

## EDITORIAL

The challenges we have faced over the past six months of this pandemic have both ‘stress-tested’ and shone unprecedented light on the capability of schools and the central role they play in the fabric of communities.

Our Catholic schools have responded magnificently, often leading Melbourne schooling responses. We have seen strong and decisive leadership, innovation, professionalism, care and compassion in abundance across our sector.

Many schools have had to close and open multiple times, alternating between onsite and remote learning with only a few days notice. They have assisted with contact tracing, overseen deep cleans, and cared for sick students and staff, all while continuing the core business of learning.

While it has not always been smooth sailing, stories of our Catholic schools going above and beyond to care for the wellbeing of their students, staff and families are common across the community.

As we move into this next phase of remote learning for students in all year levels, and Stage 4 restrictions across most of the archdiocesan school community, we congratulate and thank our schools. Your contribution already stands as a lasting legacy of Victoria’s efforts to support young people and protect their future in the face of this insidious virus.

We also remind principals, teachers and staff to take care of yourselves and each other at this stressful time, and to not hesitate to reach out for support.

### **Feast of St Mary of the Cross**

This Saturday is the feast day of St Mary of the Cross MacKillop. It will be a great celebration for our schools that are named for her and inspired by her in their daily life. Her now-familiar words, ‘Never see a need without doing something about it’, are a challenge to all of us to think more consciously about our response to those in need. May her feast day remind us of the kind of life we are called to live as followers of Christ.

### **Australian Primary Principals Day**

Today is [Primary Principals Day](#), a national celebration of primary principals. It is a timely opportunity to thank all of you for your enormous contribution to the life and growth of your school communities, and to Catholic education generally. You can read more about this in the [media release](#) available on the Catholic Education Melbourne website.

### **St Benedict’s School closure**

With enrolments declining over recent years, St Benedict's School, Burwood, will regrettably close at the end of this year. The decision was an extremely difficult but necessary one. With a number of other Catholic schools nearby, unfortunately, St Benedict's was no longer viable to operate. Parish Priest Rev Daniel Serratore and Catholic Education Melbourne have worked closely with the school leadership team throughout the decision-making process and will continue to support students, staff and families to continue their journey with Catholic education.

## Catholic Education Today

The third edition of *Catholic Education Today* for 2020 is now available on the Catholic Education Melbourne website [www.cem.edu.au](http://www.cem.edu.au) under *News and Events / Catholic Education Today*. Schools are reminded to distribute a link to the [online version](#) throughout their communities.

### In this edition

Jennifer Brown-Omichi, Lead: Languages at Catholic Education Melbourne, writes about working with a growing number of school communities to implement transformational change in their language learning and to get students talking in another language.

Anthony Zammit, English and Religious Education Teacher at Catholic Regional College Caroline Springs, writes about how the college implemented the new English as an Additional Language (EAL) curriculum and used planning, tools, data and professional learning.

To share stories of innovation and/or good practice from your school, please contact Elizabeth Fitzpatrick at 9267 0228 or [efitzpatrick@cem.edu.au](mailto:efitzpatrick@cem.edu.au). Your stories celebrate the strengths and achievements of Catholic education, and contribute to the strengthening of the system as a whole. They also build collegiality and enrich our sense of being a Catholic education community.

## LEARNING DIRECTIONS

### Languages – Let's not just teach it how we were taught, let's get talking!

*By Jennifer Brown-Omichi, Lead: Languages at Catholic Education Melbourne.*

#### Let's reimagine language learning!

Have you ever wondered why some people pick up languages much more easily than others? Actually, those learners are not any smarter and they don't have any kind of special gift for language learning either.



What matters when teaching a language is being clear about what we are aiming for and then putting in place the learning conditions to make that possible.

The Catholic Education Melbourne (CEM) Languages team has been actively working with a growing number of school communities that are keen to implement transformational change and get students talking in another language.

#### Responding to the research

The unique, CEM-developed, holistic pedagogical approach *Teachers as Co-learners* is essentially about changing school culture to enable effective language learning.

Schools consider research and conditions for effective language learning, and critically review their existing support mechanisms and organisational structures to determine what conditions need to be in place to enable students and staff to get talking in the language they are learning.

## Re-culturing language learning

Catholic schools in the Archdiocese of Melbourne have some of the most effective and innovative, high-quality Languages programs in Australia. Programs that focus on getting everyone talking by engaging students in a daily, authentic 10–15 minute oral language learning experience.

In 2020, 34 primary schools across the Archdiocese have adopted this whole-school approach, but we need a more coherent systemic approach to language learning.

An evaluation project (Macfarlane, unpub.) found that in schools that adopted this model (Schools F–N in the diagram below), the vocabulary range increased significantly more than in schools retaining a single lesson per week delivered by a specialist teacher (Schools A–E).

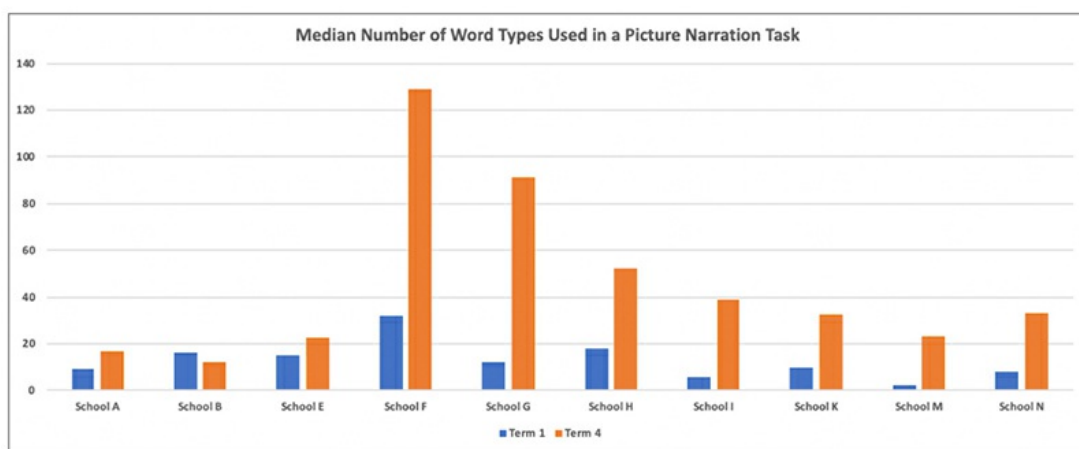


Figure 1: Median primary school student vocabulary range (Macfarlane, unpub.)  
The year of data collection for A–G was 2017 and for H–N was 2018.

From the beginning, school leaders involved in this new approach were open to exploring new possibilities. Using high-frequency language in the classroom every day is the new focus. This has normalised the use of additional languages and provided frequent opportunities to engage with the language in a meaningful context – an essential condition for language learning.

Before implementing the *Teachers as Co-learners* approach, none of the classroom teachers at any of the schools were speakers of the target language. Strangely enough, this shared challenge seems to be why the model is so successful.

Principal Annice Lappin shared, ‘The change in approach to language learning at St Mary’s School, Geelong, has meant that students and teachers alike are fully engaged and motivated to speak Italian together. The daily 15 minute, immersive approach has reinvigorated our school community’s love of language learning.’

‘The ongoing support from the CEM Languages team has been outstanding and greatly appreciated. In partnership with families and CEM, we have overwhelmingly improved the language landscape at St Mary’s School.’

St Richard's Primary School, Kilsyth, has also implemented the *Teachers as Co-learners* approach and worked strategically to support staff to learn to speak Italian. The school employs three former secondary school Italian language learners (who recently graduated from Our Lady of Sion College, Box Hill, and Mount Lilydale Mercy College) as Learning Support Officers (LSOs) in the classroom every day.

The LSOs who are completing their tertiary studies in education are also gaining valuable in-classroom experience by working with the staff and students. Meanwhile, teachers are modelling authentic learning for their students as they persist, struggle and learn through their mistakes to succeed. Both teachers and students are 'co-learners' on a language learning journey.

Principal at St Richard's, Marcus Gill, reflected: 'This new pedagogical approach has given all staff a greater appreciation and understanding of the challenges of learning another language. Students with English as an Additional Language (EAL) have particularly shone through this learning context. New teaching strategies have been implemented into other areas of the curriculum, specifically English, as we continue to see the successes of this approach to literacy.'

At St Mary's School, Greensborough, Principal Marisa Matthys said: 'The change in approach to language learning at St Mary's has encouraged our teachers and parents to be risk takers and co-learners with the students. The students have been empowered to often lead the learning, support their peers and teach their families and the staff how to speak Italian.'

A major obstacle in the traditional model of language learning is the lack of frequent contact with the language. Research based on the Forgetting Curve (see diagram below) demonstrates that learners forget about 90 per cent of what they learned within the first day. In fact, after a few hours of learning something new, it's typical to have forgotten 50 per cent of the content.

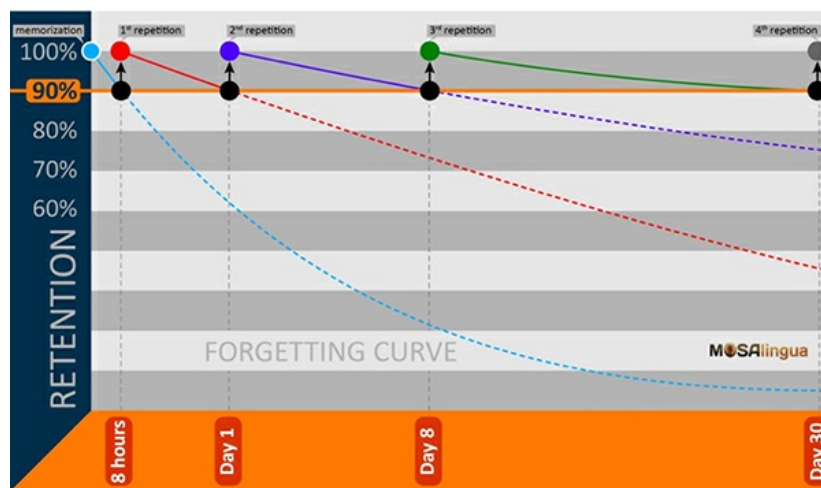


Figure 2: The 'Forgetting Curve' was developed in 1885 and demonstrates the rate at which information is forgotten over time if we don't attempt to retain it (Ebbinghaus 1964).

Through the *Teachers as Co-learners* approach, students and teachers are using the language together in meaningful ways as they interact in the classroom every day.

### Tools to measure what matters

Strong student voice data tell us that students measure their success in languages not by what they can read or write, but by what they can say. But how well do commonly used language instruments measure oral language proficiency? To enable schools to accurately measure progress and growth in language learning outcomes, CEM has developed a first-of-its-kind, online assessment tool for languages, called *Speak Up!*

To inform teacher judgment, the *Speak Up!* tool provides a way to count the number of unique words and sentence length in a spontaneous oral response to an open-ended picture chat using unseen images. This is a task that students are familiar with from NAPLAN writing assessments and a transferable skill that students can use to strengthen their literacy capabilities.

Ms Matthys said, 'We have fun learning together, making mistakes and having a strong sense of achievement. The ability to track our growth using *Speak Up!* demonstrates the success of the approach. Feedback from our school community has been extremely positive. All are excited that St Mary's is implementing such a successful initiative'.

The *Speak Up!* tool also builds learner autonomy by encouraging students to set goals, identify and measure their own growth, reflect on learning tips, celebrate progress and set new goals. Over time, consistent capturing of data can enable students to reflect on their data samples, identify success and see they are really talking in the language!

As we know, learning progressions require iterative cycles of development so as to build in horizontal coherence among curriculum, instruction and assessment – without quantitative data, this is not possible.

### **Opportunities for schools in the new strategy for Languages – Now We're Talking!**

*Languages – Now We're Talking!* invites your whole school community into a conversation about how language learning comes alive in your school. The professional learning opportunities, grants, resources and other initiatives on offer through this strategy will assist you to build on learners' literacy and communication skills, knowledge and understanding, now and into the future.

The [Languages – Now We're Talking! strategy brochure](https://cevn.cecv.catholic.edu.au) is available on the CEVN website <https://cevn.cecv.catholic.edu.au> under *Curriculum / Learning and Teaching / Languages*.

For the first time, CEM has produced some exciting new multilingual ebook resources to support emerging readers, which are now available on the [Languages](#) page above.

### **References**

Ebbinghaus, H 1964, *Memory: A contribution to experimental psychology*, Dover, New York.

Macfarlane, K, unpub., 'Transformational Change for Primary Years' Foreign Language Programs – Developing Oral Language Skills for Spoken Interaction in the Classroom', PhD dissertation, Monash University, Australia.

*Continued support by the CEM Languages Team is available on request during remote learning to ensure all students are able to progress their learning in languages.*

*Jennifer Brown-Omichi can be contacted on 9267 0228 or [jbrownomichi@cem.edu.au](mailto:jbrownomichi@cem.edu.au).*

## **SCHOOL PRACTICE**

### **Implementing the new F–10 English as an Additional Language curriculum**

*By Anthony Zammit, English and Religious Education Teacher, Catholic Regional College Caroline Springs.*

The Catholic Regional College Caroline Springs community has welcomed new refugee students in recent years. In 2019, eight refugee students enrolled, increasing to 29 in 2020. The arrival of the students has provided new opportunities within the college.



The college decided to implement the new English as an Additional Language (EAL) curriculum in 2020 and, to do this successfully, made new appointments, including an EAL Coordinator and a Multicultural Education Assistant. Provisions for the very first EAL class in Year 7 were also made.

## The EAL curriculum

The EAL curriculum is structured in a way that provides each individual student a pathway that will help them make a smooth transition into the mainstream curriculum. The different levels and pathways allow students to develop their literacy skills based on their different stages of language acquisition. Currently, all English teachers at the college have an understanding of the new EAL reporting pathways and achievement standards.

Although there are obvious challenges for subject teachers where there is a greater language intensity such as in the Humanities and Science, all subjects allow EAL students to have the opportunity to learn new subject-specific vocabulary. Notably, it is clear that all teachers have a profound role in developing EAL students' academic language vocabulary to support them in their learning. It is through differentiated practice that they are able to make strong links to the EAL curriculum within their own mainstream classroom.

The next stage of the EAL curriculum implementation is for all teachers, regardless of method, to extend their proficiency to have a strong understanding of how to use new EAL curriculum and its pathways to strengthen mainstream classroom opportunities for EAL students.

## Planning, tools and data

Although the new Year 7 EAL specialist class has its own structured curriculum, it is not isolated from the mainstream English curriculum. Therefore, in planning, EAL stakeholders collaborate with the English team to draw similarities between the two curriculums. In doing so, the EAL students, particularly those in Pathway B, can have the foundations necessary to continue to build their learning experiences and make the transition to the English curriculum.

When planning, a clear focus is established for each lesson identifying the lesson intention and success criteria. The collection of assessments, both diagnostic and formative, is critical for collecting sufficient data which subsequently inform future teaching practice. It is important in planning to organise relevant use of visual material, both online and concrete, and make use of assessment tools from the [Tools to Enhance Assessment Literacy \(TEAL\)](#) website. These resources are imperative as they scaffold student learning and allow them to engage in the tasks for that lesson.

The teaching and learning cycle, with the use of data, allows teachers to create short-term and long-term goals and assess these goals through the use of the students' personalised learning plan. The EAL students are given time and hands-on experiences to acquire the new language, particularly specific language within the unit, and the skills needed to achieve these goals across all subject areas.

## EAL students

Our EAL students are often highly able students who bring a wealth of knowledge into the specialised EAL classroom, as well as to the mainstream subject classrooms. It has been very important for the school community to acknowledge and value the EAL students' cultural backgrounds. In doing so, teachers can apply plurilingual strategies and multilinguistic practices in their classroom.

The EAL students are encouraged to use their first language when discussing material and to clarify meaning with each other. In doing so, the students' level of thinking is not hindered and, through the use of a Multicultural Education Assistant, their wealth of knowledge and thinking processes can be expressed. Vocabulary and language convention charts are made to scaffold students' understanding of the English language, as well as the use of bilingual and picture dictionaries and Arabic keyboard covers for their laptops.

The presence of EAL students within our school community brings richness and awareness of a culture. The non-EAL students have the responsibility to show empathy and respect for others and ultimately value a new cultural perspective. This provides a stronger and relevant link to the Victorian Curriculum's general capabilities, particularly, Intercultural Capability and Personal and Social Capability.

The EAL students' wealth of experience and knowledge can be shared with the non-EAL students, which subsequently widens their world view and helps them appreciate another perspective. As a multicultural school community, the presence of EAL students promotes respect and understanding of diversity among all students.

Social and affective factors can have a huge impact on the EAL students within the college community. Like all students, EAL students thrive on constant encouragement, praise and positive reinforcement. These students may feel vulnerable and inhibited and, unless the teacher ensures a positive and culturally safe learning environment and positive group dynamics, these students may not make much progress. By acknowledging and valuing their background, students develop a positive rapport towards their teacher and classmates which subsequently fosters a non-threatening, safe and inclusive language learning environment.

### Professional learning

Teachers of all disciplines are encouraged to engage in professional development to cater for our EAL students. This includes college participation and co-hosting of the Teaching ESL Students in the Mainstream Classroom (TESMC) course organised by Catholic Education Melbourne. The new knowledge gained through professional development is then shared among all staff in our professional practice workshops.

The college is also creating stronger partnerships with Foundation House to support students of refugee backgrounds and their families through the Refugee Education Support Program (RESP) initiative.

We all have a responsibility and moral obligation to provide all students with every opportunity. EAL students deserve equal opportunities to strive for excellence and, ultimately, receive support to be the best that they can be. In doing so, the community of Catholic Regional College Caroline Springs is living the college motto, to *Live Fully Act Justly*.

*Anthony Zammit can be contacted on 9217 8000 or [azammit@crccs.vic.edu.au](mailto:azammit@crccs.vic.edu.au).*

*For more information on implementing the new F-10 EAL curriculum, please contact Mollie Daphne, Project Lead – EAL at Catholic Education Melbourne on 9267 0228 or [mdaphne@cem.edu.au](mailto:mdaphne@cem.edu.au), or the New Arrivals Learning Consultant in your region.*

## CATHOLIC EDUCATION NEWS

### Catholic Education Melbourne's news stories

Every week stories about the Catholic education community in the Archdiocese of Melbourne are published on the Catholic Education Melbourne website. These stories have been published this week:

- [Fun Fridays at St John's Mitcham](#) – 3 August
- [St Mary of the Cross MacKillop](#) – 7 August
- [The fullness of life](#) – 7 August
- [Australian Primary Principals Day](#) – 7 August



## Catholic Education Today – Term 3, 2020

The third edition of [Catholic Education Today](#) for 2020 is now available on the Catholic Education Melbourne [website](#) under *News and Events / Catholic Education Today*.

The Term 3 edition focuses on 'stepping up' with articles that explore school transitions and how to support your child through changes at all levels of school from beginning in Foundation to leaving secondary.

This issue explores how a school changed its language offering and involved the whole community. It also contains guidance to help families build resilience, looks at how our students are building connections with the vulnerable through the Letter Project, and celebrates events around the Archdiocese.



Schools can share the magazine with their community by adding a link to the [online version](#) on their website or downloading [this advertisement](#) to include in their school newsletter.

## CATHOLIC CHURCH NEWS

### Pope's August prayer intention

Pope Francis' prayer intention for August is titled 'The Maritime World'. In his prayer, he asks us to:

pray for all those who work and live from the sea, among them sailors, fishermen and their families.

The Pope Video for August is available on [The Pope Video](#) website and the prepared prayer intentions for all of 2020 are available on the [Pope's Prayer Network](#).





## MEDIA RELEASES

### Catholic schools build on experiences for return to remote learning for senior students

**3 August 2020**

Catholic Education Melbourne Executive Director Jim Miles says Catholic schools will seek to build on their earlier experiences of remote learning and are well-placed for the return to remote learning for VCE and VCAL students this week.

‘Our schools will be working hard to minimise any impact on student learning and to care for the wellbeing of their students, staff and families’, he said.

‘This is an extremely challenging time for schools and the wider community. It is vital we all work together to support our students and teachers, and help minimise the risk of COVID-19 spreading further’, Mr Miles said. [Read more](#)

### Primary school principals – we salute you!

**7 August 2020**

Today, on Australian Primary Principals Day, we recognise the work of the 260 Catholic primary school principals in the Archdiocese of Melbourne, and all principals across the country.

‘It is more timely than ever to recognise our primary principals for their enormous contribution to the life of their schools and the community’, said Jim Miles, Executive Director of Catholic Education Melbourne.

‘The challenges principals have faced over the past six months of this pandemic have both stress-tested and shone unprecedented light on their capability, and the central leadership role they play in the fabric of their communities more broadly.’ [Read more](#).

## GENERAL NEWS

### Teachers get new tool to boost phonics education

In October last year, the Australian Government announced a plan to ensure student teachers across Australia are brought up to scratch when it comes to teaching children the fundamentals of learning to read.

On Monday 3 August 2020, that plan took a big leap forward when Federal Education Minister Dan Tehan launched stage one of the \$10.8m Year 1 Phonics Check, aimed at helping parents and teachers ensure children are developing the skills to become strong speakers, readers and writers.

Minister Tehan said using this tool will help parents and teachers to better understand a child's reading level and what extra support they may need to improve their reading.

To read the [full article](#), please visit [The Educator](#) website.

## OPPORTUNITIES

### REMINDERS

#### Junior Lord Mayor competition call for entries

Now in its eighth year, the Junior Lord Mayor competition aims to raise awareness about Melbourne and our city's Aboriginal history and culture – and instil civic pride by highlighting our journey since being founded on 30 August 1835.

Entry is free and open to students in Years 4, 5 and 6 (or aged 9 to 13). Answer the 10 questions in the competition entry form and you will get a confirmation email for your records when your entry is submitted successfully.

From five finalists, an overall winner is chosen. His or Her Worship gets to rock mayoral robes and gold chains, add 2020 Junior Lord Mayor of Melbourne to their resume, perform official and fun duties with Lord Mayor Sally Capp, march in the Moomba Parade and more!

Key dates:

- Competition closes: **midnight, Monday 10 August 2020**
- Finalists announced: **Thursday 13 August 2020**
- Judging and winner chosen: **Wednesday 19 August 2020.**

Enter the competition via the [Melbourne Day](#) website.

Coronavirus advisory: If State Government distancing restrictions prevent in-person judging, judging will be held via video conferencing as best as possible, with details arranged with finalists.

#### Woods Street Youth Art Prize

Woods Street Youth Art Prize is seeking artwork submissions from young people aged 14–25 who live in the local cities of Hobsons Bay, Wyndham, Maribyrnong, Brimbank, Melton, Moonee Valley, Geelong or Melbourne.



Artists are invited to respond to the theme 'A New Power – Finding a Voice'. Shortlisted artworks will be exhibited at Woods Street Art Space, Laverton, from 16–18 October 2020, with cash prizes for award winners.

[Submissions](#) are due by **5 pm, Monday 24 August 2020**.

## STEM MAD Goes Digital 2020: Showcasing the Future

In response to the COVID-19 impact on schools, STEM MAD 2020 will be going digital. The Showcase will take place on **Tuesday 27 October from 10 am to 3 pm** and has been designed to acknowledge and promote STEM learning initiatives. Its aim is to address real-world problems and demonstrate how students in Catholic schools take action that matters.



Primary and secondary schools in the Archdiocese of Melbourne are invited to submit an application for student teams to demonstrate their initiatives in STEM learning. Schools are welcome to submit more than one team, with wildcard entries being included in the finals based on excellence.

For selection in the Digital Showcase, collaborative teams of up to four students must create a 90-second video submission about their learning journey to design a product, service or innovation that addresses a real-world problem.

Finalists will then be required to provide a maximum 3.5-minute video submission demonstrating their design process and prototype, which will be judged for awards by sponsors. Submissions close on **Friday 4 September 2020 at 5 pm**.

For more information, please visit the STEM MAD [website](#) or contact Shelley Waldon on 9267 0228 or [swaldon@cem.edu.au](mailto:swaldon@cem.edu.au).

## Grants open for schools in disadvantaged communities

Applications are invited for grants of between \$20,000 and \$60,000 in funding for a project that will bring a profound change to disadvantaged students.

Schools with an Index of Community Socio-Educational Advantage (ICSEA) value of below 1,000 are invited to apply for a range of grants from Schools Plus – a national charity that raises funding for schools in disadvantaged communities.

Eligible schools will be able to apply for the Smart Giving grant, and schools can also register a project on the [Fundraise Yourself](#) platform at any time.

Applications close on **Friday 11 September 2020**. To find out more, visit the [Schools Plus](#) website.

## Film Competition – MobileMuster

[MobileMuster](#) is inviting students with a passion for film-making to create a one-minute film encouraging your community to recycle their old mobile phones. The theme for the 2020 competition is *Small actions. Big Impact*.

Students can enter the competition either as an individual, in groups or as a class and will need to specify if they are entering in the primary, secondary or tertiary category.

Film entries must be submitted via the MobileMuster [website](#) by **Monday 21 September 2020**.

## Catholic School Parents Victoria (CSPV) Parent Register

Principals are invited to nominate a parent representative to connect directly with Catholic School Parents Victoria (CSPV).

One parent representative will be the contact person to represent parents in your school, working alongside you to share information and act as a liaison with CSPV on matters pertinent in education. The parent will not be required to attend CSPV meetings.



To nominate a parent, please complete the [CSPV Parent Contact Nomination Form](#).

For more information, please contact Julia McCarthy, CSPV Administration and Marketing Officer, at [admin@cspv.catholic.edu.au](mailto:admin@cspv.catholic.edu.au).

## CONSULTATIONS/SURVEYS

### REMINDERS

#### Secondary English Class Sizes survey

All Victorian Catholic schools with secondary classes (excluding specialist schools) are requested to complete the [Secondary English Class Sizes](#) online survey via the CEVN website <https://cevn.cecv.catholic.edu.au> under *Data Management / Data & Surveys / Secondary English Class Sizes* by **Friday 21 August 2020**.

The purpose of the survey is to collect data to calculate average class sizes across the sector. Secondary English class sizes are used by convention for this calculation. The data are supplied to the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) for inclusion in its annual *Education at a Glance* publication.

#### Call for submissions on education disability standards

The Australian Government is calling for public submissions into a review of the [Disability Standards for Education 2005](#).

Federal Minister for Education, Dan Tehan, said the standards play a key role in ensuring students with disability can access and participate in education without any barriers.

As part of the consultation, people can have their say by completing an online questionnaire, making a submission, participating in a webinar or by expressing their interest in a focus group, one-on-one interview or an online discussion.

The community consultation is open until **Friday 25 September 2020**. For more information, visit the [consultation hub](#).

## COMING EVENTS

### ACYF Reunion – Lockdown Special

Catholic Education Melbourne has partnered with the Catholic Archdiocese of Melbourne to invite all leaders and pilgrims who attended the Australian Catholic Youth Festival in Perth last year for an ACYF Reunion – Lockdown Special.

The event will be broadcast live on [YouTube](#) and [Facebook](#) on **Wednesday 12 August from 5 pm to 6 pm**. The ACYF Lockdown Special will feature guests such as Archbishop Peter and Father Rob Galea, as well as live performances by Gen Bryant and Josh Angrisano.



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