Enterprise Bargaining
Catholic Education in Queensland

QCEC
WITH VISION AND SPIRIT
Enterprise bargaining is the process by which Catholic school employers and employees negotiate formal industrial agreements covering wages and conditions for teachers and staff.

The current Enterprise Bargaining Agreement in the Catholic sector is due to expire on June 30, 2012. Negotiation of a new agreement will commence in mid-February 2012.

Six 'EB' agreements have been negotiated within the Queensland Catholic education sector since the introduction of the enterprise bargaining system in 1992. Each agreement has typically operated for a period of three years.

The enterprise bargaining process takes into account a holistic and strategic view of the needs and challenges of Catholic school communities.

Negotiations are conducted by representatives of Catholic school employing authorities and employees including officers from the Queensland Independent Education Union.

The process of bargaining involves a series of meetings, usually over a period of months allowing negotiators to enter into discussion, outline proposals and provide explanations for responses and positions.

Agreements contain conditions of work and industrial entitlements. These are separated into wage and non-wage entitlements.

**Open communication**

Catholic school employing authorities are committed to keeping employees informed of their positions and intentions in relation to enterprise bargaining.

**Bargaining in good faith**

Catholic school employing authorities are committed to bargaining in good faith.

Good faith bargaining recognises the obligation of the parties involved to act openly, honestly and to genuinely seek to reach agreement.

More specifically good faith bargaining includes:

- attending and participating in meetings at reasonable times
- disclosing relevant information in a timely manner
- responding to proposals made by other bargaining representatives for the agreement in a timely manner
- giving genuine consideration to the proposals of other bargaining representatives for the agreement, and giving reasons for the bargaining representative's responses to those proposals
- refraining from capricious or unfair conduct that undermines freedom of association or collective bargaining
- recognising and bargaining with the other bargaining representatives for the agreement.

**Regular update bulletins**

Regular update bulletins should be provided for staff and relevant information made available online throughout enterprise bargaining processes.
A Catholic vision for industrial relations

The Catholic Church teaches that employers and employees are partners in the education endeavour working together for the wellbeing of the students. This includes striving to reach a balance between providing fair wages and conditions for employees while exercising responsible stewardship of resources.

Church in the Workplace is a document based on Catholic social teaching developed by the Queensland Catholic Education Commission as a framework of vision and values for industrial relations in a Catholic school context.

It states that employer/employee relations in Catholic schools should be grounded in the principle of the common good - a principle characterised by promoting the wellbeing of all members of the school community, a spirit of co-operation rather than competition, effective communications between all parties, and individual responsibility, among others.

People have a right to participate in significant workplace consultations on matters which directly impact on their lives, such as continuity of employment, hours of work, leave arrangements. However the right of participation in decision-making by employees is to be balanced with the right and responsibility of employers to effectively manage the enterprise of Catholic education.

Church in the Workplace, 2006

“The church is convinced that work is a fundamental dimension of human existence on earth... the basis for determining the value of work is not primarily the work being done but the fact that the one doing it is a person... However true it may be that the human person is destined for work and called to it, in the first place work is ‘for persons’ and not ‘persons for work.’”

Laborem Exercens, 4, 6.
About Catholic education in Queensland

- 290 Catholic schools including 197 primary, 67 secondary and 26 P-12 schools in metropolitan, regional, rural and remote communities from Thursday Island to Longreach and south to the border.
- 135,000 students
- 16,800 teachers and staff
- 18% of Queensland school students and about 60% of those attending non-government schools attend a Catholic school.
- Catholic schools in Queensland are operated by five diocesan education authorities (the Archdiocese of Brisbane and the Dioceses of Cairns, Rockhampton, Toowoomba and Townsville) and 17 Religious Institutes or Congregations.

Catholic school employing authorities in Queensland and number of schools operated:

- Catholic Education - Archdiocese of Brisbane (134)
- Catholic Education - Diocese of Cairns (26)
- Catholic Education - Diocese of Rockhampton (37)
- Catholic Education - Diocese of Toowoomba (32)
- Catholic Education - Diocese of Townsville (28)
- Brigidine Sisters (1)
- Edmund Rice Education Australia (15)
- Franciscan Friars (1)
- Franciscan Sisters (1)
- Good Samaritan Sisters (1)
- Loreto Sisters (1)
- Marist Brothers (1)
- Mary Aikenhead Ministries (1)
- Mercy Partners (1)
- Missionaries of the Sacred Heart (1)
- Missionary Oblates of Mary Immaculate (1)
- Presentation Sisters (2)
- Sacred Heart Sisters (1)
- Sisters of Mercy, Brisbane (1)
- Sisters of St Joseph (1)
- The Augustinians (1)
- Ursuline Sisters (1)