

- develop a sound educational brief and business plan for each new school development
- provide quality facilities and contemporary educational programs
- maximise access to our schools for people in situations of poverty and marginalisation

Connecting Communities

- seek to develop harmonious relationships between the local church communities and other surrounding groups
- provide different models of Catholic schooling that are appropriate to the needs of communities

Responsibilities & Decision Making

- provide transparent planning processes that include input from all potential stakeholders
- regularly review the consultation process for new school development
- develop and regularly update the guidelines in the Administrative Index for the establishment of new schools
- provide comprehensive advice to Catholic Education Council on new school development.

REFERENCES

Congregation for Catholic Education. (1998). *The Catholic school on the threshold of the third millennium*. St Paul's. NSW.

Archdiocese of Brisbane. (2001). *Queensland bishops' Catholic schools research project Archdiocese of Brisbane 1998-2001*. Brisbane Catholic Education. Brisbane.



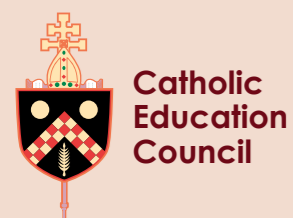
Archdiocese of Brisbane
Catholic Education Council

Opening Systemic Schools

MAY 2004

Policy Statement

FOR BRISBANE CATHOLIC EDUCATION SCHOOLS



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FOREWORD

The *Opening Systemic Schools Policy* reflects the Brisbane Archdiocese's commitment to the educational provision of new schools within the Archdiocese. The opening of a new school is a significant step for the educational mission of the Archdiocese and a great joy for those in the local Catholic community where the school is to be established.

The decision to open a new Catholic school in the Archdiocese involves extensive consultation, planning and partnerships at local, system and state levels. It is essential that the criteria and processes developed to assist the partnership between local communities and Archdiocesan authorities in new school development are implemented. This policy, and its accompanying regulations and guidelines, is a resource to guide local Catholic communities and Archdiocesan agencies in establishing new schools.

This policy has been rewritten through a review process involving consultation with the Archdiocesan Finance Council, school principals, senior administration staff, clergy, parents and other stakeholders.

I commend this policy to all in the Archdiocese involved in Catholic schooling. May it assist us in furthering the mission of Christ in our rapidly growing and changing Archdiocese.

Sincerely in Christ

Most Rev John Bathersby DD
ARCHBISHOP OF BRISBANE
May 2004

OPENING SYSTEMIC SCHOOLS

The Catholic Archdiocese of Brisbane is committed to achieving the educational vision of the Archdiocese through the establishment of new schools.

INTRODUCTION

The Archdiocese of Brisbane has significant areas of population growth and change. This policy seeks to provide clear direction on decision-making processes regarding the establishment of new schools within the community of schools administered by the Archdiocese through Brisbane Catholic Education.

RATIONALE

Parents, as first educators of their children, can legitimately expect that, wherever possible, there is access to an "authentic experience of Catholic Christian community."¹ Catholic schools, as one part of the church (*communio*) within the Archdiocese of Brisbane, provide this opportunity. Brisbane Catholic Education is charged with the responsibility for school establishment. A request to develop a new school may be initiated by a local Catholic community. Alternatively, demographic change or growth may indicate the need for administrative action for the development of a new school. Initially this may provide a stimulus to the development of a local Catholic community.

"Catholic Schools, like state schools, fulfil a public role, for their presence guarantees cultural and educational pluralism and, above all, the freedom and right of families to see that their children receive the sort of education they wish for them."² Brisbane Catholic Education is committed to the equitable provision of high quality and inclusive schools that meet contemporary educational needs across the Archdiocese.

The ongoing pastoral involvement of the local community is essential; consultation

within the community and with surrounding communities should be integral to the entire process. The "fundamental duty of the Catholic school to evangelise must be grounded in the organic pastoral work of the Christian community."³

The establishment of a new school is a major decision for both the Archdiocese and the local community. The decision to establish a school is taken by the Archbishop on the recommendation of the Catholic Education Council.

CONSEQUENCES

In implementing this policy, Brisbane Catholic Education will:

Evangelisation

- develop an educational vision for each new school that articulates a commitment to teach and witness to the values of Jesus in its community
- actively seek opportunities to support the evangelisation activity of local communities in the Archdiocese
- support Catholic communities who seek to add an educational dimension to ecumenical endeavours already in place

Service and Equity

- continue to support parents as the first educators of their children
- seek to establish new schools that complement the quality education provided by surrounding Catholic schools while allowing them to remain viable
- examine the capacity of the local community and the community of schools to provide ongoing support for each new school

¹ Archdiocese of Brisbane, *Queensland bishops' Catholic schools research project Archdiocese of Brisbane 1998-2001*, Brisbane, 2001, p.15.

² Congregation for Catholic Education, *The Catholic school on the threshold of the third millennium*, NSW, 1998, n16, p.20.

³ *ibid*, n3, p.6.