School cuts a massive broken promise to parents, teachers and students

From Bishop Anthony Fisher OP
Chairman, Catholic Education Commission of New South Wales

State MPs, Church and education offices, have all been inundated with expressions of alarm at the news that the NSW Government will be slashing Catholic school funding – according to Bishop Anthony Fisher OP, Chair of the Catholic Education Commission NSW.

The Bishop understands that the Cabinet is soon to meet in the face of this reminder from constituents that the Coalition was elected last year on a promise that if it won government it would not cut funding to Catholic schools.

At the last election the Coalition guaranteed it would continue existing support to Catholic schools, Bishop Fisher observed. “The Catholic Bishops of NSW urge Premier O’Farrell to keep his promise, listen to the voice of concerned parents, teachers and parishioners all across NSW and reverse the planned slashing of $67m per annum from non-government schools.”

“This is not about non-government versus government schools: we don’t want cuts to any schools at this crucial time.”

Parents and teachers agree. The Council of Catholic School Parents described this as an attack on “the right of parents to choose a Catholic school for their children that is high quality and affordable.”

Independent Education Union Secretary John Quessy, speaking on behalf of teachers, said, “It represents an unprecedented attack on the funding of non-government schools and an almighty breach of trust with the electorate.”

Bishop Fisher said that only last week, Premier O’Farrell was criticising the Commonwealth for failing to consult with the states on education reform and funding. “But it seems he didn’t think it necessary to consult on education funding cuts with major stakeholders in his own state.”

Meanwhile, Education Minister Piccoli has been talking up the Gonski Report – the main recommendation of which is that all sectors invest more in the education of Australia’s children. When I met the Minister recently there was no hint of slashing grants to schools. This leaves us feeling betrayed. “Drastic cuts at such short notice could force significant fee increases, staff cuts, curriculum cuts or worse.”

Last week it was revealed that the NSW Government plans to slash recurrent funding to non-government schools by $67m a year from the beginning of 2013. Two-thirds of the schools affected by the cuts are Catholic systemic schools, city and country.

There has also been talk of changing the formula that presently pegs per capita state grants to Catholic and independent schools to 25% of the cost of educating a state school student. “If legislation to allow this were introduced we would vigorously oppose it,” Bishop Fisher said. “It would prove that this is no emergency measure affecting everyone, but rather a retreat from state government responsibility to Catholic and other children.”

The Catholic Bishops recognise that in tough economic times governments need to be fiscally responsible but we believe it is false economy to compromise our children’s education and therefore their life opportunities.

“Struggling families cannot afford this cut to education. The Church does all it can to keep Catholic education affordable so that no child is ever denied enrolment because of an inability to pay fees. But justice requires funding continuity for all children in all Australian schools. We ask our state government to reconsider this disastrous decision.”
Dear Parents

I have included today the letter from Bishop Anthony Fisher OP regarding the cuts to Catholic School funding. It is a very serious issue and may have disastrous results for our Catholic schools.

Danuta Maka

RE News

The year of Grace is a time to look for the moments of grace in our lives.

Gracious God,
You gift us with abundant and unbounded love.
Open our eyes to the moments and movements of your grace in our lives,
and open our hearts to know the wellspring of gratitude that arises within us.
We make this prayer through Jesus, your gift of grace.
Amen

St Michael’s Feast Day End of Term Mass

Our whole school End of Term Mass to celebrate the feast day of St Michael will be held on Friday 21st September at 10.15am in the Church.

On this day we remember St Michael the Archangel and protector of our faith. We also pray and give thanks for the Sisters of Mercy who played such an important role in the history of our school community. We honour and give thanks for their commitment and service to St Michael’s school. All are welcome to attend.

Children’s Liturgy of the Word

The Children’s Liturgy of the Word takes place every Sunday during the 10am Mass throughout the term. All Primary aged children are warmly invited to attend.

David Ison

NEW CRUNCH AND SIP WATER BOTTLES

We are proud to announce that St Michael’s has officially become a ‘Crunch n’ sip’ certified school and we are now recognised on the Crunch n’ Sip website. As part of this process, your child has received a new Crunch n’ Sip water bottle this week to use at school. Drinking water regularly will assist them to stay hydrated and help them concentrate for longer periods of time.

Only plain water is to be consumed in the classroom. All other drinks (including waters with added vitamins, minerals, or carbonates) are not permitted such as fruit juice or fruit juice drink, cordial or mineral waters and vegetable juices.

Thank you to all the parents who continually support Crunch n’ Sip at St Michael’s as this is an important incentive which will have positive health benefits for your child.

Please ensure your child has their new, clean bottle at school every day with fresh water for drinking in the classroom and that you continue to provide fresh, cut-up fruit and vegetables for them to consume daily for their Crunch n’ Sip break.

Mrs Lucy Messina (Leader of Learning)
SOCIAL SKILLS PROGRAM

The social skill for next week is:

**Tolerance**

Being able to accept the differences and opinions of others.

---

**Catholic schools and funding**

**What you need to know**

1. **Choice of schooling is a fundamental right for parents in a democratic and pluralist society**
   Catholic schools in western Sydney educate over 46,000 students from 30,000 families, which represents over a quarter of all school aged children in this region.

2. **Catholic schools provide value for tax payer’s dollar**
   This is evidenced by the outstanding results achieved by our students and our successful delivery of the Building Education Revolution program.

3. **Catholic schools operate with 10% less net recurrent income per student than government schools creating a resources gap**
   The ACARA data shows that even after parent contributions are taken into account, government schools operate at around $11,523 per student and Catholic schools operate with around $10,008 per student.

4. **Recurrent and capital funding for Catholic schools needs to be maintained in real terms and indexed to the equivalent costs of educating students in government schools**
   A funding freeze for Catholic schools would be unsustainable and would lead to loss of service and teaching positions. Catholic schools are one of the largest employers in western Sydney with over 5,000 people employed.

5. **Funding for students with additional needs and schools in disadvantaged areas in both government and non-government sectors needs to be increased**
   Catholic schools support calls for both government and non-government schools to be appropriately funded to ensure that they achieve for their students high equity and high quality outcomes.

---

**How much money is spent on your child’s education?**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Independent schools</th>
<th>Public schools</th>
<th>Catholic schools</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Amount</td>
<td>$14,460</td>
<td>$11,520</td>
<td>$10,340</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


For Catholic Schools in the Diocese of Parramatta approximately 79% of educational funding is from government sources and 21% is from private contributions.

---

**Next Wednesday**

19th September

Parents are welcome to attend and a gold coin donation will be appreciated.

9.15am start.

All children may wear their sport uniform on the day.

---

**Children arriving before 8.20am**

Please note that Teachers do not commence supervision of children until 8.20am. **No child should be at school before this time.** If you must drop your child before 8.20am, please consider booking them into OOSH. Any parent who needs to drop their child on the premises before 8.20am will need to address a letter to Mrs Maka stating why their child is at school before 8.20am.

---

**ICAS English Competition**

Early this term students from Years 3 – 6 participated in the ICAS English Competition. Congratulations to all the children and to the following students for achieving a Distinction or Credit.

**Distinction**

**Year 3:** Isabella Carney, Alana Curran-Jones.

**Year 4:** Therese Barbara, Siddharth Pasupati.

**Year 6:** Flynn Hume.

**Credit**

**Year 3:** Fahed Tleyji, Vanessa Wong Kee, Brooke Woodroffe, Thomas Cowling, Darcy Brettle, Brendan Dias, Matthew Hatton, Thomas Knez, Isabel Lopez, Lyanel Maung.

**Year 4:** Isabella Bovino, Chloe D’Lima, Dylan Grib, Georgie Lamond.

**Year 5:** Joshua Beattie, Alyssa Gatt, Jaden Ranasinghe, Madalyn Farrell, Andrew Malysia.

**Year 6:** Ryan Barton, Daniel Fox, Andrei Rodrigues, Ryan Szymanski.

---

**Book Club**

We have an order in the office from Issue 4 – Super Science Experiments worth $20 with no name on the order form. If your child has ordered the above book, please collect from the school office.

---

This Newsletter is available for viewing on our website: [www.stmichaelsbhills.catholic.edu.au](http://www.stmichaelsbhills.catholic.edu.au).
CALENDAR DATES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Wed 19 Sep</td>
<td>St Michael’s Spectacular – (Talent Show)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Parent Maths Information Night – 7.30pm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thu 20 Sep</td>
<td>Student and Citizen of the Term Awards at</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2.30pm in the Hall</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fri 21 Sep</td>
<td>Whole School Feast of St Michael Mass at</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>10.15am in the Church</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Touch Football Gala Day</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>TERM 3 CONCLUDES</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mon 8 Oct</td>
<td>TERM 4 COMMENCES</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fri 12 Oct</td>
<td>INFANT SPORT FUN DAY</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Kinder and Year 1 on the bottom oval</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>9.30am – 12.30am</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mon 22 Oct</td>
<td>Kindergarten 2013 Information Evening – 7pm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wed 24 Oct</td>
<td>Kindergarten 2013 Orientation morning –</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>9.30am – 11.30am</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Year 4 Reconciliation – 10am in the Church</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thur 25 Oct</td>
<td>Kindergarten 2013 Orientation morning –</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>9.30am – 11.30am</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fri 26 Oct</td>
<td>International Teacher’s Day</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Hymn practice in the Church – 10.15am</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mon 19 Nov</td>
<td>STAFF DEVELOPMENT DAY</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>PUPIL FREE DAY</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

LOST PROPERTY

We have a number of precious items of jewellery in the office:
- Silver chain with an amethyst stone
- gold bracelet with heart lock
- Silver bracelet with heart lock
- gold chain with a cross with a red stone
- Gold chain with a pendant of Mary
Please come into the office to check if they belong to you.

DIOCESAN CRICKET

Congratulations to Yehan Peiris who has been selected in the Diocesan Cricket team. Well done Yehan!

Steve Kovelis

P&F NEWS

Dates in your diary:
Trivia Night: Saturday 24th November
Fireworks Night: Friday 9th November

CAR PARK COMMITTEE

The P&F is forming a sub-committee, to look into the car park issues concerning the safety of our children before and after school. If you are interested, please email Vaughan Roles vaughan.roles@gmail.com or pfmichaels@facebook.com
Note: The committee will meet after school

ST MICHAEL’S CHEER TEAM

Good luck to the St Michael’s Cheer Team who are competing this Sunday 16th September at the Scholastic National Championships at Tara School for Girls. The team will be competing at approximately 11.30am for any family or friends who would like to come along and cheer the team on.

Sympathy

Our sympathies to Dante Droguett - Ghisolfo (1HD) and his family on the passing of his uncle.

ADVERTISEMENTS

Mums!!!
Would you like to pamper yourself while the kids are at school and get salon quality hair at a more affordable price?
Look no further.

Steph’s Home HAIR Studio
Specialising in Colour and Cutting.
Ladies, Men’s, Children, Colour, Colour Correction, Foils & Streaks.

Welcome package:
Full all over Colour plus 6 Foils
Shampoo, Cut & Blowdry
$100
Call Steph Woods NOW!!
0425 335 791

UNIFORM SHOP
Thursday 20 September 8.30am – 9.30am

This Newsletter is available for viewing on our website: www.stmichaelsbhills.catholic.edu.au.