



## Edmund Rice Education Australia Apologies to Survivors and Victims – 1 June 2017

Edmund Rice Education Australia (EREA) has today delivered a National Apology on behalf of its schools to the survivors and victims of sexual abuse.

EREA has responsibility for over 50 Catholic schools and entities, some of which were previously governed by the Christian Brothers. These schools are now governed by Edmund Rice Education Australia.

EREA Executive Director Dr Wayne Tinsey said the National Apology was delivered at the National Arboretum in Canberra during EREA's National Principals' Conference.

"The National Apology has been made by EREA on behalf of all its schools to the survivors and victims of sexual abuse by members of the religious community and lay staff in those schools," he said.

Dr Tinsey said EREA had consulted widely on the apology, particularly with survivors, who had contributed to its development.

He said the apology had the full support of the Christian Brothers and the Archbishop to the Canberra Goulburn Archdiocese.

By acknowledging the suffering of survivors in our schools, we hope this apology demonstrates that we have listened to survivors and acted on their views, thoughts, and feelings," Dr Tinsey said.

"It is our hope that this apology will go some way to addressing and healing this long-standing omission and hurt."

Dr Tinsey said EREA realised its apology was just one step in the journey towards healing.

"As today's stewards of our values, we acknowledge this is part of a destructive and shameful reality in our national history and we are totally committed to it never happening again."

"We hope this apology will help in the healing process and be a step towards re-establishing trust," he said.

Dr Tinsey said EREA would continue to support the provision of care for survivors.

“Since its inception in 2007, EREA has made the protection of children from abuse a priority and has committed to ongoing accountability, integrity and due care in its schools,” he said.

“Our commitment to providing a safe, supportive, caring environment for students is reinforced by strong moral and legal obligations which underpin all of EREA’s policies.”

Dr Tinsey said the national event also marked the beginning of a series of apologies around Australia with EREA schools and their communities planning their own local ceremonies.

“EREA schools around Australia will mark this day in their own way throughout this year,” he said.