



Media Release

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CATHOLIC SCHOOLS BROKEN BAY LAUNCHES NEW EDUCATION MODEL AND LONG-TERM COMMITMENT TO SERVE STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

The Most Reverend Anthony Randazzo, Bishop of Broken Bay has announced a bold and innovative initiative that will create new options for families who are seeking an education for their children with a disability.

A Diocesan-wide Eileen O'Connor Catholic School will cater to students with a disability from Kindergarten to Year 12 through a new campus base school as well as a network of support classes strategically located on the Central Coast, Northern Beaches and the North Shore within Catholic Schools Broken Bay (CSBB) sites.

This new model provides for students and their families to be supported through a comprehensive and systemic approach to educating students with disability, offering both specialist centres as well as mainstream opportunities.

Details of the initiative were today outlined by the Bishop and CSBB. Planning for the state-of-the-art Eileen O'Connor base school, located on the Central Coast, is already in progress.

The Eileen O'Connor Catholic base school will provide extensive specialist facilities accommodating 200 students with a disability. Situated within the St Peter's Catholic College precinct at Tuggerah, the School is expected to be completed by 2027.

The project, estimated to cost approximately \$65 million, will be funded through a combination of CSBB funding, government grants available for education and contributions from generous benefactors.

Application has been made to the NSW Department of Planning and Environment late last year for this project as a State Significant Development with assessments currently underway and further submissions to be made in July.

Already, forty-six students with disability are enrolled in Eileen O'Connor Support Classes at St Martin's Catholic School at Davidson, St Brendan's Catholic School at Munmorah and Prouille Catholic Primary School at Wahroonga.

Bishop Randazzo emphasised that this visionary initiative stems from a commitment made in 2021 to expand the range of services and support provided by CSBB for students with disabilities. Reflecting on the challenges faced by many families, he said; " The education and wellbeing of all students at all schools within the Diocese of Broken Bay is a key priority and it is our obligation to respond to the needs of these families."

After thorough review and consultation, Bishop Anthony decided that a broader approach was necessary to meet the diverse needs of students and their families. This initiative aims to enhance the capacity of all CSBB schools to support students with disabilities and their families; establish a specialist school on the Central Coast and create a network of support classes across the Diocese.

Danny Casey, Director of Schools at CSBB, highlighted the growing demand for disability support, emphasising the importance of diversity in delivering the best possible education. Danny Casey said; "Parents in the Diocese have told us this initiative will significantly enhance the options available to them and their children.

"What is imperative now is to build and deliver this innovative model of education".

Principal of the Eileen O'Connor Catholic School, Fiona Dignan, said the response from parents has been extremely encouraging.

"Parents are looking for small student ratios, tailored interventions, and in-class support, but they also want their children to be included in activities such as sport, carnivals, excursions and concerts," Fiona said.

"We have a moral imperative to provide that support for families; to provide a safe space where education, therapy and faith come together, where we can focus on the strengths of our students," Fiona said.

Bishop Randazzo said, "It is a significant commitment and investment by CSBB to better serve our students and their families."

Bishop Randazzo went on to say, "Named after Eileen O'Connor, a pioneer in serving the poor and the disabled, the Eileen O'Connor Catholic School also represents a significant investment in the transformative power of education.'

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Further information about CSBB's plans to expand its services and support for students with a disability can be found at [Eileen O'Connor Catholic School - Catholic Schools \(csbb.catholic.edu.au\)](https://www.eileenocconnorcatholic.com.au)

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General Information

At Catholic Schools Broken Bay, our vision is to provide 'authentic, professional Catholic education, delivered with care and compassion'. The vision is underpinned by our exciting and robust Towards 2025 Strategy which places students at the centre of everything we do, and which brings schools and Parishes together to work as one. The Towards 2025 Strategy commits our system of schools to being at least as good as the very best, to maximise the learning growth of every student, and to inspire hearts and minds to know Christ and love learning. Covering an expansive geographical area which includes the Central Coast and Sydney's Northern Beaches and North Shore, Catholic Schools Broken Bay is a system serving 44 Catholic Schools with around 17,000 students from Kindergarten to Year 12.

Further information on Towards 2025 is available at the CSBB website.

[Our Strategy - Towards 2025 - Catholic Schools \(csbb.catholic.edu.au\)](http://csbb.catholic.edu.au)