



**TO: ALL SCHOOL BOARDS, COMMUNITY COUNCILS AND P&Fs**  
**CC: ALL SYSTEM PRINCIPALS**

Dear Colleagues

**RE: School Community Council**

I wrote to you earlier this year to provide you with an update on the School Board and Community Council Review. I am pleased to inform you that the Review has concluded and that the proposed move to a School Community Council model has now been endorsed by the Catholic Education Commission and Archbishop Christopher.

As has been acknowledged throughout the review process, the partnership between parents, caregivers and members of our school communities is critical to the success of our schools and our students. The generosity and support of generations of parents and carers has enabled our schools to grow and evolve as welcoming, Christ-centred learning environments that hold a unique place in our local communities.

Given the significant changes that have occurred over the last few decades in families and schools, and the complex nature of current regulatory requirements, the decision to implement a new framework for parent, carer and community involvement in the life of our schools has been made following careful consideration and consultation across the Archdiocese. Over the coming weeks and months, School Community Councils will be established in each systemic school across the Archdiocese, and the work currently undertaken by School Boards, Community Councils and P&Fs will be undertaken in line with the new model moving forward.

The move to School Community Councils will continue the long-held tradition of support and collaboration between schools and families, and will continue to enshrine the valuable role that families play in our school communities.

The focus of the School Community Councils will remain on parents and carers and members of our school communities working together with the Parish Priest and school staff to make our schools the best that they can be. This may be by supporting the Principal to make strategic decisions about the school, promoting our school within the local community, participating in community or fundraising activities, or strengthening our relationships with our local parishes. Supporting the Principal and Parish Priest in the development and promotion of Catholic identity, the ethos and mission of the school will continue to be a cornerstone of the work of our School Community Councils.

With the move to the new model will come a process of transition and change for existing School Boards, Community Councils and P&Fs. We understand that this transition and

change may cause a level of uncertainty. We are committed to working with you in the weeks ahead to minimise the impact of these changes on your good work.

There are a number of operational considerations that will require consideration and action as we transition to the new model, including the formal establishment of each individual Council and the transfer of operations from existing School Boards, Community Councils and P&Fs to the new School Community Councils.

Our intent is to work with you on a school-by-school basis to determine the most appropriate transition to the new model. Where appropriate, existing members of School Boards, Community Councils and P&Fs will shift into the new framework as we move through the transition in Term 4 of 2023 and into Term 1 of 2024, with new election and appointment processes to be in place after this time.

A copy of the new School Community Council Constitution will be circulated to the community when finalised by the current College Board.

It is anticipated that the majority of schools will have their School Community Councils formally commence from early January 2024 to assist with financial reporting, though each Council or Board will be able to nominate the date of commencement for the new arrangements during Term 4 of 2023 or Term 1 of 2024. Our expectation is that all schools will have completed their transition to the new model by the end of Term 1 2024.

School Boards and Community Councils will continue to function under their existing arrangements until the formal date of commencement of the School Community Council in their school. Henceforth School Boards and Community Councils will be limited to advisory on school budgets, loans and fees rather than making decisions about these issues. The Catholic Education Commission has determined that school fees and school budgets will be set and approved by the Catholic Education Commission. School Boards and Community Councils will be informed and consulted on these matters, as appropriate, as budgeting and planning is undertaken for 2024.

The Catholic Education Office will work with and support Principals to transition to School Community Councils sensitive to the needs of each school community.

On behalf of the Catholic Education Commission and the Catholic Education Canberra Goulburn School System, I extend my gratitude and thanks for your work in your current role. The impact of your collective contribution on our school communities has been incredibly valuable. I look forward to continuing to work with you in the weeks and months ahead.

Yours sincerely



Ross Fox

**DIRECTOR**

19 October 2023