

28 October 2014



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• strategic • for 2015-19

# directions



EDMUND RICE EDUCATION  
AUSTRALIA



We acknowledge  
the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples of Australia  
as the traditional owners and custodians of the land of our schools.

We are inspired and nurtured by their wisdom,  
spirituality and experience.

We commit ourselves to actively work alongside them  
for reconciliation and justice.

# preamble

Edmund Rice Education Australia (EREA) was established by the Christian Brothers in 2007 to ensure the continuation of the charism of Edmund Rice in school ministry within the mission of the Church. The strategic directions articulated in this document build on the work and achievements of the foundation years of EREA and the contribution of Christian Brothers over many years.

The strategic priorities, grounded in the EREA Vision and Charter, enhance our mission as Catholic schools in the Edmund Rice tradition. They set the strategic agenda for the EREA Board and Executive for 2015-2019 and complement their ongoing governance and leadership responsibilities.

In setting their own strategic directions, schools align their priorities with the EREA strategic directions so as to grow the common mission.

The Board and Executive operationalize the strategic directions through annual planning and reporting.

Strategic Directions setting is a dynamic process which attempts to respond creatively to the challenges presented both internally by our community of schools and by the wider external environment. It is a scaffold to ensure cohesion in the Board's decision making processes. However in its implementation we will continue to be responsive to the ever changing environments in which EREA operates.

We are confident of the continuing guidance of the Spirit and the inspiration of Edmund Rice as we advance towards what can be.

Live Jesus in our Hearts Forever

Edmund Rice Education Australia Board – 28 October 2014



# Purpose, Vision, Charter, Intent

## the Purpose



The purpose of Edmund Rice Education Australia is to own, govern, manage and conduct educational institutions and associated activities, in fulfilment of the mission of Jesus Christ in the Catholic tradition.

Edmund Rice Education Australia's work of evangelisation shall build on the sound traditions of the Congregation of Christian Brothers and ensure the continuation of the charism of Edmund Rice in school ministry as Church Mission. (*Constitution of The Trustees of Edmund Rice Education Australia*, 20 September 2012: #4.1 & #4.2)

## the Vision



Founded in values espoused in the Gospel, Edmund Rice Education Australia seeks to transform the hearts and minds of young Australians through education to build a more just and inclusive community through presence, compassion and liberation.

## the Charter



As Catholic Schools in the Edmund Rice tradition, we aspire to be faithful to the four Charter touchstones:

### Liberating Education

We open hearts and minds, through quality teaching and learning experiences, so that through critical reflection and engagement each person is hope-filled and free to build a better world for all.



## Gospel Spirituality

We invite all people into the story of Jesus and strive to make his message of compassion, justice and peace a living reality within our community.



## Inclusive Community

Our community is accepting and welcoming, fostering right relationships and committed to the common good.



## Justice and Solidarity

We are committed to justice and peace for all, grounded in a spirituality of action and reflection that calls us to stand in solidarity with those who are marginalized and the Earth itself.



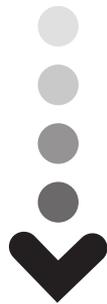
# the Intent



We are called to discern the relationships within and to walk locally, nationally and internationally to grow our identity, mission and spirituality. Conscious of the mutuality intrinsic to these relationships, we seek to identify those who wish to walk with us in relationship.

We are called to continually deepen and re-contextualise learning, spirituality and living within the diversity of our country with particular focus on the poor and the marginalised including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities.

We are called to ensure that governance, leadership and management structures reflect the wisdom and spiritualities of the wider community and provide opportunities for mutual engagement.



## development of the **Strategic Directions**

The EREA Board used a broad consultative process in the development of the strategic directions.

The process was designed to capture the insights and wisdom of the EREA Board, Leadership Team and staff, Principals, Executive Teams and Schools Boards. Other key groups consulted included the Christian Brothers Oceania Leadership Team, brothers who lead the congregational clusters, Directors of Catholic Education where EREA schools operate, Associate Schools and ATSI representatives.

A range of information gathering strategies was used to listen and to discern significant challenges for EREA over the next five years. A Reference Group from the schools worked with external consultants to sort the data into key strategic themes which were further refined by the Council, Board and Executive into the identified strategic directions.

The Strategic Directions were approved by the EREA Board and endorsed by the EREA Council on 28 October 2014.

## the **Current Situation**



Edmund Rice Education Australia (EREA) has responsibility for forty-eight (48) schools including thirty-one (31) mainstream schools, a school for the hearing impaired, a school for the vision impaired, a Montessori preschool and fourteen (14) Flexible Learning Centres. The schools are located across Australia with a presence in all states and territories. With over 4,000 staff nationally and ministering to over 35,000 students nationally, EREA ensures the continuation of the charism of Edmund Rice in school ministry as part of the mission of the Catholic Church.

In addition, there are 29 Associate schools in Australia and five partner schools in New Zealand which share with EREA the Edmund Rice tradition.

There have been significant achievements in the foundation years of EREA including the following.

- The vision and identity of EREA has been clearly articulated and owned across the EREA community. This is grounded in the Edmund Rice Charism and heritage of the Christian Brothers.
- The vision has been interpreted into a Charter for Catholic Schools in the Edmund Rice Tradition which is defining the character and culture of EREA schools.
- EREA schools are widely recognized for their commitment to justice and solidarity and providing opportunities for those who are disenfranchised.
- The new governance structure of EREA was legally constituted as a Public Juridic Person and civil law entity in 2013.
- New structures, policies and procedures have been designed and implemented to support the new governance structure of EREA.
- Formation initiatives are developing EREA leaders and staff who are committed to liberating education, Gospel spirituality, inclusive community and justice and solidarity - the Touchstones of the EREA Charter.
- There has been significant growth across Australia in Flexible Learning opportunities through Youth Plus which is strongly supported by mainstream schools as essential to Edmund Rice education.

# Strategic Directions

## Priority One



## Growing our national identity for mission



### Goals

- Contribute to the national and global educational and church agendas.
- Advocate with those who are poor and marginalized.
- Grow the understanding of and commitment to our potential as a national community in mission.
- Embrace the richness and suffering within the Christian Brothers' heritage.
- Journey in partnership with the Christian Brothers while celebrating their legacy in education.

# for 2015 - 2019

## Priority Two



## Educating for mission



### Goals

- Inform learning and teaching in the schools through the four Touchstones of the Charter
- Celebrate the richness of the Evangelizing dimension of the Catholic tradition in our communities.
- Work in partnership with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities for reconciliation and liberation.
- Include an option for those who are marginalized as a core commitment for an Edmund Rice Education.

## Priority Three



# Governing for mission



## Goals

- Advance our vision and mission through governance and management structures.
- Articulate roles, responsibilities and delegations so that they are understood and enacted within our community.
- Acknowledge and develop the leadership contribution and wisdom of women.
- Consolidate our PJP status nationally.

## Priority Four



# Sustaining the mission



## Goals

- Grow capacity in leadership across all levels of its community.
- Offer affordable education opportunities for lower and middle income families.
- Educate those who are made poor is a commitment that is sustainable.
- Contribute to the mission of the church through growth that is sustainable.

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