Dear colleagues,

Employers work to finalise agreement

Employers have reassessed their position on many key claim items that have been highlighted during previous SBU negotiations, out of session discussions with union representatives, and during the recent protected industrial action. During the meeting of the Enterprise Bargaining Single Bargaining Unit yesterday, Catholic school employers reiterated their commitment to achieving an in-principle agreement to secure the back pay of wage increases for all school-based staff.

Package for settlement tabled

Employer representatives tabled a document containing a package to settle both employee and employer logs of claim. The settlement package is contained in the attached fact sheet.

Catholic school employers have done as much as they can to be fair in the consideration of the employees’ log of claims. Where agreement could be provided to positions taken by employee representatives, it has been accommodated by employers.

Employee representatives indicated that the settlement package (with the exception of wages) was positive and welcomed. Further, employee representatives acknowledged this was a significant step to advancing negotiations.

Tough funding climate

Employers continue to be very concerned by the level of uncertainty associated with State and Federal government funding and the potential impacts on Catholic schools. We are similarly concerned about the current economic climate and the impacts this is having on the capacity of many of our parents to maintain school fee payments.

Employers have made significant concessions with regard to the positions held on many employee and employer non-wage claim items and continue to be of the view that the wage offer is fair and responsible, particularly in an uncertain economic climate.

Catholic school employers will continue to negotiate in good faith to resolve the outstanding wages claim.

Employers prepared to reach agreement now

The preparedness of Catholic school employers to significantly change our position on a number of key claim items has resulted in the parties moving closer to finalising these negotiations.

The proposed package demonstrates our intention to resolve these negotiations as soon as possible. I consider the package to be fair and responsible and that it delivers improved working conditions for the common good of our school community.

Employer representatives have agreed to more frequent meetings with employee representatives with the first of these meetings to be held next week on 20 September 2012.

I will continue to keep you informed as these negotiations progress.
Package for settlement (tabled by employer representatives) at SBU on 12 September 2012

1. **Term of Agreement:** Three (3) years to commence from 1 July 2012
2. **Wages:**
   - 2.7% per annum over three years (or a flat dollar increase of $23 per week whichever is the greater);
   - Guaranteed back pay to 1 May/1 July 2012 if in-principle agreement is reached by 19 October 2012;
   - Guarantee to match a wage offer made by Education Queensland if greater than 2.7%.
3. **Cash out of Long Service Leave:** Ability for employees to cash out their LSL provided at least 5 weeks LSL is retained as a balance to take as leave.
4. **Head of Agreement:** All employee and employer items that have been agreed in-principle and are contained within the Head of Agreement document titled “Post SBU 7”. Some of these items are listed below:
   - Implementation of a new Middle Leadership structure
   - Paid Parental Leave – access to subsequent periods of PPL without the requirement to return to work first and at half pay for double the period of time.
   - Additional special leave for Domestic Violence victims – 5 days paid leave.
   - Long Service Leave – minimum period that can be taken to be one week (less in exceptional circumstances).
   - Infant feeding and expressing – enhancement of current clause.
   - School officer allowances – First aid and specialised care
   - Increase to casual loading – from 23% to 25% (1 January 2013)
   - More favourable severance payments.
   - ET 6 – accelerated progression for new experienced teachers from outside Qld Catholic schools sector.
   - Remote area incentives – some improvements
   - Affirmative employment of the disabled.
   - Deferred salary scheme.
   - Vocational Education and Training – inclusion of VET activities that may be covered by Program Leader positions in the new Middle Leadership structure.
   - Boarding House - establishment of working party to review conditions of work.
   - Services staff – establishment of working party to review the amalgamation of working conditions and the classifications, wages, and terms of conditions of employment.
   - Casual and Part time teachers – incremental progression to change from 1000 to 1200 hours from 1 January 2013 (appropriate written advice to be provided to these employees prior to implementation).
5. **Experienced teacher 6:**

   **Professional responsibilities:**
   - An ET 6 may be requested to undertake Professional Responsibilities associated with the mentoring and/or coaching of graduate teachers and/or inexperienced teachers working at their school.
   - Professional responsibilities are within a teacher’s hours of duty.

   **Appraisal process for ET6:**
   - Formative appraisal that is cognisant of the nature of the ET6 status and the five (5) assessment criteria.

6. **Resourcing the expanding role of teachers:** Employers provide in principle agreement to change the title of “non-contact time” in Primary schools to “Preparation, planning and correction time”.

7. **PAR:** In addition to providing in principle agreement to the implementation of the new Middle Leadership structure, employers have also agreed to:
   - Accelerated progression for PAR holders who are unsuccessful in obtaining a position within the ML structure, and
   - Diocesan employers have agreed in principle to extend the tenure of ML structure, and
   - RI school employers have agreed in principle to extend the tenure of ML positions to 4 years + 4 years.

8. **Notification of ET 5:** Notification of ET 5 eligibility may be included on pay slips. With associated remuneration commencing from date of eligibility provided a teacher successfully makes application for ET 5 status within one month of being notified by a message on their pay slip.

9. **Remote area:** Toowoomba diocese will provide one airfare per annum for teachers and their families from Quilpie, Cunnamulla and Charleville to Toowoomba. In addition, employers will use the ATO definition of dependants when considering remote area claims.

10. **Position descriptions:** Employers will agree to include the clause from EB 2 into the proposed Agreement provided the relevant documents are referred to as “role descriptions”.

**Key employer claims that are not contained within the package for settlement**

- 18 hours of professional development outside of working hours (Teachers). This was reduced to 6 hours at the SBU meeting on 8 August 2012
- Direction to attend a medical examination
- Extension of notice period
- Ability to suspend employees on full pay (Diocesan only)