



# Needs Based Funding Arrangement For the Townsville Catholic Education systemic schools in the Diocese of Townsville

## Executive Summary

This document has been developed pursuant to the requirements of section 78(5) of the Australian Education Act 2013, to provide transparency of Townsville Catholic Education's needs-based funding arrangements.

Townsville Catholic Education:

- Applies the principles of co-responsibility to ensure all students enrolled in systemic Catholic Schools in the Townsville Diocese are provided with quality education regardless of location or size of the school;
- Considers student and school needs when determining differential funding in partnership with base allocations;
- Aligns budgeting parameters to Townsville Catholic Education strategic objectives ensuring appropriate resourcing to support schools and students;
- Ensures recurrent government funding received for schools is applied to the benefit of those schools.

The body of this report provides greater detail of Townsville Catholic Education's needs-based funding methodology consistent with the requirements of section 78 of the Australian Education Act 2013.

## Context

Townsville Catholic Education has delegated authority from the Bishop of Townsville to provide Catholic education in the Diocese of Townsville. Education is provided through a system of 29 schools across a geographical area of 435,000 square kilometres.

Townsville Catholic Education provides education to approximately 12,250 students and employs 2,289 staff.

## Sources of funds

Townsville Catholic Education schools are resourced from Commonwealth Recurrent Grants, State Recurrent Grants and other private income including school fees and fundraising activities.

As a system, government recurrent grants are received centrally by the Townsville Catholic Education Office, allowing for the provision of school based resources and central services to be allocated through a considered needs-based approach. School fees and levies are generated by each school locally and are applied to finance local educational resources and initiatives.

Commonwealth Recurrent funds received by the Townsville Catholic Education Office consists of:

- Base funding
- Students with disability loading
- Low English language proficiency loading
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander loading
- Socio-educational disadvantage loading
- School location loading
- School size loading

The combination of the above is referred to as the Schooling Resource Standard (SRS) and varies from school to school.

## Distribution of funding

The majority of Townsville Catholic Education expenditure is made up of staffing costs. Other expenditure includes centrally delivered services, where these services can be delivered more efficiently to schools by the Townsville Catholic Education Office. Such services include payroll, employment relations,, financial management, information and technology services, workplace health and safety, student safety, student support services, school improvement services, and curriculum advisory services.

School staffing is established in the first instance using a standard schedule of staff to student ratios. Townsville Catholic Education Office also supports teachers in remote localities by providing subsidised accommodation, travel and other support associated with living in these more remote locations.

Additional teaching and support resources are provided to schools based on need for students identifying as Indigenous, students with a disability or students with an additional language or Dialect (EALD).

Schools receive funding to provide educational resources and maintain their buildings and equipment calculated as a percentage of the Schooling Resourcing Standard (SRS).

## Appendix – Australian Education Act 2013

### 78 Ongoing funding requirements for approved authorities

- (1) This section sets out the ongoing funding requirements for an approved authority for a school for the purposes of subparagraph 73(1)(b)(iii) and paragraph 81(1)(a).
- (2) The ongoing funding requirements for all approved authorities are the following:
  - (a) the approved authority deals, in accordance with the regulations, with financial assistance that is payable under Division 2 of Part 3 (funding formula for schools) or Division 2 or 3 of Part 5 (capital funding and other funding for schools) to the authority;
  - (b) the approved authority complies with requirements prescribed by the regulations in relation to monitoring the authority's compliance with this Act.
- (3) An ongoing funding requirement for an approved authority for more than one school is to distribute all financial assistance received in accordance with Division 2 of Part 3 in accordance with a needs-based funding arrangement determined by the approved authority that complies with subsection (4) or (5).

#### *Funding arrangement based on Division 2 of Part 3*

- (4) A needs-based funding arrangement that complies with this subsection distributes to each school for which the authority is approved the amount of financial assistance worked out for the school under Division 2 of Part 3.

#### *Funding arrangement based on other factors*

- (5) A needs-based funding arrangement that complies with this subsection:
  - (a) provides an amount per student that:
    - (i) represents the recurrent resources required to support a student with minimal educational disadvantage to achieve expected educational outcomes; and
    - (ii) takes account of efficiencies that can be realised while improving educational outcomes; and
  - (b) in addition to the amount per student mentioned in paragraph (a), provides loadings to students and schools with additional needs in order to support student achievement, including loadings for the following:
    - (i) students with disability;
    - (ii) Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students;
    - (iii) students with socio-educational disadvantage;
    - (iv) students who have low English proficiency;
    - (v) schools based on location;
    - (vi) schools based on size; and
  - (c) is publicly available and transparent.
- (6) An approved authority that distributes financial assistance in accordance with subsection (5) is an *approved system authority*.

