

Media Release

Stokes continues uncertainty for non-government school parents

The threat by NSW Education Minister Rob Stokes to withhold new funding support for low-fee non-government schools leaves open the risk of substantial fee rises which will only force more students onto government schools, Catholic Schools NSW Chief Executive Officer Dallas McInerney said today.

“The NSW Government is the main funder of government schools, spending four times as much as it does on non-government schools.

“MySchool data shows that in 2016 the NSW Government spent \$10,244 per student in government schools compared with \$2,646 per Catholic school student and \$2,363 per independent school student.

“Low-fee non-government schools rely on the Commonwealth and parents’ fees for the majority of their funding.

“It defies belief that Mr Stokes is threatening to stand in the way of additional Commonwealth funding for most of the 400,000 students in NSW non-government schools on the grounds of ‘fairness’.

“The Catholic sector supports a strong, properly funded government school sector.

“The school funding arrangements announced last week by the Federal Government are no threat to government schools; they are based on Recommendation 20 of the original 2011 Gonski report.

“In an interview on Radio National today, Mr Stokes said he supported the new funding arrangements - but then refused to say whether he would allow the money to flow to hundreds of low-fee Catholic, Lutheran, Anglican, Seventh Day Adventist and Muslim schools.

“We call on Mr Stokes to categorically rule out blocking the new funding package and give parents the certainty they need to make a long-term decision on their children’s education.”

Catholic Schools NSW represents the state’s 595 Catholic schools and their 255,000 students.

Media Contact: Jim Hanna | 0414 828 629 | jim.hanna@csnsw.catholic.edu.au