Dear Parents & Students,

This week I invite parents and guardians to pray along with the staff at McCarthy for renewed vigour in the area of catechesis.

Prayer

Dear Lord,

This term we pray for the grace of increased courage in the area of catechesis. You know the challenges we face in a complex modern world. Give us the grace to know that many Catholic men and women and many Catholic teachers throughout the centuries have also faced the same challenges.

Give us first, we pray, the courage to seek you more deeply in our own faith journey. Help us to know at the deepest part of our being that we cannot give what we have not received. Help us to seek to learn more so we can give more to those you place in our care.

We make this prayer through Christ our Lord.

Amen.

Reflection

During this term at staff meetings the staff will be focusing on John Paul II’s document *Catechesi Tradendae* (Catechesis in Our Time). In this document Pope John Paul II observes that catechesis has been a central and timeless purpose of all Christian communities. The continual formation and teaching of new disciples is a big deal for teachers in a Catholic School; in fact we have been mandated to teach the faith; to assist the young people entrusted to us to believe that Jesus is the Son of God and that by believing in him they may experience the fullness of life that comes with faith in Christ. As partners in the education and catechesis of our students it is important that we, parents and teachers, reflect and pray on this often.

PRINCIPAL MATTERS

Isaac Farmilo

Isaac was presented with a cheque from the McCarthy Association to contribute to the costs associated with his representation in South Africa, through the schools pathway. Congratulations to Isaac who was presented with the Pierre de Coubertin Award in Sydney this week.

Industrial Action

Thank you for your patience in helping school management to keep the school functioning at a basic level during the industrial action on 24 July. Supervision, with a range of activities, was provided to students who attended in the first three hours of the day. School resumed as usual from 11.30am.

Parent/Teacher Interviews

Parent/Teacher Interviews were held for students in Years 8, 9 and 10 this week. Thank you to all parents who attended and to the teaching staff members who made the evening possible. I hope the interviews provided valuable feedback to support future learning.

Improvement Agenda Term 3

The improvement agenda this year has focused strongly on building academic culture. Teachers have worked through influential community data, baseline results data and the foundations for interventions. New structures have been implemented to support academic outcomes and many initiatives have been introduced to better support learning across the school. The primary interventions include:

- Substantial data analysis with targeted teaching in areas of specific need
- Mentor Group structures to allow teacher-mentors to support learning and better facilitate Year Group meetings
- QuickSmart – literacy and numeracy remediation
- Tactical Teaching – teaching strategies that address reading, writing, speaking and listening skills essential for success in all subjects
- Focus on assessment scaffolding
- Read and Write Gold applications
- Study Club and Calculus Club promotion and the addition of the morning Senior Study group
- “Two more marks” strategy; shared expertise (“What works for me”); mentoring; peer tutoring; study skills, organisation and learning tools available through the Student Planner and Term Calendar

Diary Dates

25 July: School Photos catch-up day
25 July: Vinnies Leadership Camp
28 July: HSC Trials commence
29 July: ICAS English Competition
5 Aug: TVET & SBAT Information Evening 6pm
7 Aug: Australian Mathematics Competition
12 Aug: ICAS Mathematics Competition
12 Aug: CCC Netball
15 Aug: Whole School Mass
15 Aug: Diocesan Athletics Carnival – Armidale
19 Aug: Board & Association Meetings
19 Aug: AgQuip
20 Aug: Year 11 Property Planning
28 Aug: Young Drivers Expo (Year 11)
2 Sept: Reconciliation
5 Sept: Walkathon & McCarthy’s Got Talent
10 Sept: Year 12 Graduation Mass
11 Sept: Year 11 Exams commence
12 Sept: NSWCCC Athletics
18 Sept: Catholic Schools Celebrate
19 Sept: Term 3 concludes
• Parent discussion evening on academic culture.

Last term we focused on understanding and establishing standards. This term we will be focusing on high expectations. Material will be available for parents on MOODLE as it is developed.

Staff Matters
Mr Bernie Williams and Mrs Jane Ashcroft are on leave for the first three weeks of this term. Mr Tim Godden will be Acting Mathematics Coordinator and Mr Andrew Burke is Acting Year 9 Coordinator. I congratulate and thank Tim and Andrew for their willingness and capacity to fill these roles.

Congratulations to Mr Andrew Davy who won a gold medal at the recent World Masters’ Hockey Championships in the Netherlands.

Building Works
The new works being undertaken at the school will commence in the coming weeks. Some additions will be made to the staff administration area to better accommodate the increased number of staff. The current Music rooms will be converted into a Languages Centre, enabling us to extend and enrich the language opportunities offered at the school.

The primary works will be the construction of a new Music Centre and lecture/performance theatre. The building will include specialist Music rooms, rehearsal rooms, recording studio and generalist classrooms, a kitchen, toilets and staff room and the 200-seat theatre. An electronic simulation of a walk-through of the new building will be presented at next month’s Association meeting for any parents/carers who wish to view the plans.

Catholic Schools Celebrate
I invite all parents to attend Catholic Schools Celebrate 2014 – The Journey Continues on Thursday 18 September. Tickets are on sale at Tamworth Tourism.

Mrs Kate Rayment – Principal

ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL

Action Research
This semester I will be working on an Action Research Project which involves Year 8 Maths classes and their use of Mathspace as part of ongoing professional development in which I am involved. The basic premise of the research is that regular engagement with the online program will assist Year 8 students to improve their learning in numeracy. I will support teachers in their use of Mathspace by helping to monitor and follow-up the use of Mathspace as the basis of a homework program. Additionally I will help to facilitate regular email contact with parents, outlining the work students have been assigned and would be grateful if parents could please ensure that the school has an up-to-date email address.

Planning for 2015
Planning is underway for the 2015 timetable, with Year 10 students receiving the first Line Pattern at a meeting last Friday. Please remember that this planning is ongoing in nature and that this is the starting point of curriculum offerings for 2015. The pattern will likely change, some classes may need to be added, and others may be discontinued, in an ongoing dialogue to work towards the best fit for the majority of students.

Mrs Sally Sparke – Assistant Principal

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

This week the St Agnes Conference launched the Vinnies Winter Appeal at McCarthy with the annual ‘Tacky Tracky’ day last Friday. Thanks to the enthusiasm and generosity of the McCarthy community we raised $930.00 which will go towards assisting people during the cold winter months. Later this week, students from the St Agnes Conference will attend the annual Vinnies Camp at Lake Kee, with students from the St Vincent de Paul school conferences in the diocese.

Year Masses will continue on Tuesdays this term as normal. It is pleasing to note the increased involvement of the students as they become more familiar with this very important celebration in the Church.

Mrs Cate Allen – Religious Education Coordinator

PASTORAL CARE

Welcome
We welcome Cameron Sing (Year 11), Stephanie Koukides (Year 7) and their families into the McCarthy community. We also welcome into Year 11 two exchange students Jerome Babinard (France) and Francesca Viglino (Italy) and hope they have a rewarding time at McCarthy.

Congratulations
Our congratulations go to Tamara and Brendan Shoemark on the safe arrival of their son Oscar. We also congratulate Sam Collett and family on the birth of their new brother, Max.

Condolences
Our prayers and sympathy go to Chris and Adam Pattison, Lewis Schirmer and their families following the deaths of their grandmothers.
Certiﬁcates of Achievement
The following students are to be congratulated on receiving a Certiﬁcate of Achievement:
Year 7: Briannah Donaldson, Julia Hannaford, Abigail Kelly, Kate Kirk, Augustine Mundele-Turner, Madeline Neville, Conor Noonan.
Year 8: Samuel Cohen, Harry Davison, Jessica Eggins, Maggie Fulwood, Madeleine Gale, Sarah-Jane Grogan, Rebecca Holm, Maddison Hubbard, Molly Johns, Gabrielle Jolice, Whitney Martin, James O’Connor, Matthew O’Toole, Kate Pianta, Jamie-Rae Robinson-Barlow, Nicola Ross, Hannah Roworth, Dakota Skewes, Stacey Thrift, Sarah Vella.
Year 10: Hayden Davy, Phoebe Thornberry.
Year 11: Meg Hobson, Chloe Hope, Matthew Hughes, Viivi Kaariainen, Lauren MacRae.
Year 12: Emma Barnes, Georgia Cooper, Jacinta Flynn, Katrina Lu, Brittany Meissner, Gabrielle Studdy.

Theme for the Week
We started the term discussing the beneﬁts of a Positive Attitude. We are all more likely to be successful and happy if we adopt positive habits of mind, associate with positive people, accept or change instead of complain, and try to ﬁnd opportunities in misfortune.
This is a great time of year for students to review their goals in light of their progress and results from Semester 1. All goals should be realistic, challenging and ﬂexible. Any possible obstacles to achievement should be identiﬁed and considered. Having goals and working towards them improves the chances of being successful, resilient and less stressed.
‘Knowing the destination is half the journey.’ Anon

Ms Julie McGregor – Pastoral Care Coordinator

TEACHING AND LEARNING
It appears our SOBS Online Booking System for Parent/Teacher interviews has been successful and I have had a number of emails with positive feedback. By now most of you would have accessed this program and again, I ask for your thoughts at sday@mccarthy.nsw.edu.au.

Week 3 brings the beginning of the Trial HSC examination period for Year 12 students. For many subjects, this exam is the ﬁnal assessment task that will allow teachers to rank the students. School-based assessment marks and ranks are submitted to BOSTES. This information, along with their performance in the ﬁnal exam determines their HSC mark.
The ﬁnal Tip for Success at Secondary School is: Always do your best: Students need not worry about comparing themselves with other people, just always aim to do their best in everything they do for school, and they will feel happy and their teachers and parents will be pleased with their effort.
It is always tempting to compare your child with others. However, if they are focused in class without disturbing the learning of others, ask questions when in doubt, record all necessary homework, have developed positive homework and study skills by regularly completing working for even a small period of time every day, the likelihood of your child doing their best is very high. If students can develop these positive work habits early in their school career, they will ﬁnd it easier to continue with them when they reach Year 12 where they are actually placed in rank to determine their ﬁnal HSC mark.

My role sees me speaking with parents of students who are having difﬁculty in their subjects. It soon becomes apparent that the situation has occurred because the student has not followed the tips of:
- asking for help
- positive attitude
- using class time
- using the student planner
- starting early
- always doing their best

My advice is to encourage your child to utilise these suggestions, regardless of their year level, so that they can achieve at secondary level.

Ms Suzanne Day – Teaching and Learning Coordinator

HSIE

Geography students from McCarthy tested their geographical skills and knowledge against students from all around Australia in the 2014 Australian Geography Competition. Geography teacher, Mrs Bradbery, has just received the results and was pleased with the students’ performance. A number of students performed to a high level in the competition this year with 2 High Distinctions, 5 Distinctions and 9 Credits out of the forty-four entrants.

High Distinction: Connor Statham, Isaiah Darcy

Distinction: Nicholas Sanderson, Hayley Littlejohns, Nicholas Ryan, Chloe Moyes, Liam Dunn,

Credit: Patrick Sparke, Daniel Morris, Matthew Letton, Laura Green, Claudia Turner, Harrison Tibbles, David Northey, Kate Cruickshank, Cameron Clout.

DRAMA

Year 10 Drama Lunchtime Theatre Showcase Performance
On Monday and Tuesday of Week 2, Year 10 Drama students hosted a Lunchtime Theatre Showcase Performance in the PAC. The group performances were devised by the students in Term 2 and were based on a non-linear form. It was a successful event which helped to highlight the amazing talent that we have at McCarthy. Well done, Drama Year 10.

Ms Felicity Sawtell – Drama teacher
## PARENT INFORMATION

**Association Meeting**
The next meeting is Tuesday 19 August 7.00pm for 7.15pm start in the Staff Room.

**Pie Drive Fundraiser**
Thank you to parents who ordered pies to support our Pie Drive Fundraiser and to the parents who assisted in sorting and distributing the pies during the day. We raised just under $1500.00 and placed several meals in the freezer to support the Family Fund Appeal.

**Trivia Night Donations**
The Trivia Night committee would like to ask for families who own businesses to donate prizes for the Trivia Night to be held in November. This would be a great opportunity for them to promote their business. Donations can be left at the school office.

## CAREERS NEWS

### Year 12
Last week forty Year 12 students attended the University of Newcastle Schools’ Open Day where they listened to talks on courses and aspects of university life, including tours of the facilities and viewing new accommodation available from the start of 2015. This cohort of Year 12 will be the first year to experience the new procedures in place for early entry applications. Applications for 9 universities are being coordinated by Mentor Group teacher, specifically, Dynasty. We are pleased to offer students this opportunity to apply for the UNE Early Entry school via direct application. Year 12 students are reminded of the importance of their Trial HSC exam results and reports to their assessment, ATAR and applications for college and scholarships. All Year 12 students will receive a copy of UAC 2015 on Tuesday 12 August after the Trials are completed. On time applications to university are due by 30 September and students will be reminded of other significant dates and deadlines this term via email and the morning Notices in Mentor Group.

### Year 11
More and more universities will be requiring end of Preliminary Year reports for both Early Entry and scholarship applications when students are in Year 12. Year 11 students are reminded of the need to strive for excellence now and not to wait until the start of Year 12. It may have an impact on them successfully achieving offers and/or scholarships if they do not apply themselves now.

### Year 10
With choice of subjects being a major focus this term, this is a reminder to students and parents of the resources available both on the school’s Careers page (www.mccarthy.nsw.edu.au/careers/) and in the Careers Room to help with decision-making. The completed copy of the My Plan booklet is also due to be returned to Mentor Group teachers, preferably by the end of this week. Spare copies are available at the Office or Careers Room.

### TVET and SBAT Information Evening
TVET and SBAT Information evening will be held on Tuesday 5 August from 6.00pm – 7.00pm in A4. Any Year 10 student, and their parent/guardian, wanting to find out about TAFE delivered courses for the pattern of study for Year 11 should attend. Any student wanting information on a school based traineeship or apprenticeship should also attend.

### Australian Air Force Cadets
The Australian Air Force Cadets is a voluntary youth organisation administered by the Royal Australian Air Force (RAAF), through a national command structure. 310 (City of Tamworth) Squadron provides quality training and experiences to young people aged between 12.5 and 18 years from the Tamworth region. 310 Squadron will be holding information sessions on 5 and 12 August 2014 from 7.00pm at 6 Rentell Street, Tamworth Regional Airport. Respective cadets and their parents/guardians are invited to attend one of these sessions to learn about the AAFC. 310 Squadron is also seeking expressions of interest from parent or teachers who are interested in becoming AAFC staff members. For more information visit www.aafc.org.au

### INDIGENOUS NEWS

**Yaama.**
Last term, McCarthy Catholic College celebrated NAIDOC Week with another successful assembly, Flag Raising, morning tea and Art Exhibition. We would like to thank invited guests and families for celebrating our unique culture and sharing in our festivities. This year’s theme was selected by the National NAIDOC Committee to honour all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander men and women who have fought in defence of our country. From our warriors in the Frontier Wars to our warriors who have served with honour and pride in Australia’s military conflicts and engagements across the globe. We proudly highlight and recognise the role they have played in shaping our identity and pause to reflect on their sacrifice. We celebrate and honour their priceless contribution to our nation.

Congratulations to Year 11 student Pippa Herden who received the school’s annual NAIDOC Award for her continued involvement in all aspects of schooling life at McCarthy.

I would like to congratulate all the ATSI students for their involvement in our NAIDOC Activities and performances at McCarthy and at our Catholic feeder primary schools within the Tamworth and surrounding areas. These students continually share their culture and are excellent role models for their peers.
Congratulations to Year 12 student Matthew Taylor who was selected for “Nura Gili” Indigenous Winter Schools program at University of New South Wales in the holidays. Nura Gili provides support and information for potential and existing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students at UNSW. Winter School is a program specifically for Indigenous students in Years 10, 11 and 12 who are considering further studies beyond secondary school. The week long residential program is designed to provide students with the opportunity to experience what university life is all about, through participation in academic lectures and tutorials, study sessions, team building activities, interacting with university staff, current students and fellow applicants, cultural activities and more.

JUMP ROPE FOR HEART

Last Wednesday Year 8 students participated in the annual Jump Rope for Heart. There was a great response from the students with many great costumes. They are hoping to meet the target of $4,000.

Thank you to Mrs Jones and Mr McKenzie for their organisation and to Mr Adams and Mr Feltrin for their DJ skills and support on the day.

Thank you to The Good Guys and Sportsmans Warehouse for their donation of prizes.

SPORT

Australian School Boys’ Hockey

Isaac Farmilo was a member of the Australian School Boys’ Hockey team that toured South Africa in the school holidays. The boys won the first three practice matches in Cape Town against Western Province U18 Proteas 5 – 0 (Isaac 1 goal), Western Providence U18 Zebras 11 – 1 (Isaac 6 goals) and Western Province U18 Dian 9 – 1 (Isaac 3 goals). The team visited Shakaland where they stayed in a traditional Zulu Umuzi (homestead) and had a cultural dance and traditional lifestyle experience. They travelled to Hluhluwe Game Reserve and saw zebras, rhinos, giraffes, impalas and elephants. The last practice match was against Kearnsy College Club in Durban where the boys won 4 – 3 (Isaac 1 goal). The first test match resulted in a 4 – 1 win to Australia with Isaac scoring a goal. They lost the second test match 3 – 2 (Isaac 1 goal) before taking out the series in the last test match 3 – 1. The Farmilo family would like to thank the McCarthy Association for their monetary assistance with this trip.

All Schools’ Cross Country

On 18 July, Ella Heeney competed in the 14 years girls NSW All Schools Cross Country Championships held at Eastern Creek winning a silver medal. She will now compete in the School Sport Australia Cross Country Championships to be held at Albany, WA from 21 to 25 August 2014. Congratulations to Ella.

Sophie Heeney completed in the 17 years girls NSW All Schools Cross Country Championships coming 5th out of approximately ninety girls. She is on the reserve list to participate at the School Sport Australia Cross Country at Albany, WA. Congratulations to Sophie.

Athletics Carnival

The school Athletics Carnival was held on Friday 27 June. There was an excellent level of student participation and spirit. Congratulations to Dominic for winning the overall point score on the day.

Point Score

Dominic 843 points, MacKillop 687 points, Chisholm 615 points and Edmund Rice 597.

Age Champions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Girls</th>
<th>Boys</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>12 years</td>
<td>Melanie Young</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13 years</td>
<td>Mykenzie Semple</td>
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<tr>
<td>14 years</td>
<td>Ella Heeney</td>
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<tr>
<td>15 years</td>
<td>Alexandra Reed</td>
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<tr>
<td>16 years</td>
<td>Alice Murphy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17+ years</td>
<td>Sophie Heeney</td>
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The Armidale Diocesan Athletics Carnival will be held on Friday 15 August in Armidale. Students who qualified are to return their permission note and money to the office by Friday 1 August.

NSWCCC Basketball

The McCarthy Senior Boys basketball team competed at the NSWCCC Basketball Championships in Penrith on 16 and 17 June. Members of the team included Tom Paff, Rhys Chillingworth, Max Chillingworth, Mitchell Edwards, Brock Berthold, Brody Peak, Connor Murphy and Jake Pendergast. They played five very competitive games in a highly rated pool of teams winning two and narrowly losing the other three.
**Rugby League**

The McCarthy U14s Rugby League team played in the prestigious Peel Schools' Carnival at the end of last term. The boys lost their first game to St Joseph’s Aberdeen which put them into the B division. The boys dramatically improved in their following games beating Farrer to secure a spot in the B grade final. Here the boys faced Peel High School and managed to narrowly hold on to a 14 - 10 lead which meant they won the trophy. The boys represented the school admirably both on and off the field.

Team: Mackenzie Ashcroft, Mitchell Bird, Riley Carr, Adam Challens, Zac Clark, William Clinch, Jesse Collins, Noah Cook, Jack Cutcliffe, Adrian Engelbrecht, Scott Flanagan, Barry Lane, Conor Lang, Hayden Mills, Jake Mitchell, Doughal O’Reilly, Matthew O’Toole, Joel Parry, Lachlan Shaw, Rowan Statham, Hunter Thompson, Jayden Tiberi.

**Hockey**

Jack Cruickshank was a member of the NSW All Schools’ Hockey Under 16 boys who competed in the Tri-series on 16 June. Boys were chosen from that series for the 16 years boys’ Australian team. Although Jack was not selected in that team, he enjoyed the experience of playing for the All Schools.

Ehren Hazell was one of thirty-six boys invited to attend a Hockey Talented Athlete Program at Narrabeen from 10 - 13 June. Unfortunately, Ehren was unsuccessful in gaining selection in the School Sport Australia 16 years boys final team.

**All Schools Touch Football Carnival**

**Girls**

McCarthy Year 9 and 10 girls displayed superb sportsmanship, competitiveness and enthusiasm at the All Schools' Touch Football Carnival day conducted by Tamworth Touch Association on 26 June. The girls played five highly competitive games commencing with a win against Tamworth High and a draw with Oxley High. This was a great effort considering some of the girls had limited experience playing touch.

Congratulations to Matilda Shumack, Kaylah Torode, Alice Murphy and Natalie Deaves who were scouted for the NIAS development squad from this carnival.

9/10 Girls’ team: Grace Allan, Tiarne Bayliss, Hannah Cochrane, Matilda Davies, Natalie Deaves, Laura Goodwin, Darcie Martin, Alice Murphy, Amelia O’Sullivan, Olivia Riley, Emerson Ring, Matilda Shumack (c), Emmalene Tinson, Kaylah Torode.

**Boys**

The McCarthy Year 9/10 boys lost their first match against St Joseph’s, Aberdeen but went on to win their next two matches against Tamworth High 1 and Tamworth High 2 teams. They were defeated by eventual winners St Joseph’s, Aberdeen in the semi-final.


Thank you to Mr Andrew Burke and Miss Sam Thompson for their supervision on the day and to Chloe Coe and Brodii Ingram for coaching the girls’ team.

**Basketball**

Josie Chick, Miah O’Sullivan, Sienna Kennedy, Grace Salter, Brianna Zwolsman and Krystal Booby travelled to Maitland last weekend to compete in the Country Premier League Basketball finals as members of the Tamworth U14 representative team. The girls were unsuccessful at the CPL finals but have qualified to compete in the National finals to be held in Brisbane from 29 September to 4 October. This is the first time Tamworth Basketball has had a team qualify at this level of basketball.

**Indoor Cricket**

Congratulations to Rhiannon Graham (Year 11) who won a gold medal at the National Indoor Cricket Championships in Adelaide during the holidays. Rhiannon’s team, NSW Cyclones (NSW Country), were undefeated throughout the tournament defeating Queensland in the final. Rhiannon is a spin bowler.
Dear Parents / Guardians,

From Friday 13th June, we are commencing our Hamilton Island Holiday Raffle. We hope parents support this raffle as all monies raised will go towards purchases for our school. You can request to collect a raffle book from the school office. Each book has 10 tickets and each ticket sells for $2.00.

The raffle prize is for four (4) nights at the Reef View Hotel, Hamilton Island for 2 adults and 2 children (0-12 years) in a Garden View Room including a $1,000 Virgin Australia voucher. Also included is a full buffet breakfast daily, return airport/marina transfers, use of paddle skis, windsurfers, catamarans, and snorkelling equipment, use of the Island Shuttle, gym, spa, sauna, and tennis and squash court hire. Kids eat free at participating restaurants with special Kids Eat Free children’s menus.

Also on offer are the following incentive prizes:

**BOOK SELLER’S PRIZE**
Each family/member who sells a complete book of tickets will go into the draw to win an iPod Shuffle 2GB.

**FAMILY HOLIDAY PROMOTION**
Each family/member that sells or purchases a complete book of raffle tickets will have the chance to win a 7 night family holiday for two (2) adults and two (2) children to either the Gold Coast or Hamilton Island or Fiji including $1,000 or $2,000 Virgin Australia airfare voucher and $1,000 spending money. It will be the winner’s choice of destination. To enter, you must sell or purchase a complete book of raffle tickets, then go to www.fundraisingpromo.com.au and record your answer to the puzzle as shown on the website. Terms and conditions are online.

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**If you wish to accept a raffle book,**
please complete the below details and return to the school office for your raffle book.

Name:......................................................... Class:...........................................

Parent's/Guardian's Signature:..............................................................................
16th July, 2014

Dear Parents and School Community

You may be aware that the current Enterprise Agreements covering Catholic school staff have nominally expired, with their provisions remaining in place until a new Agreement is developed.

On 7 April 2014, Catholic school employers released for discussion a draft Enterprise Agreement covering the majority of staff working in Catholic systemic schools. It’s a new, contemporary agreement which presents a range of ideas about how schools can better support 21st century teaching and learning.

Education in Australia is changing. Modern curricula, new technology and community expectations have changed schools forever and our industrial arrangements must reflect this. The proposed agreement rewards excellence in teaching, reduces distractions to the core work of learning and teaching and allows greater flexibility in the way we work. We believe that what has been proposed is equitable, sustainable and supports excellence in education for our children.

We have made it clear to the Union and staff that the proposal is just a starting point for conversation and will be subject to revision and change following staff feedback and union negotiation. Importantly, we have highlighted that our staff are in control as only they can vote to change their Agreement.

Despite this, the Union is encouraging industrial action which is likely to take place in some schools. We believe this action is intended to stop discussion about important changes that include:

- pay that is linked to professional standards that all Government’s around Australia have mandated;
- how the school day is organised;
- supporting quality teaching;
- managing workloads by changing outdated work practices; and
- having all staff collaborate on what’s works best for students instead of relying on a one-size-fits-all approach.
Catholic Employers are committed to good faith bargaining, and working through the issues in an open and fair way. While we acknowledge the Union’s important role in acting on behalf of employees, we genuinely believe that opening up the conversation around change is ultimately in the best interest of teachers, students and the whole school community.

During this challenging time, our priority is to ensure that there is minimal inconvenience to parents and disruption to our students’ learning and we will ensure that parents are informed as soon as possible about any changes to the school day.

In the meantime, a dedicated website has been created if you would like to learn more about the employers’ proposal www.foundationsforexcellence.com.au

We welcome your questions and concerns.

Yours in hope,

John M. Mula
Diocesan Director of Catholic Schools
Catholic Schools Office, Diocese of Armidale
To Teachers, Parents and Staff
14 July 2014

Dear Parent,

As you may be aware, the IEU will be taking protected industrial stoppages in Armidale Diocesan schools on Thursday 24 July, as part of a campaign to defend quality teaching and learning in the classrooms your children attend.

The IEU, which covers over 31,000 teachers and support staff in NSW/ACT schools, the majority of whom are in the Catholic sector, is deeply concerned that many hard won gains over the years, such as protection around class sizes and provision of support for students with additional needs, may be lost if Catholic employers proceed with an extreme deregulatory approach.

This attempt to strip back the working conditions of teachers and support staff, with its likely adverse impact on teaching and learning, is not occurring in NSW government schools or in independent schools.

The Union considers that this misguided agenda by some Catholic employers to change school structures and staff conditions, abolish promotions positions and reduce support staff rates of pay is unacceptable in any diocese. It is particularly hard to understand in a regional diocese such as Armidale where there are close relationships between staff, parents and school communities.

This action by Union members is authorised under the Fair Work Act, having been endorsed by a secret ballot conducted by the Australian Electoral Commission.

The stop work action is not taken lightly but the retention of appropriate preparation time for your child’s teacher, limits on class sizes and clear understandings around meal breaks and the length of the school day are essential for the provision of quality education.

Your understanding and support is being sought for the teachers and support staff at your school. For employers to unilaterally dismantle conditions negotiated over decades is inappropriate and unnecessary. Catholic systemic schools service their various communities at a high level and operate largely on goodwill and that goodwill is disrespected by the approach taken by employers on this occasion. The unique cultural values of Catholic schools should not be jeopardised by proposed agreements that have the capacity to undermine the positive relationships that are a key feature of Catholic education.

Please contact the Union office on 1800 467 943 if further information is required.

Yours sincerely,

JOHN QUESSEY
General Secretary