

MEDIA RELEASE

For Immediate Release

Tuesday, 26 May 2020

CATHOLIC EDUCATION EXTENDS FEE RELIEF FAMILIES IMPACTED BY COVID-19

Director of Catholic Education Canberra and Goulburn, Mr Ross Fox, spoke at an ACT Legislative Assembly inquiry into the ACT's response to the COVID-19 crisis, on Friday, 22 May.

He informed the Assembly that Catholic Education is providing fee concessions to assist families in financial crisis due to the pandemic. Already, almost 200 families have applied for the fee concessions and that number is expected to increase given the long term economic challenges arising from the COVID-19 shutdown period and expected future downturn in the Australian economy.

Due to prudent financial management, Catholic Education is in a position to cover the costs of these concessions to assist schools in accommodating families in need.

The System is facing a \$2 million cut in ACT Government funding this year, however, Catholic Education has given a commitment that no child will be excluded from a Catholic school because of financial hardship faced by their families.

All Catholic Schools have remained open throughout the COVID-19 crisis for children of essential workers and any students that needed to be there. The transition back to on site learning has seen higher than normal attendance rates in most Catholic schools over the past week.

Mr Fox thanks parents for their collaboration, patience and understanding over the past months, as students are welcomed back to classroom learning this week.

"Principals and school staff have done a great job to deliver a remote learning program for students. I thank all staff for these efforts." He noted, "I would also like to acknowledge the dedication and commitment of our school communities as parents and teachers combined efforts to continue quality learning for our students."

Catholic Education will continue to support the wellbeing of staff, students and their families as they transition back to classroom learning.

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