Victorian Catholic Education Authority

17 November 2026

Dear parents and carers,

Victorian Catholic schools face serious threat to funding approaching state election.

I am writing to share our *Catholic Education Election Scorecard* and provide information about the funding commitments made by Labor and the Liberal-National Coalition.

Catholic school families deserve clear information about school funding decisions that could affect their children's education. The policies adopted by the next Victorian Government will have important implications for school resources, staffing, facilities and affordability.

Over the past year, the Victorian Catholic Education Authority (VCEA) has advocated to both major parties on five Catholic education priorities:

- No cuts to school funding
- Capital funding to build and upgrade schools
- Abolish payroll tax on schools
- Better new school planning
- New early learning facilities.

The parties have taken significantly different positions on these priorities.

While both major parties have committed $500 million for non-government school infrastructure, VCEA's Catholic Education Election Scorecard reveals major differences in their commitments to protect existing school funding arrangements and abolish payroll tax on non-government schools.

The Liberal-National Coalition has committed to maintaining existing recurrent funding arrangements and abolishing payroll tax on non-government schools.

Labor has decided to change the recurrent funding model and has not committed to abolishing the payroll tax on non-government schools, leaving VCEA concerned about the potential major financial impact on Catholic schools.

VCEA's modelling estimates that changes to the existing recurrent funding arrangements would leave Catholic schools more than $200 million worse off over the next four years.

Our concern is that changes to longstanding recurrent funding arrangements would leave Catholic schools receiving substantially less funding than they would under the existing formula. In real terms, this is a funding cut.

This comes at a time when Catholic schools are facing rising costs, particularly the need to provide competitive salaries and conditions for teachers and staff, including those benchmarked against the new Victorian Government Schools Agreement.

Any reduction of the magnitude that would be created by not delivering the 25% funding linkage would place substantial pressure on school budgets, with potential consequences for fees, staffing, educational programs and facilities.

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Catholic schools already save taxpayers billions of dollars by educating one in five Victorian students with substantially less government funding per student. Catholic school communities also fund more than 85 per cent of capital investment themselves. Supporting our schools helps governments deliver education and new school places at a lower cost to taxpayers.

With around 90 per cent of Victorian Catholic schools being low-fee, they play a critical role in providing an affordable high-quality education for more than 218,000 students.

On school planning reform, Labor has committed to streamlining school approvals, while the Liberal-National Coalition has committed to accelerating precinct planning and working with VCEA to improve the identification of new school sites.

On early learning, Labor has committed to continuing the Building Blocks program. The position of the Coalition to continue ongoing funding for the Building Blocks program is unconfirmed, however, they have committed to undertaking an Early Learning Structural Review, including a review of early learning infrastructure needs and existing service capacity.

Catholic Education Election Scorecard

We have prepared the enclosed *Catholic Education Election Scorecard* to explain what Labor and the Liberal-National Coalition have committed across our five priorities.

The scorecard is intended to help families understand the parties' policies and their potential implications for Catholic schools. It does not constitute an endorsement of any political party or candidate.

I encourage you to read the scorecard and the full assessment at vcea.catholic.edu.au/state-election/.

In addition, we would be grateful for support with sharing VCEA's social media posts about this campaign to help us draw attention of other impacted parents and carers to this critical issue. These can be found on our Facebook and LinkedIn pages.

VCEA will continue to advocate for the funding and policy settings required to support Catholic schools, irrespective of the election outcome.

Yours sincerely,



Professor Elizabeth Labone
Chief Executive Officer