Australian Government
Department of Education

Choice and Affordability Fund Work Plan 2026-27

Catholic Education Tasmania

(Catholic Education Centre ABN: 55 210 77 582)

Date agreed – 21 November 2025

Summary of Work Plan 2026-27

Catholic Education Tasmania (CET) is committed to supporting the National and local priorities as identified under the Choice and Affordability Funding Agreement. This document is a summary of the work to be undertaken from 2026 – 2027 that has been identified as meeting the Choice and Affordability Funding (CAF) requirements.

From 2026 – 2027 CET plans to commit funding across four National priority areas:

1. Choice and Affordability of Schools
2. Regional Transition Assistance
3. Special Circumstances Funding
4. Strengthening Outcomes for Schools and Educationally Disadvantaged Students.

Projects and activities will include distributed funds provided directly to schools and centralised programs that best support the schools. Some of the activities to be delivered under the CAF are recognised as addressing more than one CAF priority:

1. **Choice and Affordability of Schools**
   A. CET will continue to facilitate parental choice and opportunity, giving parents the ability to choose an affordable school that will best suit their individual child. In 2026-2027 CAF will be used to continue to support the system-wide standardised fee remissions for Hardship and Concession Card Holders that were introduced in 2021.

   B. From 2026–2027, Catholic Education Tasmania (CET) will align this priority with CET's system wide reform agenda-Project Bold Goal to:

      - To transition to a new funding/Business model that will integrate CTC adjustments enabled though system-wide reforms (e.g., Project Connect ICT platforms) that ensures resources are equitably distributed according to student need and school context.
      - Ensure long-term financial sustainability of all CET Schools through an equitable, transparent funding model.

2. **Regional Transition Assistance**
   The CAF provides general support for schools to transition to a new capacity to contribute (CTC) model for recurrent funding. CET will provide transition funding support to schools through CAF funding being included in the funding models developed to cushion the impact of the change to CTC. This will be as required to support reductions in funding for both the Direct Funded Schools and Shared Funded schools funding models.

3. **Special Circumstances Funding**
   The Choice and Affordability Fund will support schools and students impacted by special circumstances or in priority areas such as rural, regional, and remote locations and areas affected by drought or other natural disasters.

   Special circumstances funding will be prioritised for schools requiring short term emergency assistance when unexpected circumstances or events cause severe and temporary financial difficulty. Funding will be set aside to assist schools with a special need for unexpected circumstances that cause severe financial difficulty of a short-term nature.

4. **Strengthening Outcomes for Schools and Educationally Disadvantaged Students**

   The CAF supports initiatives that strengthen outcomes for schools and students. Building on the CAF 2023-2025 Workplan for the Insight Program, CET will continue to provide centralised support for Principals, Senior School Leaders and School Instructional Leaders to entrench high-impact teaching practices through system-curated professional learning materials and resources in both the primary and secondary context. CAF will be utilised to procure resources and enable participation in system-wide curriculum and pedagogy learning days that will encompass high-impact teaching practices designed for optimal and sustained student learning and achievement. This evidence-based approach and achievement endeavours to strengthen outcomes for schools, including educationally disadvantaged students. All CET schools will continue participation this "Insight" program.

Overarching Risk Management

Risk	Treatment: How the risk will be managed
Over time, CET schools become less aware of the CAF priorities, and their responsibility to respond and apply for funding.	CET will provide advice and work directly with individual schools to ensure that any opportunities for funding under the requirements of each of the National Priorities can be realised. Choice and Affordability programs will be a standing item at Business Managers' Meetings, Shared Funded Schools' Workshops and Corporate Services Meetings.
Demand for CAF may exceed funding quantum available.	Where claims for funding are in excess of available quantum, distribution will be on a pro-rata basis for the year.
Applications and demand for funding may be less than anticipated.	Workplans will be reviewed and reassessed on an annual basis to incorporate other priorities and redistribute funding across priority areas.

Budget for 2026–2027

Priority	Activities/Initiatives	2026		2027	
		Centralised	Distributed	Centralised	Distributed
A – Choice and Affordability	Fee Assistance	$0	$300,000	$0	$250,000
A – Choice and Affordability	Business Model/Funding Model Reform	$1,613,000	$0	$1,290,000	$0
B – Regional Transition Assistance	Funding Model Support	$170,000	$0	$150,000	$0
C – Special Circumstances Funding	Emergency Assistance	$0	$200,000	$0	$200,000
D – Strengthening outcomes for schools and educationally disadvantaged schools and students	Insight Project - Teaching Resources and Professional Development	$200,000	$0	$0	$0
Administrative costs		$36,800		$37,904	
Total		$2,019,800	$500,000	$1,477,904	$450,000

Other funding sources

Activities/Initiatives	Other funding source	2026	2027
Insight Project - Teaching Resources and Professional Development	Improving Literacy and Numeracy Funding	$358,400	$358,400
	Levies	$228,831	$150,000

Activity/Initiative

Activity/Initiative	Fee Remission
Priority	A – Choice and Affordability

Description

CET will continue to facilitate parental choice and opportunity, giving parents the ability to choose an affordable school that will best suit their individual child. In 2026-2027 CAF will be used to continue to support the system-wide standardised fee remissions for Hardship and Concession Card Holders that were introduced in 2021.

Funding will be distributed to schools based on the amount of increase of fee remissions, equitable to each school's individual circumstances and their funding model.

Eligible schools

All Catholic schools in Tasmania can apply for reimbursement of fee remissions. Schools that meet the annual criteria of remission increases will be reimbursed with the costs of increased remissions from the Choice and Affordability Fund.

Timeframes

Schools will apply for fee remission reimbursement by November annually.

Fee remission reimbursement will be paid to schools in December annually.

Outcomes

Objectives/expected outcomes	Indicators of success
Priority A - Fee remission reimbursement will contribute to facilitating parental choice and opportunity giving parents the ability to choose an affordable school that will best suit their individual child.	Bad debts % of private fee Income are below 5% indicating that fees are affordable Stable enrolment numbers across schools, no decline in enrolments across system year on year Fee discounts and remissions across system remains consistent at 12% of gross private income

Key stakeholders

- **School Principals / Business Managers**
- **Resources and Sustainability Standing Committee**
- **Catholic Education Commission Tasmania**

Activity/Initiative	Business Model/Funding Model Reform
Priority	A – Choice and Affordability

Description

In alignment with the One System Imperative reform program, CET will utilise CAF funding to support system-wide transformation activities that strengthen sustainability, drive operational efficiency, and ensure the equitable delivery of education across all Catholic schools in Tasmania. This investment will enable CET to continue the disciplined implementation of recommendations arising from recent strategic reviews, including finance, ICT, governance, and student support capability uplift.

This funding model reform is strategically aligned to the One System Imperative and the CET Achievement Framework, ensuring that all schools benefit from a more equitable and transparent distribution of resources that supports student learning and wellbeing. Importantly, it mitigates several emerging system risks, including increasing financial volatility driven by socio-economic change and the disproportionate impact of the Direct Measure of Income (DMI) methodology on small and regional schools. By modernising business models and strengthening shared services, the reform also reduces the administrative burden placed on school leaders, enabling them to refocus time and capability on teaching, learning, and community formation. Ultimately, this reform strengthens sustainability, enhances equity, and protects student outcomes across the system—ensuring that every school has fair access to the resources required to deliver high-quality Catholic education both now and into the future.

Specifically, CAF funding will be targeted at:

1. **Modernise School Business models**
   - Reform school-based finance and ICT operating models to improve consistency, transparency, and efficiency across the system.
   - Leverage centralised shared services to deliver economies of scale, reduce duplicated effort, and ensure consistent systems, processes, and internal controls.
   - Reduce volatility and improve long-term planning capacity for schools.
2. **Funding Model Reform**
   - Realignment of the current models for Direct funded and Shared Funded schools to establish and embed one equitable, transparent funding model to underpin fair and sustainable distribution of resources across all CET schools.
   - Maintaining continuity of school operations and educational quality.

Eligible schools

All CET Schools. All schools within the Catholic Education Tasmania system—Shared Funded and Direct Funded—are eligible to benefit from this investment. Allocation will be based on transparent criteria aligned to risk, student needs, financial sustainability indicators, and system priorities.

Timeframes

The CAF-funded activities will be phased over a four-year period to ensure stability, equity, and disciplined implementation of the funding reform program, which is the most critical and time-sensitive priority for CET. In 2026, foundational work will commence with the implementation of Project Connect (Phase 1), laying the digital, data, and systems foundations required to support evidence-based funding distribution and improved financial oversight. Across 2027–2028, the core funding reform and sustainability planning activities will be designed, tested, and progressively implemented, including the modernisation of business models, uplift of shared services, and targeted support for schools. By 2029, modernised finance and ICT operating models, and long-term sustainability mechanisms are integrated into business-as-usual practice across all CET schools.

Outcomes

Objectives/expected outcomes	Indicators of success
Implement modernised business models across all schools	100% of schools using centralised finance/ICT platforms by 2028. 90% of school leaders report improved efficiency and transparency in annual survey. Shift to data driven decision making
Establish an equitable, transparent funding model	100% of schools receive funding allocations through the revised model by 2027. project stakeholder satisfaction survey shows ≥85% approval of funding transparency. Funding disparities between schools with similar characteristics reduced by ≥30% by 2029
Strengthen system governance	STRIVE Committee conducts annual reviews with 100% implementation rate 100% of funding decisions documented with rationale Implement system wide best practice governance policies and procedures

Key stakeholders

- **School Principals / Business Managers/ Finance Officers**
- **Resources and Sustainability Standing Committee**
- **Catholic Education Commission Tasmania**
- **TCEO Senior Leadership team**
- **TCEO Finance**
- **ICT Team/Project connect team**
- **School Resource Committee**
- **Broader CET/ School Staff**

Activity/Initiative	Funding Model Support
Priority	B – Transition Assistance - Regional

Description

From 2023 all Catholic schools in Tasmania have transitioned up to 80% of the SRS for Federal funding and 20% of State Funding from 2025. Prior to this there were two funding models (for Shared Funded and Direct funded schools) were developed to cushion the impact of the direct measure of income funding arrangements for recurrent funding. Individual school support was also provided directly to one Special Assistance School (St Francis Flexible School), as this school was significantly impacted by the changes in funding arrangements.

While the two funding models will continue to provide cushioning for schools transitioning down to 80% of Federal recurrent funding, overall funding within the models will be impacted by the transition affecting all Shared Funded and Direct Funded schools. Regional Transition Assistance Funding will provide additional funding into the two funding models to support the gradual reduction of recurrent funding increases for all schools within the models.

Eligible schools

All Direct Funded and Shared Funded Schools.

Timeframes

November annually, once Indexation, DMI and transition paths have been confirmed for the current year.

Outcomes

Objectives/expected outcomes	Indicators of success
Assist all Direct Funded and Shared Funded schools in transitioning to the new funding model	Transition gap is reduced by available CAF funding. All Direct and Shared Funded schools benefit from transition assistance funding disbursed directly into the funding models.

Key stakeholders

- **School Principals / Business Managers/ Finance Officers**
- **Resources and Sustainability Standing Committee**
- **Catholic Education Commission Tasmania**
- **TCEO Senior Leadership team**
- **TCEO Finance**

Activity/Initiative	Special Circumstances Grants
Priority	C – Special Circumstances Funding

Description

CET will set funding aside to be available to schools who meet the criteria for special circumstances funding. Schools will be required to apply for this funding in accordance with the requirements of paragraph 24c of the CAF Agreement.

Applications for grants will be considered by the TCEO Leadership Team, Schools Resourcing Committee and the Resources and Sustainability Standing Committee.

Eligible schools

Catholic schools in Tasmania that meet the criteria for access to special circumstances funding.

Timeframes

CET will provide information to schools regarding the requirements of the funding and how to apply for special circumstances grants at the beginning of each year from 2026 to 2027.

Outcomes

Objectives/expected outcomes	Indicators of success
CET provides information to all schools on the Special Circumstances Funding via Communique and Principal Briefings.	Information on the Special Circumstances funding provided to schools.
The Schools Resourcing Committee will consider all applications for Special circumstances funding and make determinations on success of these applications.	Schools apply for Special Circumstances Funding Grant approvals are determined, and successful schools are funded.
Schools that have potential for qualifying for funding submit applications or enquiries about funding	Annual review confirms that 90% of schools who potentially could qualify for special circumstance funding have applied or submitted an enquiry

Key stakeholders

- **School Principals / Business Managers/ Finance Officers**
- **Resources and Sustainability Standing Committee**
- **TCEO Finance**
- **School Resource Committee**

Activity/Initiative	Insight Project – Teaching Resources and Professional Development
Priority	D – Strengthening outcomes for schools and educationally disadvantaged schools and students

Description

Schools will continue to be supported in both primary and secondary contexts through the ongoing implementation of high-impact teaching practices aligned to the science of learning. This approach is evidence-based and designed to optimise sustained student learning and achievement, including for educationally disadvantaged learners.

Support will be delivered through system-curated professional learning materials, documentation, and resources that promote consistent and embedded best-practice pedagogy. Whole-of-system professional learning will be conducted state-wide to further strengthen educator capability and ensure fidelity to the implemented model.

Principals and senior leaders will be supported in embedding high-impact teaching practices and a knowledge-rich curriculum, with an emphasis on stabilising and entrenching these practices as part of Business as Usual. Schools will receive a suite of updated, quality-assured professional learning resources to drive consistency and sustainability.

Choice and Affordability Funding (CAF) will assist schools with the procurement of these resources and enable participation in system-wide curriculum and pedagogy learning days. This continued investment will contribute to teacher development and improved student outcomes.

School Instructional Leaders: Teacher Practice (ILTP) will undertake ongoing high-impact teaching practice (HITP) training to deepen their pedagogy. They are being prepared for future roles as HITP Specialist Practice Coaches. Through regular system-based and in-school learning, they will model high-impact teaching, share current learning, and collaborate on the curation of a system databank of quality lesson resources.

Over time, this will build deep internal expertise and promote school-level self-sufficiency, ensuring that high-impact teaching practices are consistently embedded, stabilised, and maintained as an integral component of BAU delivery.

Eligible schools

All CET Schools

Timeframes

All activities for the Insight Project in the Strengthening Outcomes Priority will be ongoing throughout the life of this workplan.

Outcomes

Objectives/expected outcomes	Indicators of success
A positive shift in student knowledge and academic achievement.	Increase in NAPLAN and PAT scale score. Increase in NAPLAN relative gains.
A positive shift in teachers' knowledge of high impact teaching practices and science of reading and learning pedagogy.	Increase in teacher content knowledge and confidence in delivering sophisticated knowledge-rich curriculum materials. This will be measured using qualitive techniques including surveys and interviews.
A positive change in students' well-being and behaviour.	Increase in student attendance. Decrease in social, emotional, and behavioural incidences.
A positive change in the schools' culture.	Improved wellbeing for teaching staff, leadership, and principals. Teacher enjoyment and confidence in meeting and exceeding expectations of daily teaching responsibilities. Principals are more confident leaders of learning and innovative pedagogical practices based on the principles of the science of learning.
A positive shift in the rigour and professionalism of teachers' daily pedagogy in line with evidence-based practices.	Teachers are building a bank of pre-planned, purposeful, explicit, structured, scripted lesson resources based on the science of learning.

Key stakeholders

- **Coaches/consultants**
- **Principals/ Deputy Principals/ Teaching & Learning Leaders**
- **Instructional Leaders**
- **Classroom Teachers/Teacher Assistants**
- **Resources and Sustainability Standing Committee**
- **Catholic Education Tasmania Head Office Teaching and Learning staff.**
- **TCEO Finance**

2026-27 CAF Workplan NGRB Sign Off

This 2026-27 CAF Workplan is submitted in fulfillment of the workplan requirement in part 4 of the CAF Agreement and I understand that, once approved, the work plan forms Attachment A to the CAF Agreement.

Signed:	
Name and Position of the person signing off on behalf of the NGRB[1]:	Dr Gerard Gaskin Executive Director, Catholic Education Tasmania
Date:	17 November 2025

[1] Name and position of the person within the NGRB with sufficient authority to sign off.