



Catholic Archdiocese of Canberra & Goulburn

Announcement regarding the Director of Catholic Education Canberra and Goulburn Archdiocese.

Following 8 years of innovative leadership focused on improved student learning outcomes Mr Ross Fox, Director of Catholic Education in the Archdiocese of Canberra and Goulburn, has resigned with his service to conclude at the end of 2024.

Mr Fox's period as Director has been marked by his skillful leadership and management of a number of crucial points for Catholic Education and for our Archdiocesan system of schools in particular.

Not long after Mr Fox's appointment the Commonwealth embarked on a dramatic change in funding for Catholic schools (Gonski Reforms). Its impact was a very significant reduction of funding for our ACT Schools over the decade to 2027. Mr Fox led the efforts to ameliorate the impact of these changes. Catholic education in our Archdiocese and across Australia owes him a significant debt as a result.

At the same time, Mr Fox identified specific learning needs that have plagued Australia for many years and which the data trends indicated were declining further – children were struggling to learn to read and to read well. He set the system the bold goal that every child would be a competent reader and, informed by the research associated with science of reading and science of learning, he has transformed learning in the Archdiocese. As well as benefitting our own students, Mr Fox's leadership in this area and demonstration of results has significantly altered the national debate.

In terms of his management of the Catholic Education office, Mr Fox embarked on a serious uplift in the professional capacities available to the system and, especially to support the work of schools and their Principals. These transformations have been substantial but in many ways are only just beginning to bear fruit.

A new strategy, driven by Mr Fox, for Catholic education entitled 'Faith in Learning' has put Truth, Beauty and Goodness at the heart of our collective efforts in education. Mr Fox was also this year responsible for Cardinal-elect Timothy Radcliffe OP visiting the Archdiocese to lead the principals' retreat and participate in public engagements of national significance.



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Mr Fox was instrumental in guiding the Archdiocese towards the incorporation of Catholic Education from 2025 to set a sound foundation for the future governance and operation of Catholic schools in the Archdiocese. His service will conclude as the Board of Catholic Archdiocese of Canberra and Goulburn Education Ltd assumes governance of the system.

Mr Fox said, "I thank the Archbishop for his trust and confidence over 8 years leading Catholic education in the Archdiocese. It has been a true blessing to put Truth, Beauty and Goodness at the heart of our new strategic plan entitled 'Faith and Learning'."

"Our Catholic schools, supported by the Catholic education office are a wonderful gift. They are successfully providing holistic Catholic formation and education for students and staff. Their success is demonstrated in part by record enrolment numbers in 2024."

"It has been a privilege to work with so many talented principals, teachers, school staff, system leaders, support staff, religious and clergy. I thank all of my colleagues in Catholic education for their support, trust, dedication and professionalism."

"Schools and education systems across Australia and internationally are rightly talking about the disciplined and focused approach to learning and teaching in Catholic schools in the Archdiocese. Many are envious of the improved academic achievement that has resulted. The professionalism and dedication of our staff and leaders has driven our improvement in collaboration with many partners and advisers."

"Students in our care, created in the image and likeness of God, are the ultimate beneficiaries of the dedicated efforts of our staff. I look forward to seeing Catholic schools in the Archdiocese continue to prosper from a new personal and professional perspective."

I take this opportunity on behalf of the Archdiocese to thank Mr Fox for his leadership and courage as he worked to bring about changes in our very way of thinking about education as well as arguing for just funding of Catholic education. Further I wish Ross, Joanne and their family well for the next phase of their professional and personal lives.

Archbishop Christopher Prowse
Catholic Archbishop of Canberra and Goulburn
11th October 2024