

New scores deliver significant funding increases for non-government schools with low-income families

The Catholic Education Commission of Victoria Ltd (CECV) welcomes the release of new Direct Measure of Income (DMI) scores, which will deliver fairer funding for non-government schools in Australia and replace the flawed Socio-economic Status (SES) scores.

‘The Morrison Government and Minister Tehan should be praised for delivering the new, fairer scoring approach’, said Acting Executive Director Jim Miles.

‘The development of these scores by the Morrison Government and the Australian Department of Education, Skills and Employment is a major milestone in needs-based school funding.

‘We look forward to working with the government to continue to improve school funding arrangements for non-government schools that enrol low-income families.’

‘DMI scores are better at identifying low-income families than SES scores and more accurately reflect the incomes of the parents that choose a Catholic education for their children’, said Mr Miles. ‘About two-thirds of our schools here in Victoria will see their score adjusted downward, with one-third adjusted by five or more points, which is a large decrease that will deliver significant funding increases.’

‘Combined with the Choice and Affordability Fund introduced by the Morrison Government, the introduction of DMI scores is going to save hundreds of Catholic schools from potential closure.’

The DMI scores were recommended by the National School Resourcing Board (NSRB) to replace the discredited SES scoring system, after the NSRB confirmed the CECV’s argument that SES scores are biased against Catholic schools.

‘It was because of flaws in SES scores that Catholic schools in Victoria advocated for changes to the school funding arrangements announced by the Turnbull Government in May 2017’, said Mr Miles.

The SES scoring system was unfair because it means-tested school families using the area in which they live, not their actual incomes. This approach overestimated the incomes of many families and threatened the future of hundreds of Catholic schools.

‘While the new DMI scores will reduce funding for some schools, no one should mourn the phasing out of SES scores. As we demonstrated over two years ago, SES scores were not accurate and have been the “special deal of a lifetime” for certain schools.’

Further information: Michael Pountney, Acting Assistant Director Catholic Education Melbourne, 0409 860 884