



27 February 2020

Dear Members of the Community of Edmund Rice Education Australia

We write to you following the meeting yesterday of members of the Council, Board and Executive of Edmund Rice Education Australia and consultation with members of the Board of St Kevin's College. We are committed to working together, honestly and collaboratively to respond to and address our current challenges.

Our purpose was and remains clear; and that is to continue to place the safety and wellbeing of our students at the centre of all we do, to restore trust and transparency, to investigate all information regarding allegations of inappropriate conduct and to respond carefully and immediately to the errors that have been made.

The events that have unfolded at St Kevin's College have shocked us and we acknowledge the trauma so many are experiencing. There have been many words spoken of deep regret and apology and all of them heartfelt. We continue to hear concerns from students, staff and families; and encourage each person, in our care or connected to us, to maintain the flow of information so that we can pay attention to the full extent of the challenges before us.

We understand the urgent imperative to construct a targeted and prioritised response and we confirm the following:

- Mr John Crowley has been appointed as Acting Principal and commenced on Thursday February 20. His strong and responsive leadership is already evident in action being taken and public announcements to date.
- External legal counsel is undertaking a fact-finding investigation within the College to review all concerns and allegations as they come forward. Reports are being made to appropriate authorities as required.
- Every assistance will be offered to the Victorian Registration and Qualifications Authority (VRQA) as it reviews documents relevant to the College's compliance with the Child Safe Standards.
- The EREA Board and Executive has continued to work closely with the College to ensure the wellbeing and safety of students and to bring reassurance to families and staff.

Following our meeting, EREA has established a team which will commission and receive the Safety and Culture reviews. Its role will be to review the full extent of what has taken place, to identify errors made and to co-construct a comprehensive strategy of assurance to support the safety of our students and strengthen the avenues for reporting and appropriate response. This team comprises:

- Br Paul Oakley, President EREA Council;
- Mrs Bobby Court, Chair EREA Board;
- Mr Paul O'Malley, incoming Chair St Kevin's College Board; and
- Mr John Crowley, Acting Principal, St Kevin's College

They will be supported in their undertakings by a working group, with Catherine Greenley, EREA National Director Governance acting as Executive Officer, members of the EREA Executive and others as required.

This team will commission two reviews.

Firstly, an Independent Child Safety Review to ensure that there is a complete history of any concerns of child safety and mandatory reporting. This review will be undertaken by McInnes Wilson Lawyers and Korda Mentha in consultation with legal counsel currently undertaking investigations within the College.

Secondly, a Culture Review. Once the findings of the Independent Child Safety Review and the VRQA investigation are concluded a Cultural Review of the College will be commissioned and conducted by an external, experienced and reputable agency. The terms of reference of this review will be determined at that time with the opportunity for input to be available to a broad range of College stakeholders. We anticipate that the findings of this review will inform targeted improvements, cultural reforms and strengthened reports for St Kevin's College and more broadly for all our school communities.

It is with profound gratitude that we affirm the leadership of the Acting Principal, John Crowley. We are inspired by the committed contribution of all members of the St Kevin's College community, staff, students and families. Their courageous conviction and tireless dedication is returning the College to a place of confidence, security and dignity, truly reflecting the beliefs and values at the heart of its identity as a wonderful Catholic school in the Edmund Rice tradition.

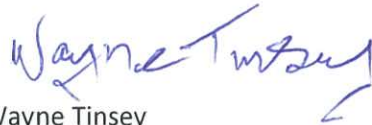
Sincerely



Br Paul Oakley  
President EREA



Mrs Bobby Court  
Chair, EREA Board



Dr Wayne Tinsey  
Executive Director, EREA