5 October 2016

Dear Editor,

The discussion around appropriate levels of funding for Australian schools is one of the most important issues we must consider for our nation’s future.

It is disappointing, therefore, to see the discussion lose focus on the needs and well-being of students and instead take on an adversarial and occasionally sectarian tenor.

Commentators intent on grabbing a headline do a great disservice to the young people whose education is the responsibility of our whole community.

The Catholic sector in Queensland educates almost 147,000 students in 300 hundred schools.

They are students from all socioeconomic backgrounds, from all cultural and linguistic backgrounds and they come from communities right around the state from the Gold Coast to Thursday Island and west to Mt Isa and Quilpie.

On average Catholic schools in Queensland in 2016 received, from all governments, 83 per cent of the funding per student that state schools received.

The Catholic sector remains committed to working with governments and parents towards the evolution of a needs-based funding system that is simple, fair and transparent.

By all means let’s have a discussion about how to make that happen but let’s have it in a way that puts the educational needs of our children and their future at the centre of the debate.

Dr Lee-Anne Perry AM

Executive Director
Queensland Catholic Education Commission