



CATHOLIC
EDUCATION
WESTERN AUSTRALIA

Building a Brighter WA



2022

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Catholic Education Western Australia acknowledges and pays its respects to the Traditional Owners and Elders, both past and present, of the lands on which our schools and offices are situated, and on which our students are educated throughout Western Australia.





DR DEBRA SAYCE

Executive Director, CEWA

Foreword

As Western Australia turns its attention to long term recovery efforts in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic, the combined contribution that Catholic schools make to the State's economy and community has never been more significant.

Our State's education sector has responded with compassion to the changing needs of families and communities that have experienced the flow-through impacts from COVID-19. But government support is still required for government and non-government schools alike, and the need for focused advocacy has been more important than ever in the past 18 months.

Representing 158 Catholic schools in WA, Catholic Education Western Australia (CEWA) pursues focused advocacy objectives that seek fairer funding from both State and Federal governments on the premise that 'Every Child Counts'.

We have identified national priorities relevant to our Western Australian schools that will help every child receive the best education possible:

- Support for Catholic schools to be an affordable choice for Western Australian families.
- Increased capital funding to address learning environments, accessibility, and wellbeing needs.
- Indexation of funding to reflect increasing educational costs.
- Extension of the Non-Government Reform Support Fund beyond 2022.
- Capital funding support for early childhood education in the two years prior to school.
- Access to Mental Health and Wellbeing programs to complement CEWA's Wellbeing Framework.
- Access to Closing the Gap initiatives for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students in Catholic schools, particularly in remote Western Australia.

More parents than ever before are choosing to send their children to Catholic schools, with enrolments up by more than 10% over the last ten years. This growth is a testament to the quality education, sense of community, non-educational student outcomes, and responsive learning environments that Catholic schools provide.

However, it is not just our 74,000 students, attending schools stretching from the Kimberley to the Great Southern, for whom we have been a strong voice. It is also the 10,500 staff we employ in WA which puts us among the 10 largest employers in the State.

At the core of everything we do remains our commitment to the formation of students and the delivery of a quality Catholic education that is both child-focused and Christ-centred.

In fostering these values, we have continued to build on the strong benefits of partnerships with parents. During the period of COVID-19 restrictions these partnerships allowed Catholic schools to move to a remote learning model quickly and with minimal disruption to teaching and learning.

Catholic school families make a significant financial contribution to their children's education in choosing one of our schools. In 2021, contributions from our parents resulted in estimated net savings of \$294 million to both the Federal and State Governments, and an estimated \$627 million to State Government alone, if they were required to replace our services.

We are committed to providing a Catholic education to all families who wish to access it for their children, regardless of their individual financial circumstances. We provide specialised support and services for students in remote and regional areas, and for seven remote communities a Catholic school is the only local school. CEWA is also committed to supporting the diverse needs of all students in our schools, offering specialised support for vulnerable students, as well as students with disabilities and specific needs.

CEWA values the Government's commitment to ensuring all students receive a high-quality education and we will continue to co-operatively engage with government to make sure all schools, including our schools, can better support the State's growing student population.

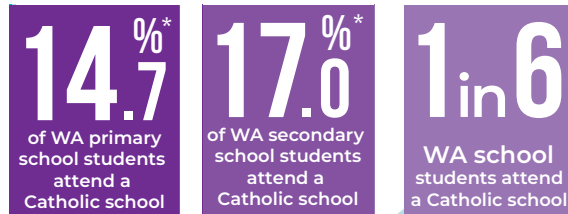
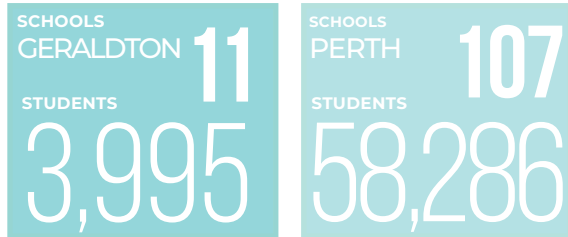
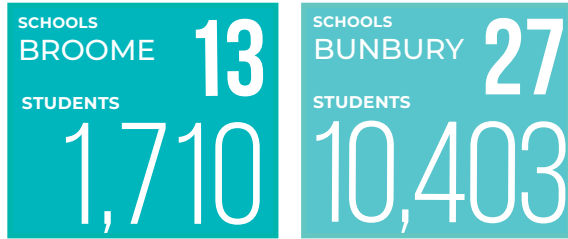
All we ask is that every child counts equally when important decisions are being made around existing and new government funding models and initiatives.

This report has been produced to highlight the progress and growth of Catholic education in Western Australia, which we are proud to say plays an important role in preparing our state's children and young people to positively contribute to society well into the future.

Debra Sayce

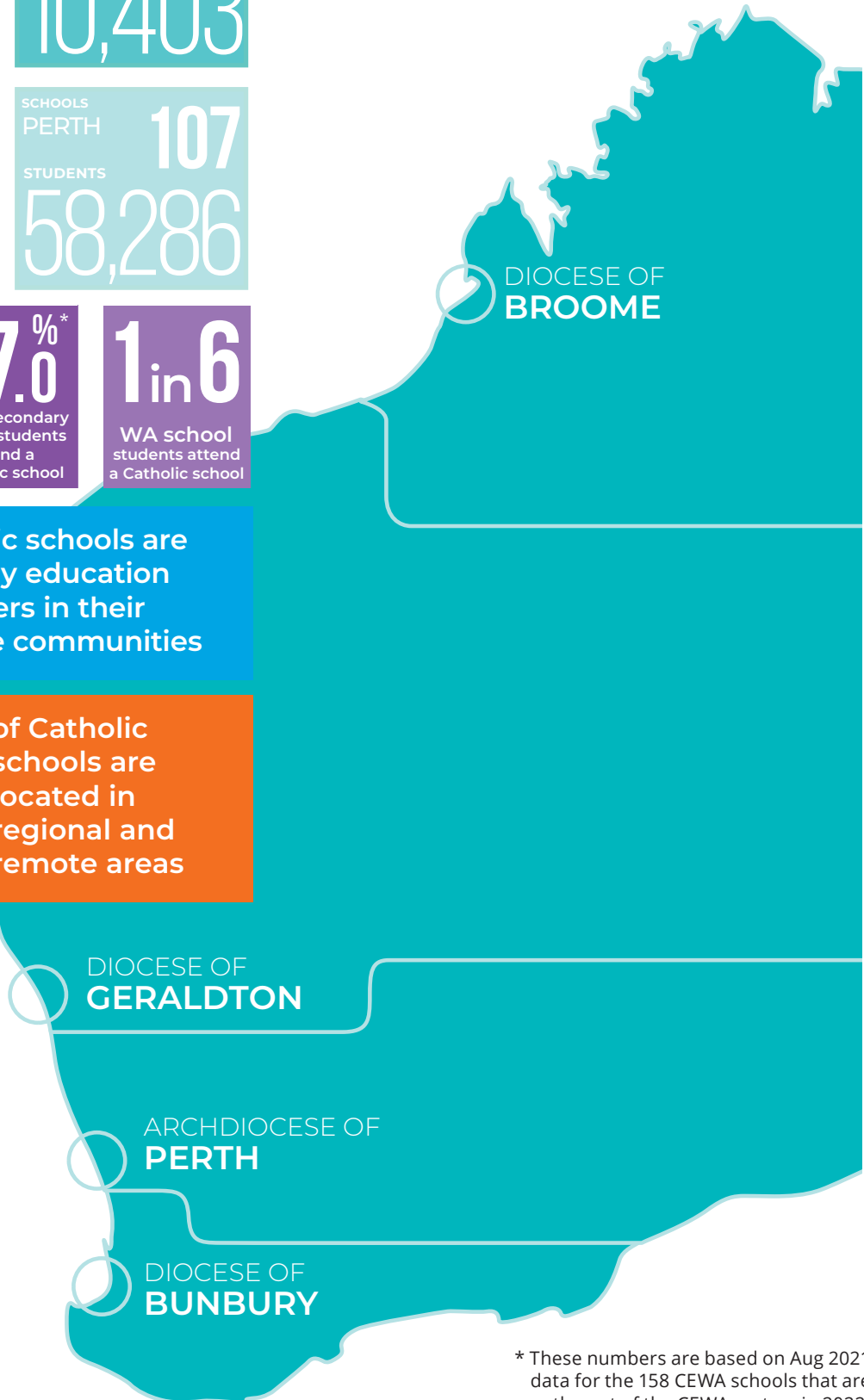
At a Glance

Diocese Schools Students (K-Y12)



7 Catholic schools are the only education providers in their remote communities

34% of Catholic schools are located in regional and remote areas



* These numbers are based on Aug 2021 data for the 158 CEWA schools that are currently part of the CEWA system in 2022.

74,400
STUDENTS

158*
SCHOOLS

Staff

10,537

Total Staff (School & Office)

6,016

Total Teaching Staff

4,521

Total Non-teaching Staff

Out of School Hours Care

67

Schools Offering Outside School Hours Care

CARE Schools

5

Curriculum and Re-engagement Education Schools

381

Students in CARE Schools

Aboriginal Education

3,521

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students

Long Day Care

4

Schools with Long Day Care Facilities

Early Years Learning

1,082

Pre-kindergarten students

4.7%

of CEWA students

Boarding Facilities

10

Schools with Boarding Facilities

78

Schools with Pre-K programs

Students with Disability

6,826

Students with Disability NCCD Funded (CEWA-approved Authority Schools Only)

Education Support

21

Schools with Kindergarten

131

Schools with Education Support Centres

Key Priorities

CEWA is working hard to achieve our vision of being a Christ-centred and child-focused community of engaged learning environments. The following initiatives are supporting all Catholic schools to realise this vision.

Vision for Learning

CEWA's Vision for Learning, launched in 2019, envisages students' learning as they explore their individual potential and develop skills of collaboration, innovation and critical thinking.

The Vision for Learning is underpinned by research and informed by the experience of nationally and internationally acclaimed practitioners.

It recognises the important role parents play as partners in the education of their children and the importance of all educators to bring the vision to life. The Vision for Learning is aligned to the domains of the Catholic Education Commission of Western Australia's (CECWA) Strategic Directions 2019–2023.

Child Safe Framework

The Child Safe Framework promotes work practices and establishes expectations for personal and professional boundaries that support a child safe culture for all Catholic schools and care centres. The nine elements of the Framework are centred on healthy and respectful relationships.

The Framework has been in place since 2018 and is:

- informed by comprehensive research
- in line with best practice and
- consistent with the recommendations of the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse.

Transforming Lives: Strategy 2025

CEWA is committed to creating outstanding, culturally responsive learning environments for Aboriginal students and their families.

The Transforming Lives: Strategy 2025 strives to ensure Aboriginal students have equitable access and participation in Catholic schools. Supported by more than 100 Aboriginal Teaching Assistants, Aboriginal students are empowered to discover their potential in inclusive and culturally supportive learning environments.

Digital Transformation

CEWA's acclaimed digital ecosystem is enabling safe and secure cloud-based collaboration and insights that allow accessibility of learning for staff and students.

Wellbeing Strategic Framework

In consultation with Catholic leaders, school staff, students and community members, the CEWA Strategic Wellbeing Framework has been created to support CEWA's strategic vision of flourishing Catholic pastoral communities in WA. This framework looks to enhance and enrich the capabilities, connections and conditions of all schools, their students, staff and communities through a shared understanding that wellbeing is improvable, visible and measurable.

The Framework is founded on the latest research around systems wellbeing in education. Furthermore, it has been created through extensive dialogue and the collective wisdom of academic leaders in the field of Catholic identity, wellbeing science, teacher practice, trauma informed approaches, positive behaviour support, cultural safety and principal wellbeing.

CECWA Strategic Directions

Responding to God's call to serve our diverse communities

CECWA shaped the Strategic Directions 2019-2023 through a collaborative process that aimed to consolidate and prioritise the key focus areas for CEWA. Through a

process involving approximately 3000 survey responses and 15 focus groups, stakeholders informed CECWA of the priorities for an evolving system of Catholic schools.

Supporting Parental Choice

Access and Affordability

Catholic schools cater for families from a variety of social and economic backgrounds who make a significant contribution to their children's education. In recognition of the increasing financial pressures facing families, one of CEWA's fundamental goals is keeping fees as low as possible and maintaining affordability.

CEWA is very clear in its position that no family will be denied the opportunity of a Catholic education for their child due to financial difficulty.



Catholic schools reduce school fees and offer financial support for families in need.

\$45m
total value of fee support arrangements in 2020

13%
of students benefited from the Health Care Card Scheme (2021)

CECWA initiated Health Care Card Scheme
Automatic fee concession for families with limited capacity to pay school fees.

Affordability measures in Catholic schools:

- CECWA initiated Health Care Card Discount Scheme
- Fee support and concessions
- Sibling discounts
- Early fee payment discounts

\$390
per primary school student fully inclusive annual fees

Affordable Schools Project

- Supporting families in school communities adversely affected by economic pressures.
- \$556k CEWA contribution to school fees

Through this process, CECWA formed the vision of a Christ-centred and child-focused community of engaged learning environments, inspiring all to actively live the Gospel. In doing so, CECWA defined the following focus areas:

1 CATHOLIC IDENTITY

Inspiring Christ-centred Leaders

2 EDUCATION

Catholic Schools of Excellence

3 COMMUNITY

Catholic Pastoral Communities

4 STEWARDSHIP

Affordable, Accessible and Sustainable System of Schools

Contributing to Western Australia's Economy



In 2021 Western Australian Catholic schools saved the:

Government of Western Australia¹

\$627m

And contributed:

\$2.37bn

to the Western Australian economy²



The Government of Western Australia funds most of the cost of government schools in the State, and a smaller portion of costs for non-government schools, while the Commonwealth Government provides separate funding for non-government schools.

However, total government funding only accounts for an estimated 75% of the cost of education for students attending a Catholic school in WA. This means parents choosing to send their child to a Catholic school must contribute to the cost of their child's education through the payment of school fees.

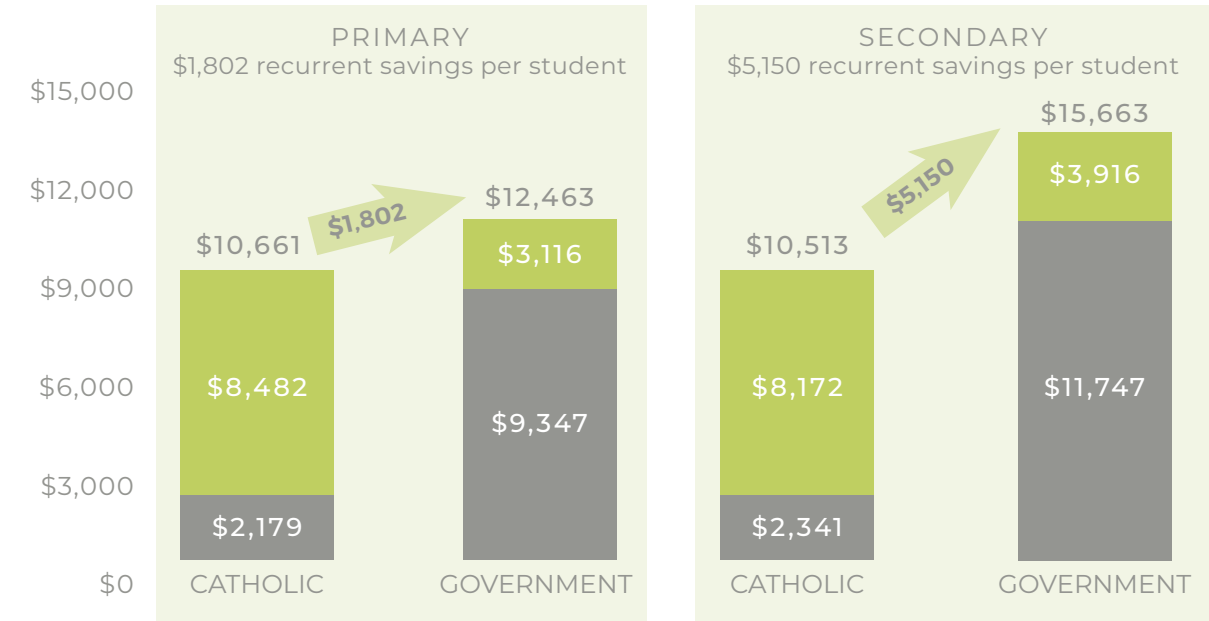
In 2022, more than 74,000 Catholic school students were entitled to, but did not take up a place in a government school. If these students were to take up government school places, to which they are entitled under legislation, the State and Commonwealth governments would bear significant additional costs to accommodate this.

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Recurrent Savings

Independent analysis, undertaken by Ernst & Young (EY), supports the position that State and Commonwealth governments are the beneficiaries of significant annual savings under the current Catholic schools funding model.

In 2021, Catholic primary schools in Western Australia received an estimated 16% less in per-student base funding and secondary schools received 30% less in per student base funding, when compared to government schools.



Source: EY STATE FUNDING FEDERAL FUNDING

Graph 1: 2021 Student funding comparison - Catholic to Government schools in WA

Capital Savings

CEWA continues to proactively advocate for sustainable grant funding to meet the schooling needs of WA’s diverse population to deliver on its commitment to offer a quality Catholic education to all parents seeking to access it for their children, regardless of their individual financial circumstances or where they live in WA.

In WA Catholic schools, capital costs³ are funded primarily from private contributions. Between 2009 and 2017, 88% of capital funding for WA Catholic schools originated from parent fees, highlighting the importance Catholic school parents place on educational choice and the significant financial contribution they make.

The independent EY analysis identified that if the State Government was required to educate all students currently attending Catholic schools, it would need to budget approximately \$5.1 billion in additional capital expenditure to establish the necessary school infrastructure to support the education of those children.

A lack of sustainable capital funding for Catholic school construction and improvement will result in schools being unable to meet the learning needs of students.

10,500

Teaching and non-teaching staff

Contributing to the WA economy

Catholic schools make a strong contribution to the Western Australian economy beyond educating and developing a diverse student body. CEWA schools are collectively among the largest non-government employers in Western Australia, employing over 10,500 teaching and non-teaching staff across the State.

The EY analysis also estimated the Catholic education sector makes a Gross Value-Added contribution to the Western Australian economy of approximately \$2.37 billion⁴, almost 17% of the equivalent value created by the State Government’s own Education and Training sector.

¹ Calculated by comparing how much base funding each Catholic school student in WA would attract from the State and Federal Governments under the existing funding agreement if all Catholic school students moved to government schools.
² Approximate Gross-Value Add based on 2021 data.
³ Such as the purchase of land, construction of buildings and property improvements.
⁴ 2021 figure.

Fairer Funding for WA students

Investing in Our Children's Education

Maintaining school choice for parents through a healthy and growing non-government sector is vital to the continued growth of Western Australia's population and future economic success.

To ensure all school students – including those attending Catholic schools – have access to the best learning and wellbeing support, CEWA is seeking State and Commonwealth Government funding support for the following priorities.

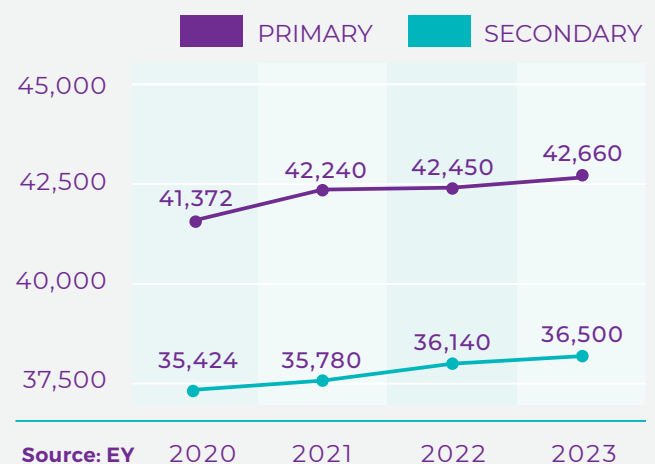
Education Infrastructure Grant Funding

The Catholic education sector recognises the need for all students to have access to world class education infrastructure. During the next five years, CEWA will need to invest approximately \$200 million to complete its new school construction program. In addition, CEWA expects to spend a further \$20 million per annum on the expansion and refurbishment of existing schools.

Approximately 90% of education infrastructure for Catholic schools is funded via fees charged to families of students. Historically, the State Government has provided capital funding assistance to Catholic schools through the provision of low interest loans (LILs). Many other states are now providing capital funding to the Catholic education sector through grant programs, rather than the provision of LILs.

Capital funding for non-government schools in Western Australia is currently reliant on parental contributions and school fees to service low interest loans (LILs) provided by the State Government. The LIL approach is outdated and no longer appropriate; it should be replaced by a grant scheme.

Many Catholic schools are located outside major metropolitan areas as well as in remote communities where CEWA is the only educational provider. These schools in particular should be considered for grant funding as their ability to raise capital funds from their parents and families is limited.



Graph 2: Forecast enrolment demand in Catholic schools in WA (fixed proportion)

In the next five years
CEWA needs to invest:

\$100m

to complete schools currently being constructed in stages

\$30m

for modernising and upgrading Kimberley schools

\$200m

for two brand new schools in high population growth areas



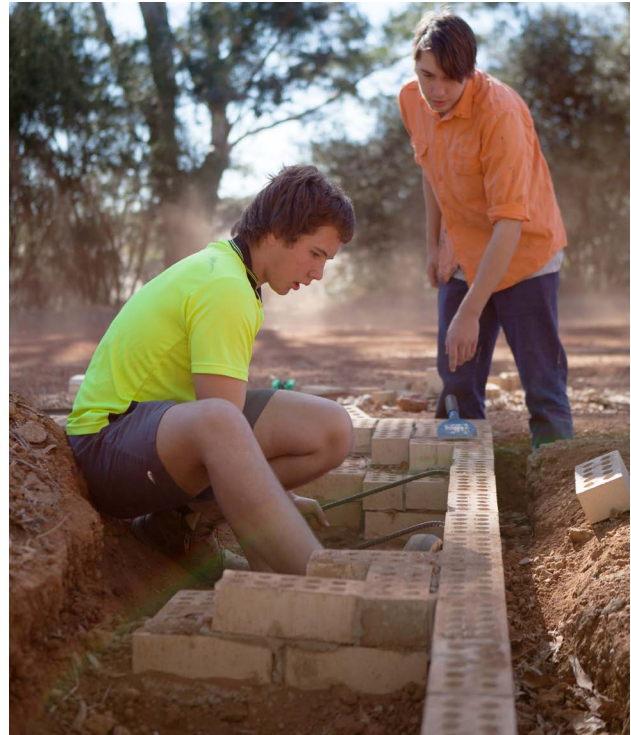
State Policy Objectives

The State Government provides funding to schools in support of education policy decisions designed to advance State Government priorities. This funding is in addition to recurrent funding for school operations and funding for capital works at schools.

Funding for education policy programs must be shared equally among government and non-government schools if the State Government is to achieve its policy objectives. Examples include funding for:

- vocational education and training in schools
- science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) subjects
- cultural diversity programs and
- education programs for Aboriginal students

Recurrent Indexed Funding for Psychologists



1 in 7

children have been assessed as having at least one mental health disorder (aged 4-17)

1:500

Recommended Psychologist to Student Ratio

1:4300

Current CEWA Psychologist to Student Ratio

Every parent should have the comfort of knowing that all children have access to adequate mental health support, regardless of the school they attend. However, there is significant disparity between the mental health funding support provided to Catholic schools and government schools.

CEWA has developed the CEWA Strategic Wellbeing Framework in recognition of the importance of student mental health and wellbeing. This framework looks to enhance and enrich the capabilities, connections and conditions of all Catholic schools, their students, staff and communities based on a shared understanding that wellbeing is improvable, visible and measurable.

CEWA is funding all initiatives under the Framework, yet more can be done to help students cope with mental health issues and to focus on student wellbeing.

Access to essential psychology services in Catholic schools does not match the demand. The CEWA psychology service currently receives a grant of \$2.5 million per year from the State Government, sufficient to employ 16 full-time equivalent staff in the psychology team.

CEWA is seeking recurrent indexed funding to provide access to an additional 50 psychologists for Catholic schools, currently estimated to cost \$10 million per annum.

Management of COVID-19

In response to the pandemic, CEWA continues to take all necessary steps to ensure the safety and wellbeing of our school community.

Immediate measures were taken to provide assurance that every child's place was guaranteed in a Catholic school in the event of financial hardship experienced by parents. This response sought to alleviate some of the financial stress experienced by our community during this difficult time. Steps were also taken to ensure COVID-19 cleaning and hygiene practices were implemented immediately in every school.

Management of COVID-19 is a health issue, not an education issue. All schools have had to take steps to ensure students and staff are safe and the State Government should contribute recovery funding to the Catholic education sector at an equal ratio to that provided to the State sector.

Sources

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- "The Second Australian Child and Adolescent Survey of Mental Health and Wellbeing Report" (Lawrence, Johnson, Hafekost, Boterhoven de Haan, Sawyer, Ainley & Zubrick, 2015)
- February and August 2021 Census (WA Government)
- August 2021 Non-Government School Census (AGDESE – Federal Government)
- February and August 2021 COSI collection (CEWA)
- ABS 4221.0-Schools
- Australian Commonwealth Government "Australian Education Regulation 2013 No.67.2103" (2013)
- www.mediastatements.wa.gov.au/Pages/McGowan/2019/10/Joint-media-statement-Perth-to-increase-in-attractiveness-for-international-students.aspx
- Australian Commonwealth Government "Australian Education Act 2013" (2013)
- CEWA "Socio-Economic Status scores" (2017)
- Australian Commonwealth Government "Australian Amendment Bill 2017" (2017)
- Bilateral agreement between WA and the Commonwealth on quality schools' reforms dated 3rd December 2018
- CEWA "School Information" (2018) & ACARA "Full Time Equivalent Teachers" (2017)
- REMPLAN "Western Australia Input/Output" (Dec 2017)
- WA Economic Profile, September 2019. www.jtsi.wa.gov.au/docs/defaultsource/default-document-library/wa-economic-profile—september-2019.pdf?sfvrsn=8e3f701_c_4
- www.mediastatements.wa.gov.au/Pages/McGowan/2019/09/Major-maintenance-blitz-New-job-creating-school-package-unveiled.aspx
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