

References

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ARCHDIOCESE OF BRISBANE
CATHOLIC EDUCATION COUNCIL

POLICY

STATEMENT

Parent Partnership and
Participation Policy

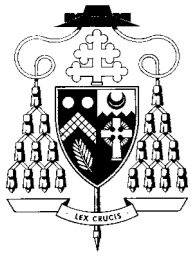
FOR BRISBANE CATHOLIC
EDUCATION SCHOOLS



*Catholic
Education
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MAY 2005



Partnerships between parents and schools are vital to the future of Catholic schools. Both parties are responsible for the maintenance and development of these partnerships. Mutual respect can be established through dialogue relating to students' families, the holistic development of the student and appropriate resourcing of the school. Participation *'should also be encouraged through the promotion of parents' associations and school boards, in order to clarify with their indispensable collaboration that personalised approach which is needed for an educational project to be efficacious'*. (n 20 The Catholic School on the Threshold of the Third Millennium)

This policy statement reflects the Archdiocese of Brisbane's ongoing commitment to strengthening partnerships and participation of parents in the life of the Catholic school. Parents and schools enter into a partnership through the enrolment process. Through enrolment parents *'anticipate that amongst the provision of a secular education, there will be an enrichment of their children's experience and knowledge of God and Church'*. (The Queensland Bishops' Catholic Schools Research Project Archdiocese of Brisbane 1998 – 2001;pg 14) Church documentation has reiterated the important role of Catholic parents as the primary educators in faith of their children. Strong partnerships between the school and the community are also essential in the Christian formation of the students' education.

I ask that Catholic school communities reflect upon this *Parent Partnership and Participation Policy* and ensure that all staff are cognisant of the policy and procedures to progress this important relationship.

I request that each school community promote this policy. I commend it to you to further the educational mission of the Church in the Archdiocese.

Sincerely in Christ

Most Rev John Bathersby DD
ARCHBISHOP OF BRISBANE

MAY 2005

PARENT PARTNERSHIP AND PARTICIPATION POLICY

POLICY

Catholic schools have a responsibility to engage and support parents in active partnerships and participation in the life of the school community.

INTRODUCTION

*"Catholic schools are founded on Christ and are at the service of students, the Church and society."*² Parents are recognised as having the primary role in the education of their children.³

The home and the school have distinct and overlapping roles in relation to the education of children.

RATIONALE

The Archdiocesan report on the Queensland Bishops' Catholic Schools Research Project states "Partnership is a key theme for Catholic schools. Parents and schools are mutually responsible for the maintenance and development of their partnership. This relationship depends on the acceptance of mutual responsibility and recognition of each other's family heritage, culture, experiences and skills that each bring to the relationship. Such partnerships need to be based upon mutual respect. Schools and parents share a common goal – the holistic development of their students."⁴

Parents, staff and pastors have differing responsibilities within the school community. In the area of policy making parents, staff and pastors are partners.

CONSEQUENCES

Organisation

- ~ Parents are engaged in active participation in the life of the school e.g liturgical life, teaching and learning, pastoral care, policy making, resourcing and other forms of voluntary assistance.
- ~ Open reciprocal communication is essential in developing the partnership within the school community.
- ~ Parents are an integral part of the school renewal process, which serves the functions of both review and future planning in Catholic schools.

- ~ The responsibility of policy making collaboratively belongs to pastor, staff and parents. The responsibility of policy implementation rests with the principal in collaboration with relevant groups. The recommended model for policy making by the Queensland Council of Bishops is the pastoral model of the school board.
- ~ Parents and Friends Associations play a vital role in promoting the interests of parents in respect to the education of their children in Catholic schools.
- ~ Parents support their Catholic school financially, however, no family should be excluded on the grounds of financial hardship.
- ~ Schools demonstrate appropriate accountability and transparency in leadership, education, pastoral care and financial areas.
- ~ Schools have in place an appropriate procedure for responding to parental concerns.

Teaching and Learning

- ~ Parents are involved appropriately in the curriculum directions and educational strategies of the school.
- ~ Schools inform parents of curriculum practice and educational program.
- ~ Schools report regularly on all aspects of students' development and progress.

Relationships/Partnerships

- ~ Catholic schools are faith communities within the broader context of the Church in which parents, staff and pastor participate in roles of shared leadership.
- ~ Staff, parents, pastors and the wider community seek to enhance relationships in service to the mission of the school.

¹ The term 'parents' includes guardians, caregivers and all those who share the primary responsibility for the raising and education of children.

² Brisbane Catholic Education. *Strategic Renewal Framework for Catholic Schooling Archdiocese of Brisbane 2002–2006 (2nd Edition)*, Brisbane, 2002, p. 9.

³ Ministerial Council on Education, Employment, Training and Youth Affairs. *The Adelaide Declaration on National Goals for Schooling in the Twenty-First Century*. Canberra, 1999.

⁴ Archdiocese of Brisbane. *Queensland Bishops' Catholic Schools Research Project Archdiocese of Brisbane 1998–2001*, Brisbane, 2001, p. 13.