State Election Alert 1

13 September 2010

Dear Colleagues

The Federal election was held more than three weeks ago and with the support of one Greens MP and three independent MPs, Labor have formed government. We look forward to working constructively with the new government to further develop education and school funding policy.

Federal Election Success
The Catholic Education Office wishes to thank everyone who kept their school community informed of the different party policies on Catholic school funding – both in the lead up to and during the Federal election. Your efforts were very successful because we obtained bi-partisan support for Catholic school funding until at least 2013. Furthermore, if any changes to government funding arrangements are proposed in the coming years we will have the opportunity to put our case again before the next Federal election.

I welcome any feedback you may have on the information made available through the CEVN, CECV and CEOSale websites in recent months on funding and election issues. I am eager to incorporate everything we have learnt into our activities leading up to the State election.

State Election
Now that the Federal election campaign is over, it is time again to turn our attention to the Victorian State election which is due to be held on 27 November 2010.

Both the Government and the Opposition have received letters from schools in relation to our request to have State funding linked to 25% of the cost of education in government schools. We thank those schools who have already written and also those who have asked their school communities to write to local MPs.

Naturally, community and media attention has focused almost exclusively on the Federal election in recent months, but State issues will now become increasingly prominent. Now is the time to encourage your school communities to get involved.

Early action on this issue has the greatest potential to benefit Catholic education and to secure our desired funding goal. Draft letters for your use and for use by parents are still available on the CEVN site. If you need any assistance or further information in this regard please this Office.

The Liberal-National Coalition has committed, if elected, to meet our 25% funding goal. Both the Government and the Opposition are now refining their policy positions for the election campaign. It is important that Catholic education obtains a bi-partisan commitment to Catholic school funding to ensure sustainable funding in the future. We successfully achieved bi-partisan support for Catholic education in the Federal campaign. We are hopeful that we might achieve this again at the State level as a result of the work of school communities.
Meeting with State MPs and Candidates
The next few weeks may be a good time to schedule meetings with State candidates and MPs if they are available. Direct meetings are the best way to develop a strong relationship with our political leaders. It allows them to see first-hand both the strengths and the real needs of Catholic schools in their electorates.

If you have any suggestions about any aspect of our advocacy for State funding at 25%, please email your thoughts to director@ceosale.catholic.edu.au.

Our current plan is to provide information to schools from now which responds directly to replies being received from the Government and the Opposition. In early October we are also looking at publicly releasing the findings of work done by Ernst and Young which we hope will strengthen our advocacy for Catholic schools.

In addition, there will be further materials available through the CEVN and CECV websites to assist schools and parents to understand the issue of State government funding and convey this message to other parents and political leaders. We are also considering new forms of communication including postcards, booklets and PowerPoint presentations.

We will keep you fully informed through regular State election alerts of progress towards our goal of 25% State government funding. The alerts will be similar to those distributed during the Federal election.

If you have any other ideas or suggestions please contact me at any time.

Thank you for all your efforts to help secure our funding goal at the coming State election.

Yours sincerely

Peter Ryan
DIRECTOR OF CATHOLIC EDUCATION
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