

## **EREA Appoints National Executive Director to Bolster Delivery of Best Practice Education Across Australia**

24 May 2023: Edmund Rice Education Australia (EREA) has announced the appointment of Dr Liam Smith as National Executive Director, bolstering the organisation's ability to deliver best practice Catholic education to its more than 40,000 students across the country.

An experienced and passionate leader, Liam has been working in the education sector for more than 30 years. Most recently, Liam held the appointment of Regional Director of two of the largest education regions in Queensland, where he had oversight of more than 265 primary, secondary and special schools catering to more than 176,000 students.

As an EREA-school graduate, previous director of the EREA Colleges Ltd Board, and with a Doctorate in inclusive classroom practices, Liam also understands the values of an EREA education. He is uniquely experienced to support the vision of EREA in collaborative leadership across the federated structure, as it equips students with a passion for learning and the skills, character and commitment, grounded in the Edmund Rice tradition, to contribute to a better world.

Liam said he was looking forward to reconnecting with the organisation that inspired his passion for education: "This role holds both immense opportunity and privilege. It is with great pleasure that I re-join the very organisation which so many years ago, inspired within me a life-long commitment to education," he said.

"I know that I am stepping into a strong education system with a rich history of care and commitment to ensuring positive educational outcomes for children and young people across Australia. I am also aware of the possibilities that lie ahead – opportunities that, through collective effort and a genuine commitment to the success of all members of the Edmund Rice family, we can achieve."

In his role as National Executive Director, Liam will be tasked with building EREA's national identity, providing collaborative and strategic guidance to EREA subsidiaries and schools, leading EREA's strong commitment to reconciliation with First Nations peoples, and building productive relationships with diocesan Catholic education offices, representatives, regulators, unions and other stakeholders critical to realising EREA's vision.

Chair of the Trustees of EREA, Philomena Billington, said Liam would bring fresh thinking to this role as EREA continues to bolster its shared narrative as a community of schools.

"Throughout his career, Liam has demonstrated a passion for education and an unwavering commitment to supporting students throughout their learning journey," she said.

"With 55 schools operating in every state and territory, EREA is the only national system of Catholic schools in Australia. We needed someone who had proven experience with such a diverse group of schools, each with their own unique needs and achievements, as well as targeted and specialised governance structures".

"The Trustees and Board of EREA Ltd are looking forward to the future under Liam's leadership. He brings the energy, skills, system experience and genuine commitment to Catholic education in the Edmund Rice tradition we were seeking".

**ENDS**

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**ABOUT EDMUND RICE EDUCATION AUSTRALIA**

Since 1872, Catholic Schools in the Edmund Rice Tradition have been educating young Australians in every state and territory. Edmund Rice Education Australia (EREA) aims to offer a Liberating Education, based on a Gospel Spirituality, within an Inclusive Community committed to Justice and Solidarity. EREA is committed to creating an environment in which the safety, wellbeing and participation of all children and young people are paramount.