

Chair’s Report to the Catholic School Parents Australia Annual General Meeting

Reporting Period – July 2024 to 30 June 2025

“The family is the sanctuary of love. It is here that tenderness and mercy are first learned, and from here that they must ripple outward into society.”

— Pope Leo XIV, First Angelus, 2025

It is with gratitude and hope that I present my Chair Annual General Meeting report for Catholic School Parents Australia. Over the past year, CSPA has been *re-energised* by the strength of our collective voice, the commitment of our members, and the shared belief that parent advocacy is a powerful driver of equity, belonging, and transformation in education.

As parents and carers, we are united by our care for children, our passion for fairness, and our belief in education as a force for good. That belief has underpinned all our efforts this year—from policy advocacy to national projects, governance renewal to grassroots consultation.

Strengthening National Representation

- **Victoria:** A representative from Victoria once again formally participating on Council in 2025 is significantly important, especially given the scale of their Catholic school system.
- **Northern Territory:** Engagement with the NT continues, with a strong focus on ensuring the voices of their parents are part of the national dialogue on education equity and inclusion.

These efforts affirm CSPA’s role as a diverse and representative voice for families from every State and Territory of Australia.

Leadership and Governance Renewal

- **New Executive Officer:** Following the resignation of Trish Roseman earlier this year, we welcomed **Wayne Crase** in May. His leadership is already shaping a forward-thinking strategic direction for CSPA.
- **Microsoft 365 Migration:** With renewed momentum, this transition is on track for completion by August 2025, with tailored training to follow. The shift will enable more transparent, collaborative, and streamlined operations across jurisdictions.

Platform Opportunities & Projects

Project/Platform	Highlights
Project 5 – Parent Communication	The final report was submitted to Government, exploring barriers and solutions to better home-school partnerships. It drew on lived experiences of families and has already informed internal government conversations. A follow-up wellbeing and learning survey, analysed by ARACY, provided critical data. Participants also received direct feedback, reinforcing trust and transparency.
Project 6 – Building Empathetic Communities	This project champions more inclusive, connected school communities. While the initial submission to Treasury was not funded in this budget cycle, our behind-the-scenes advocacy continues. We’ve built strong partnerships with the Human Rights Commission and Federation of Ethnic Councils to bolster our next submission.
NCEC Conference Sponsorship	As sponsors of the cocktail event at the August 2025 NCEC Conference in Cairns, we are taking the opportunity to profile our work and strengthen relationships across the Catholic education sector.

Submissions – Elevating Family Experience in Policy

CSPA made **five major national submissions** between July 2024 and June 2025. These were shaped by community input and grounded in our commitment to fairness, wellbeing, and access.

1. **Youth Vaping Inquiry**
 - Articulated parental concerns about inconsistent messaging, health impacts, and the school-community response gap.
 - Advocated for coordinated national action and strong preventative education.
2. **University Admissions Review**
 - Highlighted equity challenges within the ATAR system.
 - Called for national consistency and broader recognition of diverse student pathways.
3. **Closing the Gap Refresh**
 - Urged for greater partnership with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families.
 - Recommended co-designed accountability mechanisms and sustained, culturally safe engagement.
4. **Disability Standards for Early Childhood Education and Care**
 - Advocated for truly inclusive ECEC environments.
 - Called for training, facility upgrades, and inclusive communication practices.
5. **National Anti-Bullying Rapid Review**
 - Emphasised co-design with families and schools as critical.
 - Warned against top-down programs lacking community ownership.

Each of these submissions was developed in dialogue with our parent networks and demonstrates our professional, policy-informed, and principled approach to advocacy.

Welcome and Farewell – Council Movements

This year we thank the following Council members for their valued service and warmly welcome new members:

Departing Member	Successor
Marina Hayward (WA)	Alan Buckley
Christine Morrison (NSW)	Anne Fehon & Cath Garrett-Jones
Selina Walker (ACT)	Loryn Reynolds

To those stepping down: thank you for your commitment, care, and leadership.

To our new representatives: we look forward to your contributions as we move forward together.

Looking Ahead 2025/2026

We move into the next year with momentum and purpose.

- **August NCEC Conference** will be an opportunity to amplify our national presence.
- **Council expansion** will bring Victoria and NT into our shared work.
- **Governance and operations** will be enhanced through technology, renewed focus, and streamlined collaboration.

This year has reminded us that re-energising doesn't always mean doing more—it means deepening connection, refining direction, and moving forward with intention.

Our shared work is shaped not by politics, but by people—by families whose hopes, struggles, and dreams guide our every effort. Let's carry that purpose forward with the same compassion and conviction that has brought us to this moment.

Thank you for your leadership, generosity, and solidarity.

God Bless

Andrea Obeyesekere

Chair, Catholic School Parents Australia

AGM – June 2025