

Regeneration to uplift governance

Edmund Rice Education Australia (EREA) is undertaking a Regeneration Plan to uplift its governance structure and practices. This is the first of a series of communications.

Our Regeneration Plan is a significant and necessary change for EREA and one that requires strong partnership with all our schools. The **Regeneration Plan (The Plan)** will enable better delivery of high-quality governance and leadership of our schools in the charisma and tradition of Blessed Edmund Rice, embedding proactive child safety and strengthened accountability across the EREA network, from national office to schools. We seek to build and restore confidence between the national office and schools, with regulatory authorities and with the broader community.

The Regeneration Plan includes two important pieces of work for change within Edmund Rice Education Australia; the work required for the *Enforceable Undertaking* and *Incorporation*.

The Plan has been designed to ensure that the Enforceable Undertaking and Incorporation are delivered in a timely and efficient way, with project management oversight, engagement of external consultants and a clear engagement plan. External consultants ensure robust and independent perspectives on how to complete the Regeneration Plan and to restore confidence in EREA.

EREA's Regeneration objectives

- 1 Deliver learning through the charisma of Blessed Edmund Rice
- 2 Build alignment between the national office and schools
- 3 Restore confidence between EREA and regulatory authorities
- 4 Maintain confidence in the broader community
- 5 Create governance that is viewed as leading

Progress so far

EREA has undertaken a number of steps so far through the Regeneration Plan to improve governance:

- ✓ Creation of the project plan structure leading to the creation of the new national entity 'Edmund Rice Education Australia Ltd'
- ✓ A **Steering Committee**, chaired by Philomena Billington, Deputy President of EREA Council of Trustees, has been formed to coordinate the process, recommendations and preparation of documentation to guide Regeneration
- ✓ An external **Reference Group**, chaired by Professor Gabrielle McMullen AM (Deputy Chancellor and Member of Council, University of Divinity), will comprise of senior skilled representatives from the Catholic Education Authorities and EREA School Advisory Councils, to ensure that structural decisions and the formation of the Board of EREA Ltd are contemplated fairly and according to the highest governance standards
- ✓ Conducting a company structure review of heavily regulated industries led by experts, to inform the future structure of EREA Ltd
- ✓ Consultation with other Catholic Education and Church entities
- ✓ Adopting amendments to the Interim Constitution (in June 2021), clarifying the specific roles of the current EREA Board and Council
- ✓ Establishment of three new committees to the current EREA Board, including a Risk and Assurance Committee (March 2021), Child Safeguarding Committee (March 2021) and Governance Committee (May 2021)
- ✓ Creation of a new Executive Role, the Chief Risk Officer, who will be responsible for school compliance with Minimum Standards
- ✓ Creation of a Director of Registration and Incorporation contract position to assist Victorian Schools through Catholic Education Commission Victoria (CECV) reviews, embed safety and compliance standards and support schools in the incorporation process over the next 18 months
- ✓ Development and consultation with Principal and Business Manager working groups on a step-changed Delegations of Authority, to be completed by the end of October
- ✓ Reviewed and defined the role of EREA School Advisory Councils leading to a new Charter, known as The Design, approved by the Board in August and launched in October.

Timing

The Regeneration Program aims to confirm a recommended governance structure by December 2021.

We will transition towards this governance structure being implemented by early 2023.

Our Engagement approach

Our Regeneration is supported by a comprehensive and thoughtful Engagement Plan. Through information, guidance, communications, engagement opportunities and support, schools will be supported to contribute to the Regeneration and prepare for improved governance practices. The Engagement Plan is underpinned by four key principles:

Engagement Plan
Principles



Grounded in trust

Build trust and confidence to create buy-in for the change across stakeholder groups.



Clarity of accountabilities

Provide clarity of accountabilities for actions across stakeholder groups.



Genuine listening

Provide the opportunity to voice opinions, listen genuinely and incorporate these views.



Common language

Build a shared and common understanding of the change across all of EREA.

Business Managers and Principals will be formally briefed in October and November. The Engagement Plan will include regular communications twice per term, briefings on Incorporation and governance uplifts, Working Groups, two-way communication mechanisms and ongoing support and information for schools.

For further information and support at this stage, the Regeneration Plan team can be contacted at regenerationsupport@erea.edu.au. We look forward to continuing to work in partnership with school communities in the spirit of Blessed Edmund Rice, to offer quality education opportunities to young people and families across Australia.



Craig Wattam

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