

## A welcome shift towards fair funding

*Statement by Mr Stephen Elder, Executive Director, Catholic Education Commission of Victoria:*

The Catholic Education Commission of Victoria Ltd (CECV) welcomes the changes to school funding announced today by the Coalition Government.

They now ensure parents will have affordable choice when it comes to their children's education.

These changes will also be welcomed by hundreds of Catholic schools across Australia and their parent communities.

The CECV also welcomes the fresh approach brought by Prime Minister Scott Morrison and his Education Minister, Dan Tehan, to the portfolio.

Mr Tehan has genuinely listened to the concerns of Catholic education, recognised that there are major flaws in the funding model and acted decisively to address them.

This constructive and consultative approach is a hallmark of good policy development and augurs well for Mr Tehan's future in the portfolio.

The announcement today vindicates the 18-month campaign for fair and efficient funding run by Catholic schools in Victoria.

Catholic schools faced massive fee increases or closures under the flawed funding model legislated by the Turnbull Government in 2017.

Today's announcement is an unambiguous acknowledgment that the criticisms made by the CECV about the SES score system and the Birmingham funding model were correct.

It is an acknowledgment that school SES scores – the most important parameter in the funding model for non-government schools – are biased against Catholic schools and other low-fee non-government schools, as the CECV spelled out in detail in March and November last year.

It also recognises that the school transition arrangements discriminate against Catholic schools and other low-fee non-government schools that are part of school systems.

Finally, it is an acknowledgment that the model deprives many families of the choice of a low-fee, faith-based education – even though this has long been a bipartisan policy objective.

# Media Release



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Catholic education welcomes the commitment given by the government to fix these flaws.

This will ultimately require changes to the school funding model that is legislated in the *Australian Education Act 2013* but for the moment, however, Catholic education accepts that the state of the Senate will create difficulties in amending the Act.

That's why Catholic education has agreed to the practical measures announced by the government, which can be progressed immediately, until such time as the flaws in the school funding model can be removed directly through amendments to the Act.

Catholic education looks forward to helping design and implement these amendments in the future.

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