

1. GGG/BLEA joint communique

In the last week of September, all participants who contributed to the GCC/LEA governance and administration review will receive a communique from the LCA Bishop, Rev John Henderson, and the BLEA chair, Dr Neville Highett. It is planned that stakeholders who received online questionnaires, attended consultations or who contributed in any way will receive this communique.

The communique has been prepared by representatives of GCC and BLEA and sets the scene for ongoing dialogue, planning and discussion about the way forward. It also acknowledges the many people across the LCA who commit significant time and effort for the church and Lutheran education.

If you or people in your community do not receive the communique by end September, or if you have any queries or concerns about the communique, you can send an email to gccblea@lca.org.au.

2. Same sex marriage and the postal vote

Recently Bishop John Henderson issued the following eNews

These are turbulent times in Australian politics and social opinion. At the forefront of this turmoil is the matter of the recognition at law of same-sex marriages. The issue itself has been with us for several years, and through that time the Lutheran Church of Australia has not altered its view on marriage, and does not intend to do so. What repercussions that might have for us remains to be seen.

By way of guidance, in 2015 we issued a Statement on Marriage which we are reissuing today with a 2017 Preamble. Pastors and congregational leaders are encouraged to share this statement with members and other interested people who may be enquiring about this matter.

[Revised Statement on Marriage](#) (which has a 2017 preamble added to the original 2015 statement)

Additionally, some pastors and congregations have been approached, or may be approached, by local media to comment on the Lutheran Church's response to the same-sex marriage debate and/or the postal vote. I am attaching a statement that might help you articulate the position of the church on this matter. You can also share the Statement on Marriage with the media if that is helpful.

[Media statement](#)

In the first instance, you might provide these papers to the media, asking them to attribute direct quotes to LCA Bishop John Henderson. If they want you to make your own comment, you may of course oblige, but it might be wise to ask your District Bishop to review your prepared statement prior to releasing it to the media.

For those of us in New Zealand, of course, same-sex marriage is already a reality in your country. My conversations with you have indicated that church life, including marriage, has been able to continue unhindered. Let us pray that Australians will continue to enjoy the same freedoms.

*Pastor John Henderson, LCA Bishop
18 August 2017*

3. Leadership Development Program

The Leadership Development Program (LDP) is a nation-wide strategic program of the schools, principals, regional and national offices of Lutheran Education Australia to provide leadership for

Lutheran schools. LDP aims to ensure that Lutheran schools have the leaders required to operate effective schools for the future. LDP also provides *Accreditation as a leader (Al)* for staff members who hold a principal, deputy principal or head of subschool leadership position.

LDP has four components:

- *leadership profiling*
- *graduate study in educational leadership*
- *mentoring*
- *regional workshops*

Principals are encouraged to consider deputy, heads of subschool, curriculum leaders and teachers in leadership positions for this next iteration of LDP. Teachers who aspire to formal leadership positions in Lutheran education are encouraged to discuss the LDP with their principal.

Information about LDP and application forms will be sent to principals in the next week.

4. Accreditation and career paths project

The *Pathways* consultations conducted in each region provided participants with the opportunity to share ways in which they are engaging staff with *Pathways* and to inform the redevelopment of *Pathways*. After the NLT and Board meetings next week, principals will be sent further information about the Accreditation project, transition arrangements and clauses for inclusion in letters of appointment for staff commencing employment in 2018 and also from 2019.

5. LEA / LPA Germany study tour 2018

There is still a handful of vacancies for this tour. Details are included below and if you have any people in your leadership teams, or alternatively school pastors/chaplains, Christian Studies teachers, or other teaching and/or support staff you believe would benefit from such a tour and wish to encourage to participate, please ask them to email me at LEADirector@lutheran.edu.au to register their interest.

The planned dates for the tour are from 23 June 2018 – 5 July 2018 and there will be a limit of 35 Australian participants.

Participants will have to pay for their own travel to and from Germany. It is likely the tour itself will cost approximately \$2400 per participant. This covers transportation, accommodation and some meals. Final costs will only be known early 2018. The itinerary will likely include Neuendettelsau, Nuremberg, Berlin, Erfurt, Eisleben, Eisenach, Wittenberg, Dresden, Buchenwald and Rothenberg.

6. LEA survey : principal as spiritual leader

In the near future all Lutheran school principals will receive a request to participate in a survey on *Principal as spiritual leader*. NLT, LEA and ALC have worked together in preparing the questions and ask that all principals and acting principals take the time to provide responses. It is planned that the results of this survey will assist in future policy and resource development, professional engagement and learning for current and future school and system leaders as well as information sharing with key LCA / ALC leaders. Research findings will be communicated in early 2018.

7. Meeting with NCEC

In recent days Stephen Kroker and I met with key leaders from the National Catholic Education Commission, Greg Crafter (Chair NCEC) and Christian Zahra (Executive Director, NCEC), as well as Stephen Higgs (Ecumenical Schools system).

This was a very positive meeting in which matters such as inconsistencies in system funding as well as future communication and meetings with both the Coalition and Labor political leaders were discussed.

LEA, the regions, NCEC and the Ecumenical Schools System wish to raise the inequity of systems facing a six year transition when compared with similar independent schools that are not in systems who face a ten year transition.

NCEC has proposed ongoing regular meetings in the future with LEA and also the BLEA Chair, to ensure the voice of system leaders and governance is heard appropriately by the relevant political leaders.

Principals may receive further LEA communications to consider circulating to your respective school communities in the months ahead, particularly as a 2018 federal election comes closer.

Interestingly, Alex Gordon, Group Manager, School Funding, Department of Education, Canberra, has made a time to meet with Stephen Kroker and me in Adelaide this week to discuss the 'treatment of systems under the new arrangements'. It is pleasing for LEA to receive such opportunities from both NCEC and the federal Department of Education to discuss and promote Lutheran system funding.

8. SchoolLink

8.1 2017 edition

The 2017 edition of SchoolLink will soon be mailed to principals for distribution to your staff. Additionally, the November 2017 edition of *The Lutheran* will contain SchoolLink, thus enabling subscribers of *The Lutheran* to read about the significant work being carried out on behalf of the LCA across Lutheran early childhood services and schools.

SchoolLink focusses on ACLE5 and contains contributions from across Australia from ECS and school people. Thanks to these contributors and all who serve across Lutheran education.

8.2 2018 edition

The 2018 edition of SchoolLink will focus on the *Lutheran education earthcare charter* and its implementation across our ECSs and schools. Individual reports from ECSs and schools who will receive *LLL earthcare grants* will make up the majority of this SchoolLink. In advance, LEA wishes to commend and acknowledge all in Lutheran education who are leading and participating in caring for God's creation.

9. Quality Schools 2018

LEA and NLT looks forward to all Lutheran schools' participation in the 2018 Quality Schools survey.

As advised in previous editions of LEA news, LEA plans to send to all principals by early October the following Quality Schools survey information:

- core items which were used in the 2016 survey and will form a key part of the 2018 survey
- additional optional items which may be included in the 2018 survey, dependent on your school's needs and your leadership team's requests.

By the end of the 2017 school year, LEA will require your list of optional items so an individual survey for your school can be assembled by RADII. You will also be asked to nominate your preferred 2018 Quality Schools survey dates so arrangements can be made between RADII, LEA and each Australian Lutheran school. In 2018 Mrs Dianne Eckermann, LEA Director of Leadership, will oversee this process.

10. LEA levies 2018

The proposed LEA levies for 2018 are:

| | 2018 | 2017 |
|--|---------|---------|
| National Office | \$39.50 | \$38.40 |
| Safe School Liability Fund | \$ 0.10 | \$ 0.20 |
| Total National Office and Safe School Liability Fund | \$39.60 | \$38.60 |

This represents a 2.6% increase which covers salary increases and costs associated with national projects including the *Accreditation and careers pathways* project, possible *Valuing Safe*

Communities update as a result of the Royal Commission recommendations and the Leadership Development Program.

Due to claims in recent years the levies for the sick leave fund and the transfer fund have increased as follows:

| | 2018 | 2017 |
|---------------------------|-------------|-------------|
| Sick Leave Emergency Fund | \$ 5.00 | \$ 2.50 |
| Transfer Fund | \$ 7.90 | \$ 5.00 |

Please note that for 2016, three schools were reimbursed a total of \$136,000 for significant sick leave claims – for one of these schools the claim was in excess of \$50,000. This makes the \$5.00 per student sick leave emergency fund ‘insurance’ a good investment. It also assists schools to cover the sick leave potential liability that comes from the portability of sick leave between Lutheran schools.

Serving the Lord together

Stephen Rudolph
Executive Director
Lutheran Education Australia