OUTLINE OF ASPECTS OF THE
CATHOLIC EDUCATION SYSTEM
DIOCESE OF LISMORE 2014

The system of Catholic Schools operates under the direction of Bishop Geoffrey Jarrett DD, who is advised in policy matters by the Lismore Diocesan Catholic Schools Council.

The Catholic Schools Office (CSO) operates as the secretariat to the Council and is responsible for implementation of policy and as a support, resource group to schools. In 2007, Bishop Jarrett approved for publication “Catholic Education in the Diocese of Lismore, Foundational Beliefs and Practices, The Essential Framework.” Principals are expected to be a driving force in embedding this Essential Framework into all aspects of parish school life.

DEMOGRAPHIC, GEOGRAPHIC INFORMATION

The diocese extends from Tweed Heads to Laurieton and west to the foothills of the Great Divide. Total population at the 2011 census was 477,689 with 111,115 Catholics (23.3%).

The region has an agricultural / service industry / tourist based economy and continues to experience significant growth. The Catholic education system currently includes 33 primary schools with an enrolment of 9434 and 12 systemic secondary schools with an enrolment of 8,130. There is also one non-systemic secondary school with a further 1,233 students. About 61% of students in the diocese are Catholic.

All 45 schools are co-educational.

GENERAL INFORMATION

1. Conditions of service for lay teaching staff and Principals are governed by enterprise agreements which specify aspects of service including salary scales, leave conditions, classification requirements, promotions positions and various miscellaneous matters.

Members of religious orders are not covered by these agreements, but custom and practice have established recognised and accepted procedures for religious in our system. Various options are available for Principals with regard to professional and industrial representation and association membership.

2. The diocese sponsors a variety of inservice and teacher development programs including Religious Education courses and programs, conferences, professional development and meeting opportunities for priests, principals, teaching and support staff and CSO staff, professional support for beginning and newly appointed teachers, whole school development programs, support and appraisal processes for staff in leadership positions, liaison with Australian Catholic University and Southern Cross University. Currently the Diocese is supporting a cohort of leaders studying the Graduate Certificate of Theology.

3. The diocese is approved by the Board of Studies as a system for the purpose of registration and accreditation of all schools in the diocese.

4. Accommodation is generally readily available but costs vary markedly among the different population centres. Coastal places are much more expensive than "inland" towns.