

APPROVAL PROCESS FOR DEVELOPMENT OF LUTHERAN SCHOOLS AND EARLY CHILDHOOD CENTRES

APPROVAL – A CHURCH and GOVERNMENT PROCESS

Approval for development of Lutheran early childhood centres or schools is required at local, regional and national levels. Application to government authorities for funding purposes may be pursued, subject to church approvals. The government approval process differs in each state, while the terms of reference within each church district also generate varying procedures within those sectors of the church. Therefore, this document deals with national requirements administered through the Board of Directors of Lutheran Education Australia Ltd (LEA Board), as well as common functions which are to occur in each of the regions.

CHURCH APPROVAL

REQUIREMENT FOR APPROVAL

The approval process applies to new schools and stand-alone early childhood centres / preschools

INITIATIVE TO COMMENCE A SCHOOL OR EARLY CHILDHOOD CENTRE

A local area may plan commencement of an early childhood centre (ECC) or school as the result of the initiative of the local Lutheran congregation(s) or an ECC or school may be proposed because of planned mission by the church. Discussions are to be held with the regional director; the LEA Executive Director may also be involved, dependent on the particular church/school circumstances and request.

1. The concerns of the LEA Board are for:
 - a) adequate and suitable resources to lead and staff schools and ECCs.
 - b) the proclamation of the gospel.
 - c) confessional integrity.
2. The LEA Board supports regions to act co-operatively and the LEA Board limits, where necessary, the number of new schools and ECCs, if any, that may commence in a given year.
3. In order to make decisions of this nature, the LEA Board will:
 - a) be aware of the level of Lutheran teachers, principal and ECC director resources available
 - b) assess the average attrition rate of staff / principals / early childhood directors
4. NLT will
 - a) identify potential principals and ECC directors via LDP and other means
 - b) need to be aware of the potential of current principals and ECC directors.
5. Before the first meeting of the LEA Board each year, the National Leadership Team shall negotiate an agreed list of early childhood centres and schools in order of priority to be approved by the LEA Board for commencement two years after the meeting. Such proposals shall indicate the planned enrolment development of each school and ECC.

6. Schools or ECCs planning significant enrolment increases and/or expansion into other levels of education:
Decisions for such expansion are to be monitored by the National Leadership Team by means of the statistics available on enrolment projections. This expansion should be reported to the LEA Board for information at its first meeting each year.
A significant enrolment increase is defined as ECCs and/or schools wishing to add additional streams at any level.

TIME FRAME

Normally, a minimum of two years is required, from the initial request for a new school or ECC to commence, until the development is actioned. Only in exceptional circumstances may this time period be waived and at the discretion of the LEA Executive Director, the respective Regional Director and District Bishop.

SCHOOLS SEEKING TO AMALGAMATE

As schools seeking to amalgamate will not necessarily involve an increase in enrolments, the LEA Board is not involved, but the LEA Board will be informed. Such an initiative is to be processed in consultation with the regional school council. The time frame will depend on the relevant state registration and Department of Education requirements.