

**Press Release 3/2/03
For Immediate Release**

REGIONAL EDUCATION GETS ONLINE BOOST

The vital role Schools play in supporting rural and regional Australia has received a boost from the digital age. Teachers visiting an Australian website, Teachers On Net (www.teachers.on.net), will see real-time job advertisements from places as far-flung as Broken Hill or Bourke. The Wilcannia Forbes Catholic Diocese, geographically NSW largest, recognises the advantages of the broadcast power of the Internet. It joins Armidale, Broken Bay (Northern Beaches/Central coast) and the Sydney Offices of Catholic Education in adopting the internet as a formal part of their recruitment strategy.

Dr Ken Rodwell, Co-ordinator of Schools for the Wilcannia Forbes Diocese, indicated the initiative had its origins in a need to communicate job vacancies efficiently and conveniently. "Within our diocese, covering 52% of the total land area of NSW, I wanted all of our staff to know what was available." Simon McGuire, Managing Director of Teachers On Net added "...making short or long term teaching vacancies known to the widest possible group of candidates is a communication problem. The Wilcannia Forbes office has solved it cheaply and effectively."

The difficulties of attracting teachers, as with all professionals, to country areas are well known. Dr Rodwell says that the ability to access a wider audience, particularly new graduates was a bonus. He said that the detailed vacancy information he could now provide to this audience in such a directed fashion was a quality outcome for his schools. Simon McGuire pointed out that rural and regional schools from all sectors have been early adopters of the technology. "It is quite egalitarian and breaches the country city divide. The vacancies of small rural schools appear side-by-side those of the big city schools for any given search."