

# Edmund Rice Education Beyond Borders

TRANSFORMATIONAL EDUCATION FOR JUSTICE AND LIBERATION

## WELCOME

1<sup>st</sup> September, 2014

Dear Friends and Colleagues,

Please receive the warmest of greetings from Melbourne Australia.

It is my privilege to welcome you to this E-News and Website of Edmund Rice Education Beyond Borders!

Earlier this year 30 educators and leaders in Edmund Rice education from around the world gathered for a week in Nairobi, Kenya. The purpose of our gathering was to explore ways in which Edmund Rice education communities from several different continents could work together more closely and form a global network committed to a common vision for education.

The result of this gathering was the formation of 'Edmund Rice Education Beyond Borders'. EREBB was officially launched by the Congregation Leader of the Christian Brothers, Brother Hugh O'Neill at the closure of the gathering. Included in this E-News and Website are some documents which details the background to and aspirations of EREBB and initial actions that we have agreed upon.

What this movement means in essence is that we all belong to something much bigger than just our school and our national context. We are one in mission in a global coalition of over 250 schools educating more than 150,000 young people. The work of Edmund Rice education has been enriched by the cultures in which the Christian Brothers have laboured for generations. Each culture brings a particular insight into the power of this vision. How much richer will we become as we share beyond borders the insights and reality of that vision making a difference in so many different contexts! The possibilities are enormous.

At the core of our common vision we hold inclusion of those at the margins of society as essential for authenticity in our mission. We contend that we cannot fully claim the title Catholic without this emphasis on inclusion and outreach to those who are marginalised. Our schools must be founded on the Gospel priorities of inclusion and special concern for young people at risk of being left behind. They must be schools for all who seek the values of our Gospel, regardless of religious affiliation or financial capacity.

Our schools expand the notion of excellence beyond the academic, cultural and sporting domains, as important as they are to holistic education. An excellent Catholic school in the Edmund Rice tradition celebrates success and potential in all domains of the formation of a young person. All are nurtured towards fullness of life. Our schools ask hard questions of

themselves in terms of how success is defined and how our lived priorities reflect those of the Gospel. This is the common tradition to which we belong.

Along with core priorities of inclusion, service and a deep commitment to social justice, advocacy, speaking for the voiceless and amplifying the voice of the Gospel, is our common challenge and priority. As well as serving those who are at the margins, we respond to a renewed call to question why people are marginalised and more importantly, to encourage and give skills to the marginalised in our world to be able to ask these questions for themselves. We are committed to teaching our young to question the realities that they have inherited, since many of these realities are dehumanising. We challenge the young to see that freedom is not permission to do as we want, but the responsibility to do as we ought for the making of a better world.

I invite you to share in our excitement and passion for the possibilities that this global community in mission will give birth to. Over coming months your representative on the Leadership Forum of EREBB will be working with the leadership of your school to explore ways in which your community can join in this vision.

I take this opportunity to thank you for all that you do for Edmund Rice education in your context.

With every best wish,

*Wayne*

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