



MEDIA RELEASE

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Educating our youth for the future

Council of Catholic School Parents welcomes the new report *Through Growth to Achievement* released today by the Australian Government.

This report provides a strategy for achieving educational excellence in Australian schools and “it is heartening to see that the importance of parents and carers is recognised in Chapter One as essential to laying the foundations for learning” says Narelle Burke, Chair of Council of Catholic School Parents.

The report engages with the parent engagement projects currently underway that seek to quantify and qualify the effect of parent engagement on student learning with special regard to students with disadvantage.

Mrs Burke says, “there is a need for a solid body of research in the area of parent engagement that is specific to Australia to meet the needs of Australian students and families, and it is pleasing to see the Australian government is supporting such projects.”

The report rightly suggests it is the role of schools to map out ways of engaging parents and carers as partners in student learning. Council of Catholic School Parents as well as other state and nationally based parent organisations, work closely with schools to connect parents and schools staff through websites, teacher professional development and parent conferences and seminars.

CCSP Executive Director, Linda McNeil says “CCSP is pleased to see that the Report is future-focussed with the intent of building learners better equipped for their post school years. The inclusion of student agency and voice represents a big shift and will result in teaching and learning that is engaging and relevant to students.”

The report calls on industry and community to partner through mentoring, volunteering and other activities. Hopefully, this will build on the great work of our teachers and schools to shape the education and development of our children and young people as a shared responsibility for parents, schools and community.

The recommendations in this report are ambitious and its implications are far-reaching given the time-frame of five years. A net of support for teachers, parents, school leadership and systems will be needed to successfully make the transition. Key to this is ongoing consultation and involvement of all stakeholders.

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The Council of Catholic School Parents (CCSP) is the peak representative body for parents with children in Catholic schools in NSW.