want to know what the issues are and how we address them. We have no pre-set ideas about what the outcomes might be; however, if we are to make significant investments we need to do detailed research with our communities first.
- 5) **What is the main focus of the Study?**
The main focus of the Study is to explore what is currently happening in Catholic Secondary schooling in the ACT and to consider the aspirations of our students, parents, teachers, support staff, leadership teams and clergy. The study will examine what is “best practice” in other areas and will invite input to the future that our education community would like to create. The Study will also talk to people not currently in catholic education to try and understand their educational choices. The final report will be future focused.
- 6) **Who will conduct the Study?** The Study will be facilitated by Ellen Davis-Meehan, Principal of Key Insights (a research company recently relocated to Canberra). The Study has been instigated by the ACT Catholic Education Commission. The Catholic Education Office has been asked to make the Study happen and has set up a Steering Group to manage the project. The Catholic Education Steering Group is comprised of Mary-Jane Carroll-Fajarda (Chair), Bob Brady, Angus Tulley, Daniel Lawler, Bradley Cooney, Fr Mick MacAndrew and John Barker.
- 7) **Does the Study include Congregational and Systems schools?**
Yes; the Study includes all schools under the Archbishop in the ACT. Although Congregational schools are independent of the Catholic Education Office, this project will be undertaken in an open and mutually supportive way and together all our schools will be looking to deliver the best educational outcomes for our students in the years ahead.
- 8) **Who has the final say on whether or not changes are implemented?** Any recommendations produced as an outcome of the Study will be reviewed by the Catholic Education Commission and it will determine the final recommendations. The priority for this Study is consultation with our school communities.

- 9) When will the Study take place? The Study commenced in June and will continue until October when a report will be provided to the Commission. It is an ambitious engagement plan but that is currently the timeframe.
- 10) What type of consultation will take place with the community? Extensive community consultation will take place in the form of stakeholder engagement meetings, held in various Catholic secondary schools in the ACT. Consultation will also include an on-line survey, and an opportunity to ask questions or make submissions on-line. Parents, staff and students in our schools will be invited to participate.
- 11) When will we see changes, or new schools that come out of the Study, implemented? If, as a result of the Study, there are changes to be made, these will need to be planned, with a timeline for implementation that accounts for resourcing and other implications.
- 12) Will the structure of any schools change as a result of the Study? We are not presupposing any particular outcomes from the Study. We will let the information we gather from the Study, direct the recommendations.
- 13) Is this Archdiocese the first to undertake a Study like this? No. Many other dioceses have from time to time examined their school offerings in light of changes to education, demographics and the broader landscape. The Archdiocese has previously reviewed secondary education, the last partially complete Study being in 2009. The Study facilitator for this project, Ellen Davis-Meehan, completed a similar project for the Diocese of Maitland and Newcastle in 2013 and 2014.
- 14) Will Archbishop Christopher Prowse be involved in the Study? The Archbishop is taking an active interest in this Study, particularly as President of the ACT Catholic Education Commission who have instigated this project.

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