



EDMUND RICE EDUCATION
AUSTRALIA

20 21

annual report





**EDMUND RICE EDUCATION
AUSTRALIA**



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Cover picture: Cover Picture: Students from St Paul’s College, Adelaide.

We acknowledge the Aboriginal Peoples as the Traditional Owners of each of the Country/s on which our schools and offices are located. We acknowledge the Torres Strait Islander Peoples who are the Traditional Owners of the Torres Strait Islands.

We are honoured to have the world’s oldest living and surviving cultures. We pay our respect to Ancestors, Elders, and leaders of the future who have the spiritual connectedness and relatedness to Country and all living systems.



“

The culture of care ... calls for a common, supportive and inclusive commitment to protecting and promoting the dignity and good of all, a willingness to show care and compassion, to work for reconciliation and healing, and to advance mutual respect and acceptance. As such, it represents a privileged path to peace ... May we never yield to the temptation to disregard others, especially those in greatest need, and to look the other way; instead, may we strive daily, in concrete and practical ways, to form a community composed of brothers and sisters who accept and care for one another.

”

Pope Francis World Day of Peace 2021

EREA President

Philomena Billington

2021 heralded the celebration of 200 years of Catholic education in Australia. The Christian Brothers, and now Edmund Rice Education Australia (EREA) since 2012, have been active and continuous in the mission of Catholic Education in Australia since 1868. Responding to the needs of young people and their families has required examination throughout these years, in order to recognise the 'signs of the times'.

'Authentic Edmund Rice education is based on the spirit or charism of its founder... a radical faith in the divine presence in his own life; the second, a profound sense of the dignity of every human person; and the third, a heightened sensitivity to the poor and marginal' ¹. In the midst of the continuing global pandemic and on-going uncertainty in many aspects of life during 2021, Edmund Rice Education Australia (EREA) has had to re-examine its mission and the very core of its commitment to the safety, wellbeing and learning of young people.

During 2021, this has required acknowledgment that current governance structures and processes are no longer adequate in meeting the requirements of contemporary governance standards and appropriately increased supervision by the regulators. Throughout 2021, the EREA Council and the EREA Board committed to a thorough examination of all aspects of governance. This included the engagement of an External Reference Group of eminent educational and governance leaders to examine the current practice of EREA, and external consultants provided clear recommendations to the Council of Trustees early in 2022.

We have been called to listen, to be open to hearing what is said and to respond with integrity. In the words of the highly esteemed Australian founder of the Christian Brothers in Australia, Br Ambrose Treacy, 'It is by no means that

I am disposed to act precipitously but rather I do not believe in delay when the time is come to act.' The foundations for the regeneration of the governance structures and processes at all levels of EREA – the Council of Trustees, the Board and ultimately all aspects of EREA – were the prime focus in 2021.

¹ McLaughlin, D. (2006) The Education Charism of Blessed Edmund Rice. Australian Journal of Theology.

Within this increasingly complex context and regulatory environment, it is the mission that continues to inspire and capture the spirit of those engaged in governing, leading and choosing a Catholic education in the tradition of Edmund Rice. The 55 school communities continued their commitment to meeting the complex needs of an increasingly diverse student population, in a very changed world.

The care of young people, especially in environments of prolonged lockdowns, was exemplary, with school leaders, parents and carers focused together on the mental health of all students in this on-going and unprecedented time.

The leadership of the newly appointed Executive Director, Dr Craig Wattam, at the beginning of 2021, heralded the renewal of the animation of the Touchstones in the lives of leaders, staff and students, as well as all aspects of EREA, amidst a critical focus on governance and all aspects of operation.

The importance of continuing to examine our Identity and Mission at every level of EREA is foundational to living in right relationship with God, the students and families whom we serve and the leaders and staff with whom we serve. It is the call to service which must inspire us into the future.

As the Trustees of EREA, the Council continues to reflect on all aspects of the Mission of Catholic Education across the 16 Dioceses, in every state and territory of Australia in which EREA contributes to the Church's

mission. In so doing we pray for the humility, courage and commitment to ongoing partnerships in mission. We continue to be inspired by our God and the wisdom of Blessed Edmund:

*Above all, beg of God to give you the virtue of humility
which is so necessary for [leadership] in every station, but particularly for those
who have the care and direction of others.*

*If you only acquire this virtue, it will always guide you safely even when your paths be ever
so cross or difficult.*

Edmund Rice to Brother Austin Grace, aged 26, on being appointed Superior in Preston.
20 September 1826.



EREA Board Chair

Mark Anderson

The Board met on ten occasions in 2021, commencing with a two-day shared Retreat with the Council in March. A second year of COVID disruptions in 2021 saw the Board making the most of technology to facilitate its meetings. The Board managed to meet twice at EREA's National Office in Richmond, employing a hybrid model for those unable to travel. Board and Executive members have experienced the limitations of not being able to meet as we would have wished.

During 2021, Mrs Bobby Court concluded her role as Board Chair. Bobby's deep commitment to the service of the national EREA community, her knowledge and understanding of its mission and her support of the Executive and Council were acknowledged when she was farewelled in August. Her leadership of the Board with warmth, grace and determination, through difficult circumstances, supported the Board in responding to the challenges. Three new members commenced on the Board in 2021: Dr Sue Vollert, Mrs Cynthia Rowan and Mr Tony Ryan.

The Board has continued to work tirelessly in its preparation, contribution and decision making in 2021.

Each member has been actively involved in a variety of committees of the Board and working groups for special projects. Participating in Board meetings and this related work, on top of the reading entailed, requires a considerable effort and personal commitment. EREA has again been well served this year by members of the Board, each of whom brings outstanding expertise, wisdom and knowledge to their governance responsibilities. The thoroughness of this work and their generous investment of time are deeply appreciated.

2021 saw EREA move into the second year of the new Strategic Directions cycle. The following projects and achievements, across the domains of Voices, Paradigm Shifts and Enablers, are notable:

The EREA Learning Statement (**EREA Strategic Direction: Our Voice in Learning**)

Through listening to our school communities, as well as national and international discourse on learning and education reform, Edmund Rice Education makes this statement: Inspired by four liberating educators and practitioners - Jesus, who challenged us to live life to the full; Edmund Rice who recognised individual dignity and empowered young people; Paulo Freire, who knew that learning happens best in an atmosphere of hope, love, humility and trust; and Miriam-Rose Ungunmerr-Baumann who calls us to deep listening and acceptance - EREA commits to implementing six liberating practices to build a better world by explicitly co-creating learning conditions, dispositions and relationships, in order to enable deep listening, confidence, agency and freedom.

The EREA Stretch Reconciliation Action Plan (**EREA Strategic Direction: Paradigm Shift - Reconciliation**)

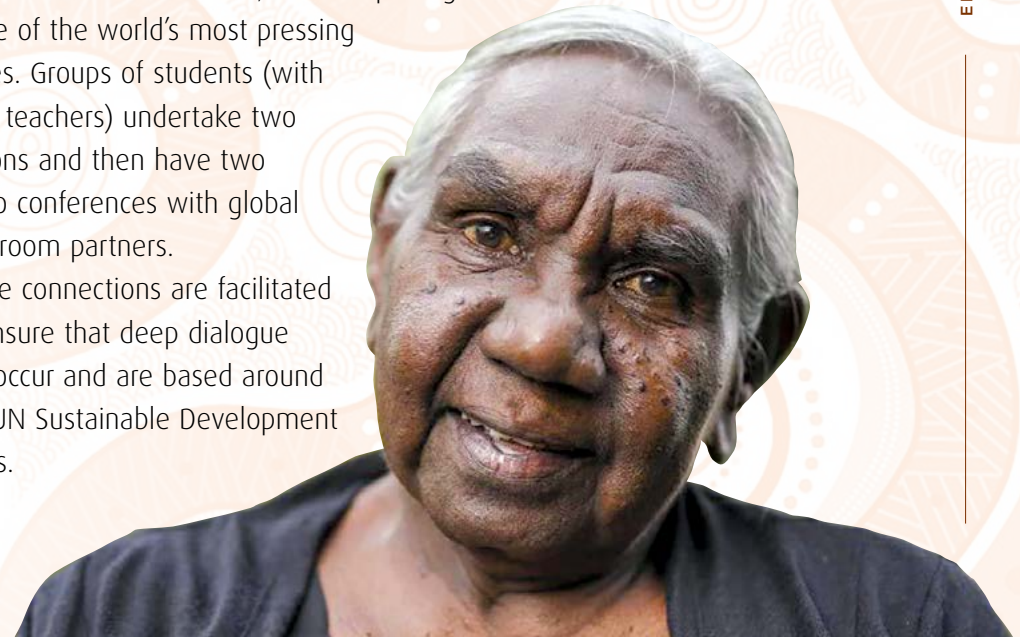
The EREA National Stretch RAP will provide guidance and momentum for each EREA school to integrate and embed the values and priorities of the Reconciliation movement into the fabric of their school cultures – their daily ways of being, knowing and doing. In creating a Stretch RAP, our commitment to Reconciliation is further extended. We will continue to review and expand the embedding of Reconciliation principles in all domains of Governance within our organisation, to ensure that we identify and provide opportunities, remove barriers to inclusion and listen respectfully to the voices of First Nations Australians.

The EREA Climate Crisis Statement (**EREA Strategic Direction: Paradigm Shift – Ecology**)

The EREA Climate Crisis Statement was launched on 19 August 2021. The Statement speaks to us with hope and optimism, and is grounded in a call for renewed and reimagined action. It was developed over 18 months through consultation with more than 1600 young people from EREA schools, as well as various other members of our school communities. We are seeking a shift in attitudes and actions, to address the climate crisis and to restore harmony to God’s creation.

EREBB Global Classrooms (**EREA Strategic Direction: Our Voice in the World**)

During 2021 EREA students had the opportunity to meet and dialogue with other young people from Edmund Rice Schools around the world. The EREBB Global Classroom Partners’ Program links classrooms from Edmund Rice schools, in order to learn from, with and about each other, while exploring some of the world’s most pressing issues. Groups of students (with their teachers) undertake two lessons and then have two video conferences with global classroom partners. These connections are facilitated to ensure that deep dialogue can occur and are based around the UN Sustainable Development Goals.



EREA Governance

(EREA Strategic Direction: Governance and Compliance)

2021 again presented EREA with significant challenges as we worked to reform our governance practices. EREA has worked at maintaining a culture of continuous improvement and engagement with numerous stakeholders, as we worked towards embedding improvements in structure, capability and culture.

Enrolment Growth and Diversity

(EREA Strategic Direction: Sustainability)

The 2021 Census data continues to highlight growth across the EREA network, noting a second year of COVID-19 impact. At the August 2021 census, the total enrolment for EREA schools (both Colleges and Flexi schools) stands at 39,255 (Colleges: 36,963 Flexi schools: 2,292). The 2021 Community Profile Report again reinforces diversity in the EREA network of schools, specifically in relation to the following:

- > The gender balance of teachers in our Colleges is similar to 2020 (F 44% / M 56%).
- > The percentage of female teaching staff in Flexi schools is higher than in our Colleges (61%).

- > In our Colleges, 11 teachers (FTE) and 24.4 non-teaching staff (FTE) identify as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander.
- > In the Flexi schools, 12.3 teachers (FTE) identify as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander, with an additional 50.4 (FTE) non-teaching staff also identifying as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander. This represents a pleasing increase in the Flexi schools where there are proportionally more Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people enrolled.
- > There has been an increase of 413 students across the network from 2020. While pleasing, this represents 167 students below the total budgeted enrolment figures for 2021 across all EREA schools.
- Female enrolments rose 41.6% in our co-educational Colleges. This was due to a larger female cohort at St James College, Brisbane and St Mary's College, St Kilda which enrolled females for the first time in 2021. Female enrolments in the Flexi School Network rose slightly to 46% (up from 45% in 2020) of the total Flexi student enrolment.
- > EREA Female enrolment:
 - 1.6% total all Mainstream schools
 - 46% total all Flexis
 - 4% total all schools (including Flexis)
- > Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander young people make up 4.4% of the total enrolment in EREA schools in 2021 (2.9% of total mainstream enrolments / 28.4% of total Flexi school enrolments). This represents a similar enrolment to 2020.
- > In our Colleges, 65.5% of students identify as Catholics, 16.5% as Other Christian and 18% as Other. The total percentage of students identifying as Catholic has fallen from 70% in 2019 (Note: 2020 Figures).



I extend to everyone who is part of the EREA community, especially our school principals, staff and School Advisory Councils, a very deep expression of thanks for all you have done throughout 2021 to ensure the safety and wellbeing, and the learning and faith formation of the children and young people in our care.

I reiterate my thanks to my fellow Board members and in particular, Paul Linossier, who acted as Chair for an extended period. I also extend my thanks to all our national and regional office staff who have continued to work diligently during this time of change.

I extend to Graham Goerke and the members of Council, and to Dr Craig Wattam and the Executive team, my sincere appreciation for their hard work and support over 2021.

There is much to affirm and celebrate in what is being achieved through our collective efforts towards fulfilling EREA's mission to provide young Australians with a transformative Catholic Education in the Edmund Rice tradition.



EREA Executive Director

Dr Craig Wattam

Dear Friends of Edmund Rice Education Australia

Leading during the time of a pandemic is not something that any one of us felt prepared for. While the toolkit of senior leaders in education is vast and varied, managing a school community which is trying to avoid a virus on the run, certainly tested our schools and staff. It certainly spelt leadership in a dynamic space, and one that was subject to rapid-fire decisions made by state and federal government ministers, often with little or no notice.

Our schools coped marvellously, managing the practical elements – of which there were many – as well as the health and wellbeing of our children and young people, the staff, parents and wider community. The work of our schools was a testament to Catholic Education, to the care, dedication and commitment to people in times of hardship, struggle and difficulty. The pastoral response was tremendous. Schools found inventive ways of employing teaching and learning through new pedagogies and, with the aid of technology, to engage and re-engage students coming in and out of lockdowns, from remote to face-to-face learning, and back again countless times throughout 2021. In addition, schools and their leaders provided novel and entertaining ways to keep spirits buoyed and students connected with their school communities. I have never felt prouder of the education sector and the valiant efforts that all staff in schools made, to ensure life for our young people was as productive, hopeful and positive as it possibly could be. There were many sacrifices of time and energy made by our staff, all in the name of providing connection and belonging at a time when we were mostly apart.

From a National Office perspective, our efforts were similarly dedicated to pivoting to online meetings and gatherings, prompting innovation at all levels, including formation programs, renewal reviews and regular gatherings with our principals across each region. Covid has certainly provided us with alternatives that we can employ in the future and has made all of us all the more keenly aware of the need for human connection, sharing of wisdom and the value of human dignity.

This year was certainly the year of reviews. In taking up the role of Executive Director, it was timely to commission a review of the National Office operations. We engaged McGrath Nicol in this work and they produced a wide-ranging report from data gathered from surveys and qualitative interviews with a variety of stakeholders. This report has been helpful in steering us toward some structural renewal in the work of our office and in better meeting the needs of our schools. I offer my thanks to our schools for their feedback about the National Office.

Much of our effort during 2021 was dedicated to working with the Catholic Education Commission in Victoria in order to attend to matters pertaining to the Enforceable Undertaking, and to examining, reviewing and renewing our governance approaches, our policy suite and our engagement with our schools. In the latter part of the year, we were subject to interim reviews of our Victorian schools and of the National Office, in terms of our approaches to Child Safety.

Notwithstanding, much was achieved in 2021, with enrolments continuing to increase, with improvements to our school campuses and with the celebration of the commencement of co-education at St Mary's College in St Kilda.

While we still have work to do, the challenges of 2021 have provided us with new opportunities. These opportunities can only make us stronger and more robust as an organisation and will result in a reinvigorated sense of our purpose, leadership and service into the future. We have been challenged in many ways, yet our small team at the National Office has continued to work extremely hard, is committed to ongoing improvement and has not resiled from the work at hand.



I am reminded of the untiring and unstinting work of Blessed Edmund Rice, who faced his own share of challenge and even turmoil as he established and then developed the Brotherhood. Despite the challenge, he persisted, and the Christian Brothers flourished.

They spread from Ireland to many countries across the globe, most successfully in Australia. When I think that in 2021 there are approximately 39,000 students and young people who are engaged in a hope-filled, life-giving possibility because they are educated in an Edmund Rice school, the legacy that Rice has provided is a living one, and one that sustains. We take abundant hope from the work of Blessed Edmund, whose inspiration was always the Gospel. Our care and our energies must always be focussed on “the work” – of offering a liberating education. This is how we bring good news to the poor and to allow people freedom.

During 2021, our Board Chair Bobby Court, concluded her role and Paul Linossier took up the Acting role of Board Chair. I am indebted especially to Bobby for her tremendous work ethic, commitment to the charism of education in the tradition of Edmund Rice, and for her measured approach to all things. Bobby exemplified the spirit of Catholic education.

I offer my grateful thanks to all members of the EREA Board, and to the Trustees for their stewardship and careful tread, and in particular I offer my grateful thanks to our National Office staff who have led and served our schools through a very trying year. Lastly, my admiration goes to our school principals and all staff in our schools.

I stand in awe at the myriad ways in which you have taught, nurtured and cared for students and their families in 2021. There is no community like a Catholic school community when times are difficult, and our Edmund Rice communities are shining examples of selfless service to the other.

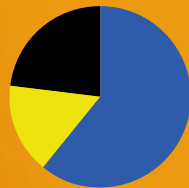


Total income \$961.0 million

- Wealth Grants \$414.3 million, 39%
- State Grants \$123.8 million, 12%
- Capital Grants/Income \$67.9 million, 6%
- Student Income \$398.2 million, 37%
- Other Income \$57.9 million, 6%

Finance Report

31 December 2021



Total expenditure \$1,042.9 million

- Salary Costs \$641.3 million, 62%
- Education & School Support \$139.2 million, 13%
- Capital Expenditure \$262.4 million, 25%

The consolidated financial report of EREA for the year ended 31 December 2021 showed that the operating surplus, once adjusted for exceptional items was in line with budget.

The Operating Statement delivered income growth of 8% and a surplus before depreciation of 19%. Included within these figures is a 7% increase in Government grants however this is counteracted in some respects by salary and wages growth, up 5% on the previous year. The prudent approach taken in managing other overheads resulted in a margin before depreciation of 16% and 7% after accounting for depreciation.

Total Income for 2021 increased by \$75.3 million, an increase of 8%. Government grants continue to provide a significant level of income to schools within the EREA Network. The graphs illustrate that recurrent income from grants amounted to 51%, which is in line with the preceding year. Whilst this is a significant component of recurrent income, it falls well short in percentage and dollar terms, of the costs incurred in acquitting employee benefits which amounted to \$641.3 million for the year.

EREA continues to report a healthy Balance Sheet, with \$2.1 billion net assets, of which the school's land and buildings comprised 94% of the total value. The Liquidity Ratio (current assets over current liabilities) is 1.6, which is high by commercial standards.

This strong performance facilitated further investment in capital works with \$158 million re-invested in projects throughout 2021. Of note, St James College, Brisbane, invested \$17 million to purchase an adjacent property which will fundamentally enhance their long-term educational offering.

From a cash perspective, as at 31 December 2021 EREA increased its cash holding by \$19.2 million however loans, which are utilised to fund capital projects, increased by \$16.7 million resulting in a net cash increase of \$2.5 million on the previous year.

There are a number of key items to note:

- 1) The transition from SES to DMI has changed the grant funding for our Colleges and Flexible Learning Schools. During the year a price elasticity model was prepared for several schools which has provided data to support those adversely affected by the change as they adjust to a new grant funding model and the pressure that this may have on their fees.

- 2) In 2020, EREA moved quickly and with compassion to support families impacted financially by the economic fallout associated with COVID 19. In 2021, the requirement to provide support has fallen somewhat with concessions reducing from \$39.7 million to \$36.8 million.
- 3) Total enrolments increased from 39,196 in 2020 to 39,584 in 2021, a modest increase of 388 students.
- 4) EREA Flexible Learning Schools continue to improve their infrastructure as they work through their Capital Master Plans. The uplift in their facilities and the development of appropriate learning areas is being largely funded from their cash reserves.
- 5) St Mary's College St Kilda, continues its transition to a co-education model. To this end, it is developing a land and infrastructure plan which is well progressed.

The consolidated general purpose financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission Act 2012 and Australian Accounting Standards – Simplified Disclosures for For-Profit and Not-for-Profit Tier 2 Entities, Australian Interpretations and other authoritative pronouncements of the Australian Accounting Standards Board. EREA is a not-for-profit body for the purpose of preparing financial statements under Australian Accounting Standards.

The recurrent operating results were in line with the Key Performance Indicators (KPI's) set by the Board to ensure EREA continued to be a sustainable entity. This report is an extract from the audited consolidated financial report and refers to the flow of income and expenditure from a cash perspective.

Jennifer Scott – National Director Stewardship

FINANCIAL REPORT

This is an extract from the audited accounts which shows income and expenditure, from a cash perspective, for Edmund Rice Education Australia for the year ended 31 December 2021

INCOME		\$	\$
Commonwealth Government Grants	Recurrent	405,959,874	
	Other	8,316,659	414,276,532
State Government Grants	Recurrent	115,169,364	
	Other	8,646,160	123,815,525
Capital Income	Commonwealth grants	4,473,264	
	State grants	12,540,193	
	Donations capital	6,294,502	
	Loan proceeds	44,565,126	67,873,085
Student Income	Tuition	382,711,357	
	Other	15,520,287	398,231,644
Other Income	Donations - Operating	1,558,048	
	Building levies	9,786,009	
	Investments	2,394,164	
	Trading activities	25,434,725	
	Other	18,770,670	57,943,616
TOTAL INCOME			1,062,140,402
EXPENDITURE			
Total Salary Costs	Salaries	572,268,853	
	Superannuation	58,114,660	
	Long service leave and provisions	10,870,741	641,254,254
Education and School Support	Facilities and co-curricular expenses	50,048,261	
	Boarding expenses	8,164,706	
	Trading activities	16,504,111	
	Administration	45,633,771	
	Insurance	13,877,521	
	National and Regional costs including co-responsibility support	5,001,869	139,230,239
Capital Expenditure	Net payments for property, buildings, plant & equipment	158,765,768	
	Maintenance	49,298,125	
	Debt servicing (principal & interest)	53,639,422	
	Leasing costs	664,358	262,367,672
TOTAL EXPENDITURE			1,042,852,165
NET INCREASE IN CASH HELD			19,288,238

Our Schools

Across Australia, Catholic Schools in the Edmund Rice tradition have been educating young Australians in every state and territory since 1872. All our schools aim to offer a Liberating Education, based on a Gospel Spirituality, within an Inclusive Community committed to Justice and Solidarity. Our schools are diverse, including primary and secondary, co-educational, boys, regional/rural, boarding, early learning centres and flexible education.

Click each school to read their individual report

EREA SCHOOLS REGIONS

NORTHERN

Ambrose Treacy College
Indooroopilly

Ignatius Park College
Townsville

Indooroopilly Montessori
Childrens' House

St Brendan's College
Yeppoon

St Edmund's College
Ipswich

St James College
Brisbane

St Joseph's College Gregory
Terrace Brisbane

St Joseph's Nudgee College
Boondall

St Laurence's College
South Brisbane

St Patrick's College
Shorncliffe

EASTERN

Christian Brothers' High School
Lewisham

Edmund Rice College
Wollongong

St Dominic's College
Penrith

St Edmund's College
Canberra

St Edmund's College
Wahroonga

St Edward's College
Gosford

St Gabriel's School
Castle Hill

St Patrick's College
Strathfield

St Pius X College
Chatswood

Waverley College
Waverley

SOUTHERN

St Mary's College
St Kilda

Parade College
Bundoora and Preston

St Bernard's College
Essendon

St Joseph's College
Geelong

St Kevin's College
Toorak

St Patrick's College
Ballarat

St Virgil's College
Hobart

CENTRAL WEST

Aquinas College
Salter Point

Christian Brothers' College
Adelaide

Christian Brothers' College
Fremantle

Edmund Rice College
Bindoon

Rostrevor College
Woodforde

St Paul's College
Gilles Plains

Trinity College
East Perth



FLEXIBLE SCHOOLS NETWORKS

OSCAR ROMEO

FAME
(South Australia)

Northern Flexi School
(South Australia)

Geraldton and Canarvon
(Western Australia)

St Joseph's Catholic FLC
Alice Springs (NT)

MARLENE MOORE

Deception Bay
(Queensland)

Gympie
(Queensland)

Hemmant
(Queensland)

Noosa
(Queensland)

NANO NAGLE

St Francis FLC Hobart
(Tasmania)

St Joseph's FLC
Melb and Geelong (Victoria)

EASTERN

St Mary's FLC
(New South Wales)

Wollongong FLC
(New South Wales)

St Laurence FLC
(Newcastle, New South Wales)

Pambula Beach FLC
(New South Wales)

WOLLEMI

Albert Park FLC
(Queensland)

Mount Isa FLC
(Queensland)

Rockhampton FLC
(Queensland)

Southport FLC
(Queensland)

XAVIER

The Centre Education Program
(Queensland)

Inala FLC
(Queensland)

Ipswich FLC
(Queensland)

Townsville FLC
(Queensland)



55 Schools



39,000+ Students



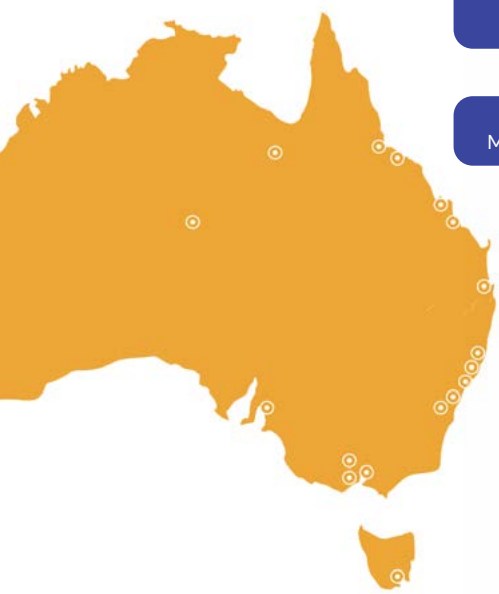
4,500+ Staff



16 Dioceses



EDMUND RICE EDUCATION
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*Edmund Rice Education Australia
offers a liberating education, based on a Gospel spirituality,
within an inclusive community
committed to justice and solidarity*



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