

## Catholic Education Calls for Funding to Be Brought Forward to Support Building Blitz

The Catholic Education Commission of Victoria Ltd (CECV) is calling for a \$400 million capital works package allocated to non-government schools over four years at the 2018 election to be brought forward to help boost economic recovery following today's announcement of a \$1.18 billion state schools 'building blitz' by Education Minister James Merlino.

CECV Executive Director Jim Miles said with almost 500 Catholic schools across the state educating more than 20% of Victorian students, it makes sense that the Catholic sector contributes to the COVID-19 recovery 'building blitz' program.

'By making more of this allocated funding available now, we can play our part in supporting post COVID-19 economic recovery and deliver much needed improvements to school infrastructure sooner.

'The CECV has hundreds of school infrastructure projects planned over the next 2-3 years, including several new schools, across the dioceses of Melbourne, Ballarat, Sale and Sandhurst.

'A number of these projects could easily be accelerated to benefit communities with improved school facilities and the creation of local jobs', Mr Miles said.

'Importantly for all Victorians, 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.

'It is well-established that government investment in Catholic schools takes pressure off the state school system and saves taxpayers' money.

'I look forward to further discussions with the State Government about how the Catholic sector can constructively contribute to the building blitz program', Mr Miles said.

**Media contact: Gerard Delaney on 0413 274 176 or [gdelaney@cem.edu.au](mailto:gdelaney@cem.edu.au)**