

Catholic education Victoria seeks urgent talks on payroll tax

Catholic Education Commission of Victoria Ltd (CECV) Executive Director Jim Miles says the sector is deeply concerned about the impact of the state government decision announced in yesterday's budget to remove a longstanding exemption and charge some Catholic schools payroll tax.

'This policy appears likely to apply to around 25 of our Catholic secondary colleges in Victoria and could wipe upwards of \$1 million per annum from their operating budgets', he said.

'Catholic schools are not-for-profit community entities working to provide the best quality education they can for Victorian children, while also endeavouring to remain affordable and accessible for families who seek a Catholic education.

'We recognise that most Catholic schools will not be impacted by this policy. However, if the threshold previously used by the state government to define low-fee schools of less than \$7,500 per year is applied, then this will be a significant hit to the operating budget of schools and families in communities that can ill-afford it.

'At times like this, it is important that the state government is reminded of the multimillion-dollar contribution already made through annual school fees by the one in five Victorian families who choose a Catholic education for their children. These contributions already save taxpayers tens of millions of dollars each year.

'The CECV will seek further discussions with the state government as a matter of urgency', Mr Miles said.

Mr Miles said the Catholic sector welcomed the state government's ongoing and significant contribution to capital funding for the refurbishment and construction of new schools and early childhood facilities announced in yesterday's budget.

More than 20% of Victoria's students are educated in one of 499 Catholic schools across the state.

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