

Principals' Briefing Notes – 16 August 2019

The Federation and its Education Policy Committee is continuing the process of developing a positive and productive relationship with Catholic Schools NSW (CSNSW). As both are relatively new and important players in Catholic Education, it is critical that each establishes its place in an environment of significant change.

This forum and these notes are intended to provide principals with the opportunity to reflect upon the issues that have arisen during the consultation process and help to advise CSNSW on some of the areas that you would like to see developed in the areas of service delivery, advocacy and mutual support.

We were pleased to be invited during October 2018, to participate, along with Diocesan directors of education, in a survey of services offering, conducted by CSNSW. The response to this invitation outlined the complexity in operating a modern Catholic school, the differences between Congregational and Systemic schools in a range of areas and the diversity of stakeholders that provide support to our schools.

The Federation has also attended and participated in annual stakeholder days conducted by the board and executive of CSNSW over the past two years.

The speakers will outline the process that has occurred over the past year or so, leaving time at the end for advice and feedback from principals.

Brother Paul Oakley will speak about the unique and various governance models for Catholic Congregational schools, and how the initial members of the Federation agreed upon a set of guiding principles, outlined in the Federation's constitution:

- a. Catholic education shares in realising God's mission in the Church.
- b. Each Catholic school is a particular expression of the Church's service of this mission and an integral part of its local Diocese and of the Universal Church.
- c. The ecclesial imperatives of collegiality and subsidiarity define the mutual relationships that exist among all the Catholic School Authorities within the Federation.
- d. Catholic School Authorities within the Federation acknowledge and value the interdependence that should prevail among them, in the interests of the common good of the Catholic education sector.
- e. While each authority governs its school(s) with due autonomy and freedom, all accept a share of responsibility for contributing to the vitality and viability of the ongoing work and growth of Catholic education.

It is hoped that these principles will form the basis of a memorandum of understanding between the Bishops and the other Catholic school authorities.

John Kyle-Robinson will present and evaluate the results of the recent survey of principals that many of you recently participated in, including a summary of those areas of service that are most commonly sourced from CSNSW, other membership bodies and canonical authorities as follows:

CSNSW -

- Special Needs Support (85% of respondents)
- Funding Advocacy – Recurrent & Capital (69% of respondents)
- Advocacy for Curriculum/Policy (42% of respondents)
- Religious Dimension (35% of respondents)
- Teacher Development & Comms Support (equal) (each 27% of respondents)

AIS NSW -

- Teacher Development (92% of respondents)
- Advocacy for Curriculum/Policy (73% of respondents)
- Compliance (73% of respondents)
- Leadership Development (69% of respondents)
- Funding Advocacy – Recurrent & Capital (62% of respondents)

Canonical Authorities -

- Formation (77% of respondents)
- Religious Dimension (65% of respondents)
- Compliance – Governance & Board Evaluation (35% of respondents)
- Certification of Financial Viability (35% of respondents)
- Section 83C (31% of respondents)

Danielle Cronin, Director of Education Policy at CSNSW will respond to these needs including the role of CSNSW as a block grant authority and a representative body, with reference also to the Choice and Affordability Fund.

Danielle will speak on the commitment of CSNSW to ensure that:

- schools are aware of what is available from CSNSW,
- services complement and add value to what might be available elsewhere,
- services are available to those who are unable to access them elsewhere,
- services are available in areas that are uniquely Catholic, and,
- the relationship between CSNSW and Congregational schools reflecting the shared responsibility of all Catholic School Authorities for contributing to the vitality and viability of the ongoing work and growth of Catholic education (as outlined by Br Paul).

Greg Smith will speak about the unique recurrent funding issues for Catholic Congregational schools in NSW, providing some examples of the potential funding threats that may arise from the use of Direct Income Measures in the determination of schools' socio-economic scores.

Marea Nicholson will facilitate a session where **Maria Pearson, Lee MacMaster and Stephen Walsh** will provide their thoughts on what they most need and expect from CSNSW in the management of their schools. Marea will then invite all attendees to provide advice and comments, and ask questions of Danielle and the other presenters.