

Mr G Seidel  
Secretary  
IEU (SA)  
213-215 Currie Street  
ADELAIDE SA 5000

**Adelaide** Catholic Education Centre  
116 George Street, Thebarton SA 5031  
PO Box 179, Torrensville Plaza SA 5031  
**T** +61 8 8301 6600 **F** +61 8 8301 6611  
**E** [director@cesa.catholic.edu.au](mailto:director@cesa.catholic.edu.au)  
**W** [www.cesa.catholic.edu.au](http://www.cesa.catholic.edu.au)  
ABN: 91 893 631 195  
SACCS ABN: 84 572 437 441

*(Via email)*

Dear Glen

**Re: Proposed Policy to Maintain Vaccination Mandate**

I refer to your letter of 5 April 2022 regarding the consultation process currently underway for the proposed Catholic Education South Australia (CESA) COVID-19 Vaccination Policy.

As outlined in the Memo of 4 April 2022, the final decision will be made when the consultation process is concluded, and feedback has been received and duly considered. The policy is proposed for the remainder of the year, with an undertaking to review it again in November 2022.

In answer to your two questions:

*Question #1*

*Given that the message from SA Health that mandated vaccines for school staff have, in effect, outlived their usefulness, what evidenced-based rationale is CESA using to justify the proposed maintenance of a mandate which has been rescinded for SA schools?*

As employers, CESA (including separately incorporated Catholic Schools) has a non-delegable duty under the *Work Health and Safety Act 2012* (SA) to ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, the health and safety of its employees, contractors, volunteers, students and community while on our premises. We are also obliged to ensure so far as is reasonably practicable, that others are not put at risk from our activities. We supported the initial mandate for these reasons.

The decision made by the State Emergency Co-Ordinator to cease the Emergency Management Direction in Education and Early Learning settings does not alter our obligation as stated above. This includes assessing the risks in relation to COVID-19 in our system's context and taking steps to manage that risk through the best available means.

The ongoing public health messages and evidence, including from Safe Work Australia and SA Health, continues to be that vaccination provides the best ongoing protection from the risks of severe disease caused by COVID-19 being in the community. Vaccination is an effective control measure that helps to protect the individual, and those around them.

The Chief Public Health Officer, Professor Nicola Spurrier, recently stated on ABC Radio Adelaide (6 April 2022), that an unvaccinated teacher returning to classrooms is "risky".

Taking into consideration the recognised health advice, it is not unreasonable to propose a policy that requires employees to be fully vaccinated to assist in achieving the safest work environment that we reasonably can, and to minimise the impact of COVID-19.

CESA is certainly not alone in acting on this advice and seriously considering the health and safety of their workers in proposing such a policy. Other education systems nationally, as well as corporate organisations, have implemented COVID-19 policies in the absence of a Government Direction or Public Health Order.

*Question #2*

*Given that perhaps only 50% of students are fully vaccinated, what practical difference will it make to community contagion if a small number of staff are unvaccinated?*

As previously stated, Catholic Education has a responsibility to create as safe an environment as possible, especially because not all students are vaccinated or are able to be vaccinated. Regardless of the numbers, we have a responsibility and obligation to consider and implement appropriate measures to manage identified risks as effectively as we can. Our risk assessment, developed in conjunction with risk management specialists, has identified that vaccination is the best available control measure, and it is on that basis that we are consulting on implementation of that proposed control measure.

Throughout this consultation time, your feedback, on behalf of IEU members, as well as feedback being directly provided by employees and others, is assisting us in considering the situation before a final decision is made.

Yours sincerely



Dr Neil McGoran  
**Director**

7 April 2022