

Media Release

A quarter of a million Catholic school students back in class this week

Almost 257,000 students will walk through the gates of nearly 600 Catholic schools across NSW this week, Catholic Schools NSW (CSNSW) said today.

CSNSW Chief Executive Officer Dallas McInerney said Catholic education supported a valuable feature of the NSW education landscape – school choice.

“Catholic schools educate one in five NSW students and are the biggest providers of school education outside of government,” Mr McInerney said.

“School education in NSW is a partnership between the Federal and State Governments and the providers of more than 3200 government, Catholic and independent schools.

“With the average cost of educating a student in Australia at some \$13,000 per year, there is a dual benefit in governments supporting non-government schools, which collectively educate one in three NSW students.

“It reduces the cost to taxpayers - who would otherwise have to fully fund the education of every student – and it ensures parents can afford to send their children to a school that reflects their values and beliefs, a significant characteristic of a pluralist society.”

NSW Catholic school communities contributed almost \$1.5 billion in fees, capital funding and other contributions in 2016, the most recent public data showed, Mr McInerney said.

He said Catholic schools are representative of their local communities and are open to students from all cultural backgrounds, faiths and abilities.

“NSW Catholic schools provide families with a quality, faith-based education that seeks to educate the whole child – intellectually, spiritually, physically, morally and emotionally.

“Parents choose a Catholic education for a wide range of reasons, knowing they will receive a quality, Christ-centred education in a caring, welcoming and supportive environment.”

Mr McInerney said Catholic schools were first established in Australia almost 200 years ago to educate those in most need - and that commitment remains strong to this day.

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