

Trustees of the Edmund Rice Education Australia Culture and Capability Review

CECV Statement

Introduction

Catholic Education Commission Victoria (**CECV**) is approved by the Victorian Registration and Qualification Authority (**VRQA**) as the body to review and monitor compliance of Victorian Catholic schools with the minimum standards for registration. As the review body of Victorian Catholic schools, CECV is also vested with responsibility for assessment of any change of school proprietor applications for recommendation to VRQA.

Trustees of Edmund Rice Education Australia (**TEREA**) is the proprietor and operator of educational entities and services across Australia, including seven Victorian Catholic schools registered with VRQA.

TEREA was subject to a review by VRQA in early 2020 in respect of events at St Kevin's College. VRQA identified, amongst other things, significant deficiencies in TEREAs governance of the Victorian schools and non-compliance with the governance registration requirements administered by VRQA. In response to these findings, TEREAs provided an Enforceable Undertaking to VRQA to resolve the non-compliances.

Care, Safety and Welfare of Students

In light of VRQAs review of TEREAs, CECV reviewed the Victorian TEREAs schools in August 2020 and again in late 2021. Both reviews identified a strong commitment by the schools to, and compliance with, the required standard of care, safety and welfare of students. CECV has full confidence in the continued compliance at each school with child safety requirements.

TEREA Culture and Capability Review

In late 2021, CECV also conducted an assessment of the necessary improvements to governance structures to address VRQAs findings of governance non-compliance at TEREAs Board level. In the light of this work, CECV earlier this year commissioned KPMG to undertake an independent review of culture, capability and organisational governance of TEREAs (**the Review**).

The [Review](#) presents a comprehensive analysis of issues and reports findings that there are significant deficiencies in the culture and capability of TEREAs.

The culture and capability shortcomings that currently exist at TEREAs are not consistent with CECVs governance expectations of school proprietors in Victorian Catholic schools, within the context of the requirements of the minimum standards imposed under the *Education and Training Reform Regulations 2017 (Vic)*.

CECV requires TEREAs to undertake and have regard to the following:

1. Implementation of recommendations

The Review outlines recommendations to enhance and improve the standing of TEREА in each of the nine areas of the capability framework. CECV requires TEREА to urgently address the recommendations of the Review.

CECV has commissioned KPMG to conduct a reassessment of TEREА's culture and capability post the implementation of the Review recommendations.

2. Engagement and consultation with Victorian TEREА school communities

TEREА must demonstrate effective engagement and consultation with the Victorian school communities. The relationship with the St Kevin's College community demands a special attention given events that initiated the review of TEREА's governance of its schools.

CECV will only recommend the registration of new school proprietor(s) for Victorian schools in succession to TEREА that has the support of key stakeholders. In the meantime, CECV requires demonstrated evidence that a suitably designed operational autonomy to the satisfaction of CECV is provided for St Kevin's College (and where appropriate for other Victorian TEREА schools), to enable the school(s) to operate effectively.

3. Future governance of Victorian TEREА schools

School registration standards in Victoria require school proprietors to structure their governance in a way that enables effective strategic direction and financial management of the schools (including payments of suitable fees and levies as permissible by the registration standards).

The recommendations of the Review will need to be contextualised in any new governance structures proposed for Victorian TEREА schools. This will enable CECV to meaningfully assess enhancements in the organisational governance, capabilities and culture identified in the Review.

4. Change in proprietor of the Victorian schools

Following KPMG's independent reassessment of TEREА's culture and capability to suitable and appropriate settings, CECV would then be in a position to engage with TEREА regarding a change in proprietor application(s).

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