

## **Catholic education welcomes all schools in the NT reaching full and fair funding**

National Catholic education executive director Jacinta Collins welcomed the 'Statement of Intent' between the Federal and Northern Territory (NT) Governments to bring public schools up to 100% of the Schooling Resource Standard (SRS) by 2029, and said she looks forward to all NT schools being fully funded in the next round of bilateral agreements.

"The Australian and Northern Territory governments agreement will bring much needed resourcing to public school communities in the NT, which are some of the most disadvantaged and remote in Australia," Jacinta said.

"Currently Catholic schools receive almost 5% less of what they should receive from the Northern Territory Government and we would expect a commitment to fully fund Catholic school communities in the next round of agreements."

On average, Catholic school parents take on more than 26% of the annual cost of their child's education and almost 90% of the funding required to support school buildings and capital works, with state and federal governments contributing 11% in total to capital projects.

Catholic Education Northern Territory director Paul Greaves said Catholic school communities were doing it tough with many families facing cost of living pressures.

"As a small system of schools in some of the remotest and most disadvantaged areas in Australia, full government funding - both territory and federal - is critical to enable equitable provision of educational opportunities for students," Paul said.

"In our remote and very remote schools, particularly serving First Nations communities, school fees are not charged and other NT Catholic schools are providing significant fee relief for families facing financial hardship."

"Full and fair funding for all NT students in both public and non-government schools must be a priority for the Northern Territory Government."

In the Northern Territory, Catholic schools operate alongside public schools in remote locations and in some cases are the only providers of schooling in the area.

There are 18 Catholic schools in the NT serving over 4,800 students, with around 31% of students from First Nations backgrounds.

Across Australia over 42% of Catholic students are funded for socio-educational disadvantage, and nearly 40% of our schools are located in rural, regional and remote areas.

The agreement follows on from Western Australia committing to reach 100 per cent of the SRS for public schools by 2026, with the Australian Capital Territory public schools already at 100 per cent of the SRS.

*Catholic education is the largest provider of education in Australia outside of government, enrolling one in five, or 805,000 students and employing over 109,000 staff in 1,756 schools.*

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