

**GOSPEL SPIRITUALITY** INCLUSIVE COMMUNITY  
JUSTICE & SOLIDARITY **LIBERATING EDUCATION**

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# A CATHOLIC EDUCATION

in the Edmund Rice Tradition

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EDMUND RICE EDUCATION  
AUSTRALIA

“I see no value in a centre of learning which churns out numberless school leavers each year and is passively part of a society torn apart by division of race and partisan politics....Our schools exist to challenge popular beliefs and dominant cultural values, to ask the difficult questions, to look at life from the standpoint of the minority, the victim, the outcast and the stranger.”  
Br Philip Pinto, Congregation Leader, Christian Brothers



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This document provides a brief outline of Edmund Rice Education Australia. For more detailed information please access our website [www.erea.edu.au](http://www.erea.edu.au) or contact one of our offices.

# OUR STORY

## Edmund Rice Education Australia



**EDMUND RICE EDUCATION  
AUSTRALIA**

**Edmund Rice Education Australia (ERA) is the network of schools, entities and offices offering a Catholic education in the tradition of Blessed Edmund Rice.**

**ERA schools strive to offer a liberating education, based on a gospel spirituality, within an inclusive community committed to justice and solidarity.**

Established by the Christian Brothers in 2007, ERA now has full responsibility for the schools operated by the Brothers at that time. With the addition of schools established since 2007 there are nearly 50 schools in 2014 enrolling over 35,000 students through all states and territories of Australia. As part of their mission within the Church and shaped by the spirit and charism of Blessed Edmund Rice, schools offer an education guided by the *Charter for Catholic Schools in the Edmund Rice Tradition*.

ERA has its own canonical and civil identity but remains closely connected to the Christian Brothers and their ongoing ministry. Schools operate in dioceses with the mandate of the local Bishop.

# OUR HERITAGE

## Who was Edmund Rice and who are the Christian Brothers?



**Edmund Rice was an Irish man of the 18th and 19th Century who had the dream of creating a better world for poor young people through education.**

Edmund was a deeply faith committed man inspired by the Gospel story of Jesus and who understood the unjust reality of his times. In 1802 he established a school in Waterford where many alienated youth were excluded from education.

A successful and wealthy businessman, he always had a concern for those who were poor and on the edges of society. He believed that education was essential to liberating young people from their circumstances.

The education Edmund offered flowed *“Christ present in and appealing to him in the poor”* [Christian Brothers’ charism Statement, 1982]. Reflecting Edmund’s own core beliefs, an Edmund Rice education is faith based, relevant to the needs and futures of the students, inclusive and challenges the injustices of the time. As his work developed, a number of men joined Edmund and formed, with him, a religious community – the Christian Brothers.

The Christian Brothers are a Catholic Religious Institute whose members dedicate their lives to the service of others, particularly those at the margins of society. They work across the world in areas of education, community engagement, faith formation and social justice.

The Christian Brothers began their work in Australia in 1868, with their first school, now Parade College, being established in 1871. Since then thousands of young men and women have graduated from over 120 schools offering an education in the tradition of Edmund's first school in Ireland.

Whilst their ministry in Australia has been largely based around education, their focus in recent years, particularly since handing their schools to the governance of others, has been on returning to the margins and working in community development, advocacy, Indigenous ministry, with refugees and in other social justice related areas.

More detail on the Edmund Rice and Christian Brother stories is available at [www.erea.edu.au/about-us](http://www.erea.edu.au/about-us)



# OUR IDENTITY

## The Charter for Catholic Schools in the Edmund Rice Tradition

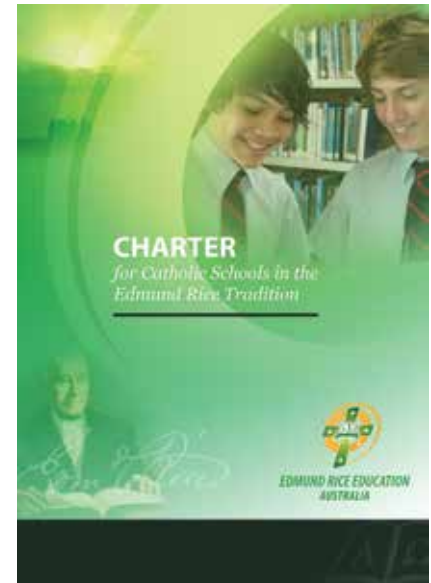
**All schools and educational entities in the Edmund Rice tradition across Australia are bound by a Charter which identifies touchstones authentically linked with the charism of Blessed Edmund Rice and which underpins the ministry in our schools and educational endeavours.**

These touchstones help us set our direction and define our goals as, following Blessed Edmund's example, we continue to reflect and to seek to make the Gospel a living reality in our communities. Living these touchstones gives Edmund Rice Education Australia a special position in educating for liberation and possibility.

Each school and educational entity within Edmund Rice Education Australia is called to be authentic to the Charter.

As a living document, the Charter continues to evolve through review and reflection as the demands of our changing times are read and interpreted in the light of the unchanging Gospel.

This Charter document was proclaimed by the EREA Council on 22 August 2011 and can be accessed at [www.erea.edu.au/about-us](http://www.erea.edu.au/about-us)



# The Touchstones of a Catholic Education in the Edmund Rice Tradition



## 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 marginalised and the Earth itself.

# OUR STRUCTURE

## Governance and Management

**To facilitate mission, EREA is governed by a Council which holds the canonical authority of EREA as canonical stewards and the civil authority as Trustees of Edmund Rice Education Australia. Appointment to the Council is made by the Congregation Leader of the Christian Brothers.**

The Council appoints a Board which has the responsibility for the strategic direction and oversight of management of EREA. This Board meets six times each year and has a number of standing committees.

The Executive Director of EREA is appointed by the Board with the approval of Council, as the Chief Executive Officer of EREA.

### **EREA has three National Mission Areas:**

- Identity and Liberating Education;
- Community Engagement and Support;
- Stewardship and Resourcing.

### **There are 4 Regional Offices:**

- North (QLD);
- South (VIC & TAS);
- East (NSW & ACT);
- West (WA, SA and NT).

### **Youth +:**

- coordinates a national flexible learning network.

The Leadership Team of EREA comprises senior national and regional leaders as well as two Principals.

An integral element of EREA is Youth+, which has oversight of a number of Flexible Learning Centres and other initiatives providing education to disenfranchised young people outside mainstream education.



# OUR MISSION

**EREA staff offer a range of services in support of mission nationally, regionally and at the local school level. These include:**

## Identity and Liberating Education

- staff formation and leadership programs;
- publications and resources supporting identity;
- formation for School Boards;
- immersions to Majority World countries and Indigenous Communities for leaders and staff;
- support with student immersions;

- justice and peace education;
- supporting Associate Schools in their living the charism;
- links to the Christian Brothers and the Edmund Rice network;
- school reflection and renewal processes.

## Community Engagement and Support

- support to schools;
- development and implementation of strategies for growth;
- appointment of Principals and Deputy Principals;
- performance appraisals of Principals and Deputy Principals;

- leadership development and succession planning;
- critical incident support;
- educational reporting.

## Stewardship and Resourcing

- financial planning and budget control;
- statutory reporting;
- human resource support;
- risk assessment;
- support with capital developments;
- property and asset management;
- professional development and appraisal of Business Managers.

“Among our tasks as witnesses to the love of Christ is that of giving a voice to the cry of the poor.” Pope Francis, 2013

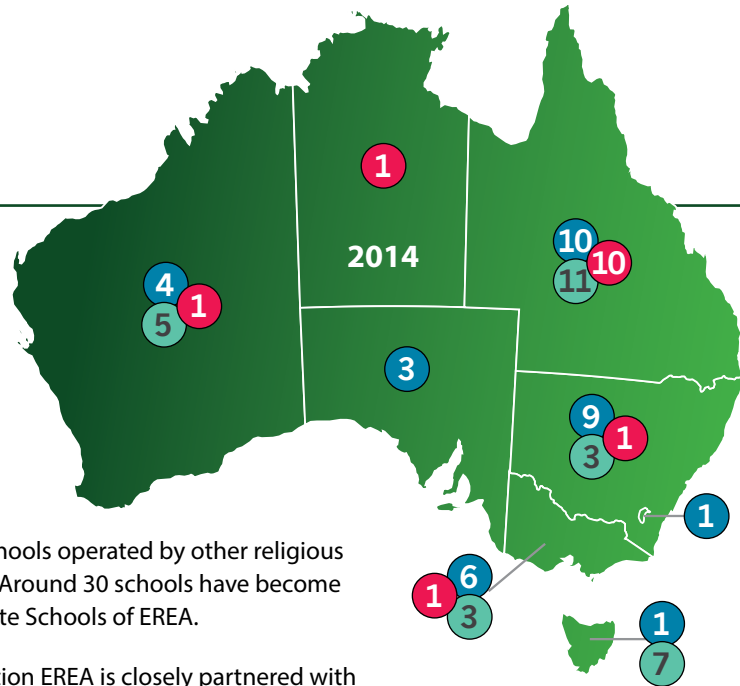
# OUR NETWORK

## Membership of EREA

**Nationally there are many schools forming a large network with a common commitment to offering a Catholic education guided by the charism of Edmund Rice.**

**Members** of EREA are schools which EREA directly owns and governs. There are nearly 50 of these schools, including a number of Flexible Learning Centres operated by Youth+, based in all states and territories of Australia.




**Associates** of EREA are schools which, although not governed by EREA, desire to keep a connection to the charism of Blessed Edmund Rice and the heritage of the Christian Brothers. In most cases these are schools which were owned or led by the Christian Brothers in the past but which now are Diocesan governed schools, frequently after an amalgamation



with schools operated by other religious orders. Around 30 schools have become Associate Schools of EREA.

In addition EREA is closely partnered with the five Catholic Schools in the Edmund Rice tradition in New Zealand. Across the wider world, there are over 250 schools inspired by the Edmund Rice charism operating in over 20 countries.

For a full listing of membership of Edmund Rice Education Australia see [www.erea.edu.au/our-schools](http://www.erea.edu.au/our-schools)

-  Schools operated by EREA
-  Flexible Learning Centres
-  Associate schools

# OUR NETWORK

## Youth+



**Youth+ is the arm of EREA which offers a flexible education for young people disenfranchised from the education system and from many aspects of society.**

Youth+ operates a number of Flexible Learning Centres, each of which is a registered school, small in size and providing a range of learning pathways to connect young people with education and positive futures.

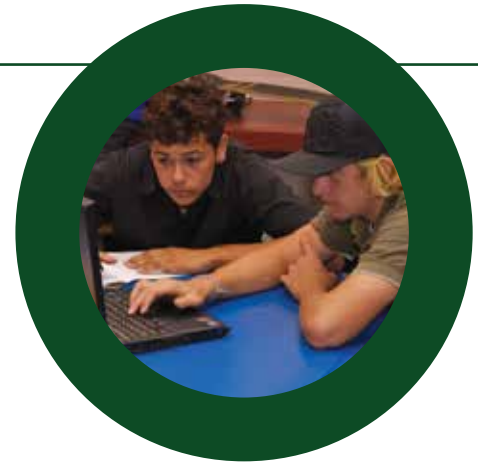
Flexible Learning Centres rely on authentic relationships, a staff dedicated to working with young people who may be facing

multiple challenges, and an engaging program that balances academic and social development.

Each Flexible Learning Centre operates under four Guiding Principles which invite young people and staff into an experience of community that enables them to reach their fullest potential in a safe learning environment. The four principles are:

**Respect  
Participation  
Honesty  
Safe and Legal**

Detailed information on Youth+ is available on the website [www.youthplus.edu.au](http://www.youthplus.edu.au)



*“The educational field is not limited to the conventional school. Encourage each other to seek new forms of non-conventional education in accordance with the needs of the times and of people.”  
Pope Francis, 2013*



**EDMUND RICE EDUCATION  
AUSTRALIA**

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*“Do not bury your talents,  
the gifts that God has given you!  
Do not be afraid to dream of great things!”  
Pope Francis, World Youth Day, 2013*

