

Catholic education welcomes Andrews Government support

The Catholic Education Commission of Victoria Ltd (CECV) welcomes today's announcement of \$400 million across the next four years for non-government schools, Executive Director Stephen Elder says.

'We welcome this support from the Andrews Labor Government', Mr Elder said, 'support that will largely flow to Catholic education.

'This is not just a great win for Catholic schools across Victoria, but a vote of confidence in the quality and strength of our system.

'Premier Andrews and Education Minister James Merlino have acknowledged the significance of Catholic education – and what we add to the community through our schools.

'Melbourne is booming in a way we have not seen since gold rush days. This is creating an extraordinary challenge when it comes to providing essential services such as schooling – a challenge Catholic education is happy to help with.

'Catholic education already runs the second largest school system in the state, providing a quality education for close to a quarter of Victoria's schoolchildren.

'This year alone we opened five new schools across the greater Melbourne area, building vital social capital as well as educational facilities in rapidly developing areas.

'The Andrews Labor Government has recognised our contribution to the community and the importance of our schools.

'Today's funding will make a vital contribution towards our capital works needs.

'That's important to all Victorians, as our research indicates Catholic school enrolments could grow by up to a third if greater government capital support to construct the facilities needed to meet demand was available.

'Not only would this take an immediate weight off the state budget, but Catholic education has a well-established track record of making investments of public money go a long way, with Catholic school communities already raising 80 per cent of every dollar they spend on capital works from their own pockets.

'This offers a win-win for Victorian taxpayers – an outcome the Andrews Labor Government has acknowledged today.

'The welcome planning reforms will let us provide schools and the social capital they bring where they are needed the most, more quickly.

'And assistance towards asbestos removal and the like will help guarantee all our schools, wherever they are, are safe schools.

'We thank Premier Andrews and Mr Merlino for their support today.'

Further information: Christian Kerr 0402 977 352