

Briefing Note

Deputy Director-General, Corporate Services Division
Department of Education, Training and Employment

DRAFT

Action required: For Approval

Action required by: ASAP

Urgent – In order to review the School Viability Assessment procedure by end of Term 1, 2014.

SUBJECT: IMPROVEMENT REVIEW OF SCHOOL VIABILITY ASSESSMENT PROCEDURE

Summary of key objectives

- Following its initial implementation in 2013, the Infrastructure Strategy, Research and Performance (ISRP) unit seeks approval to review and make operational improvements to the School Viability Assessment procedure.
- Although the review of the procedure is not scheduled to occur until May 2015, in line with Departmental procedural requirements, ISRP has prepared a proposed consultation plan to enable the review to be completed by the end of Term 1, 2014 (**Attachment 1 – 13/395134**).
- ISRP will write to key education stakeholders to seek feedback for the review (**Attachment 2 – 13/XXXXXX**).

Key issues

1. The Department's School Viability Assessment procedure was approved and implemented for the first time in May 2013.
2. In the 2013 School Viability Assessment process, nine schools were approved to proceed to consultation for proposed closure or amalgamation.
3. At the conclusion of the assessment and consultation process, in September 2013, six schools were approved to close at the end of 2013—Charlton State School, Fortitude Valley State School, Nyanda State High School, Old Yarranlea State School, Stuart State School and Toowoomba South State School.
4. Two schools were approved to remain open—Everton Park State High School and Wyreema State School—while the proposed amalgamation of Coorparoo Secondary College with Brisbane State High School was not approved to proceed.
5. The Minister has publicly stated there will be no further school closures associated with a school viability assessment in this term of Government.
6. In line with departmental processes for developing and reviewing procedures, ISRP is scheduled to conduct a review of the School Viability Assessment procedure in May 2015.
7. ISRP considers it may be appropriate to conduct a review of the procedure earlier than 2015, in order to make improvements to the procedure for any subsequent round of the School Viability Assessment process.
8. As per Attachment 1, ISRP has proposed a process to review the procedure and consult with internal and external stakeholders.

9. While it is not a requirement for ISRP to seek input from external stakeholders in the review of this procedure, ISRP considers it would be good consultative practice, due to the community and political sensitivity around the school closure process.

10. Stakeholder groups are as follows:

INTERNAL:

- a. Office of Education Queensland
- b. Regional Directors

EXTERNAL:

- c. Queensland Association of State School Principals (QASSP)
 - d. Queensland Secondary Principals Association (QSPA)
 - e. Queensland State P-10/12 School Administrators' Association (QSP-10/12SAA)
 - f. Association of Special Education Administrators of Queensland (ASEAQ) Inc
 - g. P&Cs Queensland
 - h. Isolated Children's Parents' Association (ICPA)
 - i. Queensland Teacher's Union (QTU)
 - j. Together Union
 - k. United Voice.
11. If appropriate, the Executive Director ISRP will write an email to these stakeholders to seek feedback on the existing procedure and the 2013 School Viability Assessment process.

Implications

- 12. There are no financial implications.
- 13. The review of the procedure and consultation with external stakeholders may generate media interest.

Background

- 14. The School Viability Assessment procedure, which was implemented for the first time in 2013, was developed in consultation with external stakeholders including P&Cs Queensland, the Queensland Teachers' Union, Isolated Children's Parents' Association and various principals associations.

Right to information

- 15. I am of the view that the contents or attachments contained in this brief are suitable for publication.

Recommendation**DRAFT**

That the Deputy Director-General, Corporate Services Division

- **Note** ISRP's proposed consultation plan to review the School Viability Assessment procedure; and
- **Approve** ISRP to carry out the review and consult with relevant stakeholders prior to the end of Term 1, 2014.

NOTED / APPROVED/ NOT APPROVED

Jeff Hunt
Deputy Director-General
Corporate Services Division
Department of Education, Training and Employment

/ /

Deputy Director-General's comments

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Action Officer
Emma Clarey

A/Principal
Project Officer

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Endorsed by:
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Wedemeyer
Principal Policy
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ADG

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Date: / /

DRAFT**Proposed consultation outline:**

SCHOOL VIABILITY ASSESSMENT PROCEDURE - IMPROVEMENT REVIEW TIMELINE		
DATE/TIMEFRAME	ACTION	KEY OFFICERS/STAKEHOLDERS
P H A S E O N E		
By 13 Nov	DDG CS to approve BN seeking approval to review School Viability Assessment procedure.	Jeff Hunt, DDG CS
14 Nov - 22 Nov	ISRP officer to commence reviewing the procedure, including making notes and exploring various issues/options as a result of learnings from 2013 process.	Emma Clarey, Principal Planning Officer
18 Nov	ED ISRP to write to all stakeholder groups, inviting feedback on the 2013 School Viability Assessment process, by mid-February 2014.	Lee Callum, ED ISRP
P H A S E T W O		
18 Nov 2013 – 15 Feb 2014	Internal and external stakeholders review the procedure and prepare written feedback for ISRP's consideration. Feedback due to ISRP 15 Feb 2014 (three-months).	Internal and External Stakeholders
P H A S E T H R E E		
17 Feb – 28 Feb	Revise and rewrite the procedure, incorporating feedback from stakeholders (where possible).	Emma Clarey, Principal Planning Officer
3 – 7 Mar	Seek internal endorsement of the revised procedure from ED ISRP.	Lee Callum, ED ISRP
P H A S E F O U R		
10 Mar – 21 Mar	Progress revised procedure to ADG ISB, DDG CS, DG and Minister for approval/noting (?).	Paul Hobbs, ADG ISB Jeff Hunt, DDG CS Dr Jim Watterston, DG Minister
By end of Mar/ early Apr	Revised procedure to be approved/published on DETE PPR (?).	Emma Clarey, Principal Planning Officer

CONSULTATION PLAN

Improvement Review of School Viability Assessment Procedure

DRAFT

Consultation framework:

Consultation and engagement with stakeholders regarding the improvement of the *School Viability Assessment* procedure will be divided into four phases:

- PHASE ONE: Internal review and exploration of issues and alternative options
- PHASE TWO: Consultation with stakeholders
- PHASE THREE: Revise the procedure, incorporating feedback from stakeholders (where possible)
- PHASE FOUR: Seek approval of the revised procedure

Key Audiences:

INTERNAL

- Office of Education Queensland
- Regional Directors

EXTERNAL

- Queensland Association of State School Principals (QASSP)
- Queensland Secondary Principals Association (QSPA)
- Queensland State P-10/12 School Administrators' Association (QSP-10/12SAA)
- Association of Special Education Administrators of Queensland (ASEAQ) Inc
- P&Cs Queensland
- Isolated Children's Parents' Association (ICPA)
- Queensland Teacher's Union (QTU)
- Together Union
- United Voice

Page 6 redacted for the following reason:

Sch.3(3)(1)(c) – Exempt information not subject to release

Released under the
RTI Act by DETE

Briefing Note

The Honourable John-Paul Langbroek MP
Minister for Education, Training and Employment

Action required: For Approval

Action required by: ASAP

Urgent – Urgent approval required to allow properties to be progressed for disposal at the earliest opportunity

SUBJECT: CLOSED SCHOOL SITES TO BE DECLARED SURPLUS AND PROGRESSED FOR DISPOSAL

Summary of key objectives

- Six schools have been announced for closure at the end of 2013, five of which are on properties owned by the Department of Education, Training and Employment (DETE) (see schedule at **Attachment 1**).
- The Minister is requested to declare the five closed school sites as surplus and approve the preparing of the sites for disposal.
- It is intended that the properties will be placed on the market in 2014 after the schools have closed.

Key issues

1. On 17 September 2013, the Minister announced that following extensive consultation, six state schools would be closing at the end of 2013, five of which are on properties owned by DETE. DETE has no further need for the properties once the schools have closed and the properties vacated.
2. A number of actions are required to prepare the properties for disposal. Declaring the properties surplus on the Government Land Register (GLR) is the formal start of the disposal process, and provides other government agencies an opportunity to express an interest in the properties.
3. The Department of Housing and Public Works (DHPW) were engaged to conduct preliminary due diligence on the potential disposal of these properties. Based on this initial assessment, all are considered suitable for disposal. All properties have some issues requiring further investigation and/or resolution prior to being placed on the market for sale.
4. Declaring the properties surplus at the earliest opportunity will allow DETE to engage DHPW to manage the disposal process, which includes conducting full due diligence, commissioning market valuations, preparing the properties for market, and engaging marketing agents.
5. DETE will discuss the disposal strategy for these properties with the Government Land and Asset Management group (GLAM) in the Department of State Development, Infrastructure and Planning.
6. The disposal of these properties will be considered as part of the Property Asset Utilisation Review, which is taking a holistic view of the Queensland Government's property assets. Value uplift opportunities will also be considered as part of this process.
7. It is expected that most of the properties will be disposed of via the open market to maximise the financial return to the Department, however, other opportunities such as

inter-agency transfers or in-priority dealing with specific parties may be explored, if in the best interests of DETE, the Government and the community.

8. In the interests of community sensitivity, the properties will not be placed on the market until 2014.
9. A draft brief is progressing (Ref: 13/361112) which will request the Director-General's approval that these schools receive 2013-14 maintenance funding for workplace health and safety requirements only.
10. Once the schools close they will require regular continued grounds maintenance and security patrols.

Implications

11. Any funds realised from the sale of these sites would be reinvested in the Queensland state school Capital Works program.
12. Delay to the disposal process will incur recurrent costs for DETE, such as arranging security and maintenance contractors and services.
13. The marketing of the properties is likely to attract significant community and media interest.

Background

14. On 3 May 2013, the Minister announced eight schools – Charlton State School (SS), Everton Park State High School (SHS), Fortitude Valley SS, Nyanda SHS, Old Yarranlea SS, Stuart SS, Toowoomba South SS and Wyresma SS – would undergo community consultation regarding proposed closure, as a result of DETE's new School Viability Assessment process.
15. The School Viability Assessment procedure effectively allows for the viability assessment, community consultation period and school closure process to be completed within a single school year. For 2013, this process concluded on 17 September 2013, with the announcement that six schools would be closed at the end of Term 4, 2013.
16. This streamlined process avoids the risks associated with vandalism and facility deterioration, and significantly shortens the time required for the property to be declared surplus and added to the GLR for disposal.

Right to information

17. I am of the view that the contents or attachments contained in this brief **are suitable** for publication.

Recommendation

That the Minister

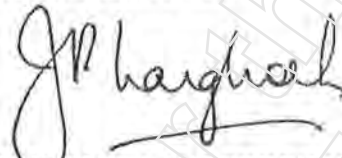
Approve the Nyanda SHS, Fortitude Valley SS, Toowoomba South SS, Charlton SS and Stuart SS sites be declared surplus on the Government Land Register and approved for disposal; and

Note that DETE will commence work to prepare the properties for disposal, but that none of the properties will be placed on the market until 2014.

NOTED**APPROVED/NOT APPROVED
ENDORSED/NOTED**


FIONA CRAWFORD
Chief of Staff
Office of the Hon John-Paul Langbroek MP
Minister for Education, Training and
Employment


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☐ Copy to Assistant Minister


JOHN-PAUL LANGBROEK MP
Minister for Education, Training and
Employment

14 / 1 / 14

Minister's comments

Action Officer Brett Robertson PPO	Endorsed by: ED Lee Callum	Endorsed by: ED Vince White	Endorsed by: A/ED Maree Bauer	Endorsed by: ADG Paul Hobbs	Endorsed by: DDG Jeff Hunt	Endorsed by: DG Dr. Jim Watterston
Infrastructure Strategy Research and Performance Tel: 3234 1812	Infrastructure Strategy Research and Performance Tel: 3237 0950 Mob: _____	Infrastructure Operations Tel: 3237 0761 Mob: _____	Infrastructure Programs and Delivery Tel: 3224 2826 Mob: _____	Infrastructure Strategy Tel: 3237 0658 Mob: _____	Corporate Services Tel: 3405 6329 Mob: _____	 Tel: 323 71070 Mob: _____ Date: 23 / 1 / 13
s.47(3)(b) – Contrary to the Public Interest						
Date: 15/10/13	Date: 18/10/13	Date: 21/10/13	Date: 21/10/13	Date: 22/10/13		

Attachment 1 – Schedule of properties to be declared surplus

Trim: 13/352174

School	Real Property description	Site Area
Nyanda State High School	Lot 1179 on Plan CP851209	8.38 Hectares
Fortitude Valley State School	Lot 21 on Plan CP816131	1.38 Hectares
Toowoomba South State School	Lot 18 on Plan AG814532	1.48 Hectares
Charlton State School	Lot 201 on Plan AG3745	2.80 Hectares
Stuart State School	Lot 33 on Plan CP887788	2.06 Hectares



Hon John-Paul Langbroek MP
Minister for Education, Training and Employment

02 OCT 2013

Mr Alex Scott
President
Together Union
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Dear Mr Scott

I am writing to formally advise you that following careful consideration of the results of the school viability assessment and the consultation reports, I have determined that the following schools will close at the end of Term 4, 2013:

- Charlton State School
- Toowoomba South State School
- Fortitude Valley State School
- Nyanda State High School
- Old Yarranlea State School
- Stuart State School

These were extremely difficult decisions to make and I understand that my decisions will be disappointing for each of these school communities. I can assure you that I gave full and proper consideration to concerns raised with me and the issues outlined in submissions provided.

The principals and Parents and Citizens' (P&C) Association presidents of these schools were formally notified of my decision, by telephone, on Tuesday 17 September 2013. I have also written to each Principal and P&C president to formally advise them of my decision and to thank them for representing their respective communities during the recent consultation process.

I appreciate the important role the principals and P&C presidents will play over the coming months to ensure that students make a smooth transition to their new schools for 2014. My Department's regional office staff will support the schools to manage all of the issues associated with the closure. Relevant information has been provided to principals to support students, parents and staff through this process. The principal and the regional office staff will provide further information and support to the school community over the remainder of the school year.

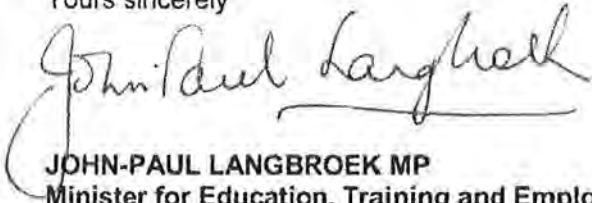
I assure you that these decisions were not made lightly. As Minister for Education, Training and Employment, it is important that I ensure our educational facilities are appropriately managed. As part of ensuring that we have the best facilities for our students, we need to identify where it is appropriate to close a particular school or where it is necessary to build a school.

This planning process enables the Government to ensure that all children have access to a quality education and that our school facilities are being used to their maximum potential. This can involve making decisions that may not be popular but are in the best interests of all Queenslanders.

Further information about the approved school closures can be found on the Department's website at <http://education.qld.gov.au/schools/school-viability/index.html>.

If you require any further information about the approved school closures, I invite you to contact Ms Lee Callum, Executive Director, Infrastructure Strategy, on telephone 3237 0950.

Yours sincerely



JOHN-PAUL LANGBROEK MP
Minister for Education, Training and Employment

Ref: 13/343639

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RTI Act by DETE



Hon John-Paul Langbroek MP
Minister for Education, Training and Employment

02 OCT 2013

Mr Kevin Bates
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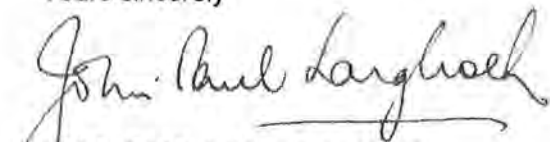
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Yours sincerely



JOHN-PAUL LANGBROEK MP
Minister for Education, Training and Employment

Ref: 13/343639

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RTI Act by DETE



Hon John-Paul Langbroek MP
Minister for Education, Training and Employment

02 OCT 2013

Mr Dan Smith
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Dear Mr Smith

Dan,

I am writing to formally advise you that following careful consideration of the results of the school viability assessment and the consultation reports, I have determined that the following schools will close at the end of Term 4, 2013:

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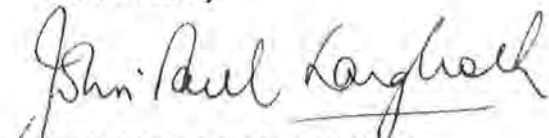
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Yours sincerely



JOHN-PAUL LANGBROEK MP
Minister for Education, Training and Employment

Ref: 13/343639

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RTI Act by DETE



Hon John-Paul Langbroek MP
Minister for Education, Training and Employment

02 OCT 2013

Mr Andrew Pegler
President
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Dear Mr Pegler *Andrew,*

I am writing to formally advise you that following careful consideration of the results of the school viability assessment and the consultation reports, I have determined that the following schools will close at the end of Term 4, 2013:

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Yours sincerely



JOHN-PAUL LANGBROEK MP
Minister for Education, Training and Employment

Ref: 13/343639

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Hon John-Paul Langbroek MP
Minister for Education, Training and Employment

02 OCT 2013

Mr Norm Fuller
President
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Dear Mr Fuller *Norm,*

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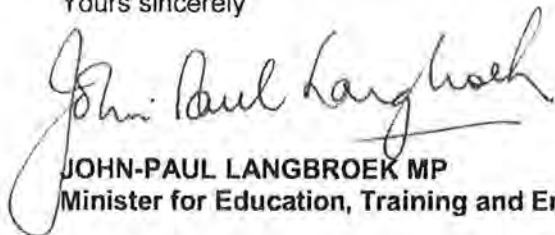
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Yours sincerely



JOHN-PAUL LANGBROEK MP
Minister for Education, Training and Employment

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RTI Act by DETE



Hon John-Paul Langbroek MP
Minister for Education, Training and Employment

02 OCT 2013

Ms Hilary Backus
President
Queensland Association of State School
Principals Inc
Level 10
445 Upper Edward Street
SPRING HILL QLD 4000

Level 22 Education House
30 Mary Street Brisbane 4000
PO Box 15033 City East
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Dear Ms Backus

Hilary,

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The principals and Parents and Citizens' (P&C) Association presidents of these schools were formally notified of my decision, by telephone, on Tuesday 17 September 2013. I have also written to each Principal and P&C president to formally advise them of my decision and to thank them for representing their respective communities during the recent consultation process.

I appreciate the important role the principals and P&C presidents will play over the coming months to ensure that students make a smooth transition to their new schools for 2014. My Department's regional office staff will support the schools to manage all of the issues associated with the closure. Relevant information has been provided to principals to support students, parents and staff through this process. The principal and the regional office staff will provide further information and support to the school community over the remainder of the school year.

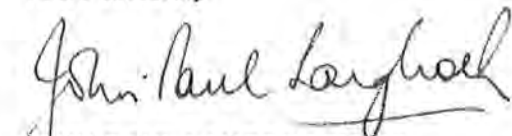
I assure you that these decisions were not made lightly. As Minister for Education, Training and Employment, it is important that I ensure our educational facilities are appropriately managed. As part of ensuring that we have the best facilities for our students, we need to identify where it is appropriate to close a particular school or where it is necessary to build a school.

This planning process enables the Government to ensure that all children have access to a quality education and that our school facilities are being used to their maximum potential. This can involve making decisions that may not be popular but are in the best interests of all Queenslanders.

Further information about the approved school closures can be found on the Department's website at <http://education.qld.gov.au/schools/school-viability/index.html>.

If you require any further information about the approved school closures, I invite you to contact Ms Lee Callum, Executive Director, Infrastructure Strategy, on telephone 3237 0950.

Yours sincerely



JOHN-PAUL LANGBROEK MP
Minister for Education, Training and Employment

Ref: 13/343639

Released under the
RTI Act by DETE



Hon John-Paul Langbroek MP
Minister for Education, Training and Employment

02 OCT 2013

Mr Chesleigh Hargreaves
President
Queensland Association of Special
Education Leaders Inc
PO Box 67
ZILLMERE QLD 4034

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30 Mary Street Brisbane 4000
PO Box 15033 City East
Queensland 4002 Australia
Telephone +61 7 3237 1000
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Email education@ministerial.qld.gov.au

Dear Mr Hargreaves

I am writing to formally advise you that following careful consideration of the results of the school viability assessment and the consultation reports, I have determined that the following schools will close at the end of Term 4, 2013:

- Charlton State School
- Toowoomba South State School
- Fortitude Valley State School
- Nyanda State High School
- Old Yarranlea State School
- Stuart State School

These were extremely difficult decisions to make and I understand that my decisions will be disappointing for each of these school communities. I can assure you that I gave full and proper consideration to concerns raised with me and the issues outlined in submissions provided.

The principals and Parents and Citizens' (P&C) Association presidents of these schools were formally notified of my decision, by telephone, on Tuesday 17 September 2013. I have also written to each Principal and P&C president to formally advise them of my decision and to thank them for representing their respective communities during the recent consultation process.

I appreciate the important role the principals and P&C presidents will play over the coming months to ensure that students make a smooth transition to their new schools for 2014. My Department's regional office staff will support the schools to manage all of the issues associated with the closure. Relevant information has been provided to principals to support students, parents and staff through this process. The principal and the regional office staff will provide further information and support to the school community over the remainder of the school year.

I assure you that these decisions were not made lightly. As Minister for Education, Training and Employment, it is important that I ensure our educational facilities are appropriately managed. As part of ensuring that we have the best facilities for our students, we need to identify where it is appropriate to close a particular school or where it is necessary to build a school.

This planning process enables the Government to ensure that all children have access to a quality education and that our school facilities are being used to their maximum potential. This can involve making decisions that may not be popular but are in the best interests of all Queenslanders.

Further information about the approved school closures can be found on the Department's website at <http://education.qld.gov.au/schools/school-viability/index.html>.

If you require any further information about the approved school closures, I invite you to contact Ms Lee Callum, Executive Director, Infrastructure Strategy, on telephone 3237 0950.

Yours sincerely



JOHN-PAUL LANGBROEK MP
Minister for Education, Training and Employment

Ref: 13/343639

Released under the
RTI Act by DETE



Hon John-Paul Langbroek MP
Minister for Education, Training and Employment

07 OCT 2013

Mr Shaun Kanowski
President
Queensland State P10/12 School
Administrators' Association
c/o Allora P-10 State School
21 Warwick Street
ALLORA QLD 4362

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PO Box 15033 City East
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Dear Mr Kanowski

Shaun,

I am writing to formally advise you that following careful consideration of the results of the school viability assessment and the consultation reports, I have determined that the following schools will close at the end of Term 4, 2013:

- Charlton State School
- Toowoomba South State School
- Fortitude Valley State School
- Nyanda State High School
- Old Yarranlea State School
- Stuart State School

These were extremely difficult decisions to make and I understand that my decisions will be disappointing for each of these school communities. I can assure you that I gave full and proper consideration to concerns raised with me and the issues outlined in submissions provided.

The principals and Parents and Citizens' (P&C) Association presidents of these schools were formally notified of my decision, by telephone, on Tuesday 17 September 2013. I have also written to each Principal and P&C president to formally advise them of my decision and to thank them for representing their respective communities during the recent consultation process.

I appreciate the important role the principals and P&C presidents will play over the coming months to ensure that students make a smooth transition to their new schools for 2014. My Department's regional office staff will support the schools to manage all of the issues associated with the closure. Relevant information has been provided to principals to support students, parents and staff through this process. The principal and the regional office staff will provide further information and support to the school community over the remainder of the school year.

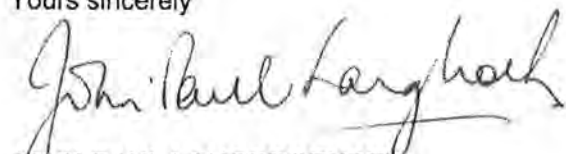
I assure you that these decisions were not made lightly. As Minister for Education, Training and Employment, it is important that I ensure our educational facilities are appropriately managed. As part of ensuring that we have the best facilities for our students, we need to identify where it is appropriate to close a particular school or where it is necessary to build a school.

This planning process enables the Government to ensure that all children have access to a quality education and that our school facilities are being used to their maximum potential. This can involve making decisions that may not be popular but are in the best interests of all Queenslanders.

Further information about the approved school closures can be found on the Department's website at <http://education.qld.gov.au/schools/school-viability/index.html>.

If you require any further information about the approved school closures, I invite you to contact Ms Lee Callum, Executive Director, Infrastructure Strategy, on telephone 3237 0950.

Yours sincerely



JOHN-PAUL LANGBROEK MP
Minister for Education, Training and Employment

Ref: 13/343639

Released under the
RTI Act by DETE



Hon John-Paul Langbroek MP
Minister for Education, Training and Employment

8 OCT 2013

s.47(3)(b) – Contrary to the Public Interest

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Dear s.47(3)(b) – Contrary

Thank you for your recent letter regarding the honour boards currently held at Nyanda State High School.

I appreciate you taking the time to write to me and thank you for your years of involvement with Salisbury State High School, Nyanda State High School and St Laurence's College.

As you may be aware on 17 September 2013, I announced that Nyanda State High School would be closing at the end of Term 4. This was an extremely difficult decision to make and was not one that I made lightly.

I understand that the school has not made a decision about where the honour boards will be relocated to. However, please be assured that Ms Fiona McKenna, Principal of Nyanda State High School will work closely with the school community and surrounding schools in respect to the relocation of the honour boards as well as other important school artefacts and memorabilia.

Thank you again for bringing this matter to my attention and I wish you all the best for the future.

Should you have any further queries I invite you to contact Ms Lee Callum, Executive Director, Infrastructure Strategy, Research and Performance, Department of Education, Training and Employment by telephone on 3237 0950.

Yours sincerely

JOHN-PAUL LANGBROEK MP
Minister for Education, Training and Employment

Ref: 13/312212



Hon John-Paul Langbroek MP
Minister for Education, Training and Employment

10 OCT 2013

Mr Kevin Bates
General Secretary
Queensland Teachers' Union
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MILTON BC QLD 4064

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Dear Mr Bates

Thank you for your email dated 9 September 2013 regarding school closures.

I understand that a number of your members were concerned regarding the pending announcement of approved closures, following the recent consultation process in eight school communities. I appreciate you taking the time to raise these matters on behalf of your members. School staff and community members are also welcome to contact officers within the Department at any time to express their concerns.

As you know the period for public submissions closed on 26 July 2013. There were a significant number of submissions received from students, parents and members of the school communities that required consideration prior to a decision being finalised.

On 17 September 2013, I announced that six of the eight schools proposed for closure would close at the end of Term 4. These schools are Forlitude Valley State School (SS), Old Yarranlea SS, Nyanda State High School, Charlton SS, Toowoomba South SS, and Stuart SS. Relevant information has been distributed to parents, students and staff to assist them in making the transition to alternative schools. They have also been supplied with contact details for officers in my Department should they require further information.

While I can appreciate your views, I hope you can understand the importance of making well-informed decisions in relation to these school closures and that these decisions were not made lightly.

Again, thank you for writing to me on these matters and I hope this information is of assistance to you.

Should you require any further information about the approved school closures, I invite you to contact Ms Lee Callum, Executive Director, Infrastructure Strategy, Department of Education, Training and Employment on telephone 3237 0950.

Yours sincerely

JOHN-PAUL LANGBROEK MP
Minister for Education, Training and Employment

Ref: 13/321956



Hon John-Paul Langbroek MP
Minister for Education, Training and Employment

10 OCT 2013

Councillor Carol Taylor
Toowoomba Regional Council
PO Box 3021
TOOWOOMBA VILLAGE FAIR QLD 4350

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30 Mary Street Brisbane 4000
PO Box 15033 City East
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Dear Ms Taylor *Carol*,

Thank you for your letter dated 18 July 2013 regarding the proposed closure of Wyreema State School and departmental processes with regard to other issues you have identified.

I am pleased to formally advise you that, following careful consideration of the results of the school viability assessment and consultation process, I have determined that Wyreema State School will remain open. I expect that this decision will be welcomed throughout the school community.

I would like to take this opportunity to sincerely thank you for your representations on behalf of your school community during the recent community consultation process.

Submissions received during the consultation process demonstrated the commitment of the school community to work in partnership with the principal, school staff, P&C and broader community to implement strategies to assist the future viability of the school.

I encourage you, as a local Councillor, to continue to work with the principal, parents, staff and students in promoting a successful future for Wyreema State School.

Regarding the two other issues raised, unrelated to the proposed closure of Wyreema State School or the announcement of my decision, I provide the following.

Although the Department has a strong focus on continuity of school leadership, it is recognised that from time to time permanent employees take leave for which they are eligible. This can range from short periods to longer term leave for reasons such as sick leave or long service leave entitlement. All planned leave is considered based on operational needs and replacement issues.

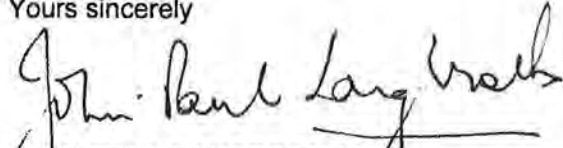
It would be unreasonable for the Department to decline leave where an appropriate replacement can be sourced. Just as it would be inappropriate to deny aspirants for promotion the opportunity to build on their skills and contribute to student learning outcomes through relieving opportunities in other locations.

The Department treats all allegations of inappropriate behaviour of staff seriously and each is managed and dealt with in accordance with long standing practices. Unfortunately, some incidents continue to be the topic of community interest and conversation long after resolution. Where an employee or member of the community believes that unresolved issues exist they should address these in writing to the Director-General for investigation.

Again, thank you for writing to me on these matters and I hope this information is of assistance to you.

Should you have any further queries I invite you to contact Ms Lee Callum, Executive Director, Infrastructure Strategy, Research and Performance, by email to Lee.Callum@dete.qld.gov.au or on telephone 3237 0950.

Yours sincerely



JOHN-PAUL LANGBROEK MR
Minister for Education, Training and Employment

Ref: 13/274823

Released under the
RTI Act by DETE



Hon John-Paul Langbroek MP
Minister for Education, Training and Employment

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25 OCT 2013

s.47(3)(b) – Contrary to the P

Email: s.47(3)(b) – Contrary to the Public Interest

Dear Mr Camilleri

Thank you for your email dated 26 September 2013 regarding my decision to close Nyanda State High School and the future enrolment for high school age children following the end of Term 4 this year.

I appreciate you taking the time to write to me about your concerns. This was an extremely difficult decision to make and I hope you understand we are working to ensure that all Queensland students are able to learn in appropriate learning environments.

As a result of my decision to close Nyanda State High School, there will be changes to catchment areas for neighbouring schools for the 2014 school year onwards. Maps outlining the realigned catchment boundaries of neighbouring schools are available on the Department's website at <http://education.qld.gov.au/schools/school-viability/index.html> and will indicate to you which state school is now your local school.

Students who were enrolled in a school which has been approved for closure will be able to attend the neighbouring school of their choice in 2014 in most cases. However, due to individual schooling history, there may be a small number of students who will not be able to be accommodated at the school of their choice. In these cases, school/regional staff will work with the student and their family to negotiate an alternative school.

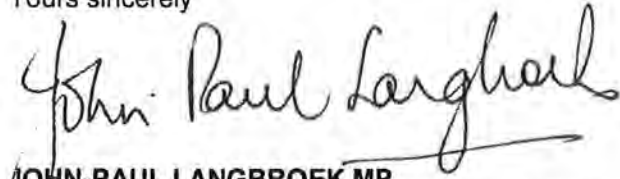
In terms of selecting a future high school for your son, I can advise you that students are automatically eligible to enrol in the state school which is closest to their principal place of residence, that is, within the local catchment area. Students may also seek to enrol in a state school outside of their local catchment area. However, please be aware that in some cases the school may have a School Enrolment Management Plan (School EMP) in place, which may restrict out-of-catchment students enrolling in the school.

Students from outside the school's catchment area applying for enrolment at a school with a School EMP are placed on a waiting list in order of receipt of application. A list of schools with a School EMP, is also available on the Department's website at www.education.qld.gov.au/schools/catchment/.

I trust this information is useful to you in assisting you to select a high school for your son to attend in 2015.

Should you require any further information, I invite you to contact Ms Lee Callum, Executive Director, Infrastructure Strategy, Research and Performance by email at lee.callum@dete.qld.gov.au or on telephone 3237 0950.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "John Paul Langbroek". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

JOHN-PAUL LANGBROEK MP
Minister for Education, Training and Employment

Ref: 13/354464

Released under the
RTI Act by DETE



Hon John-Paul Langbroek MP
Minister for Education, Training and Employment

30 OCT 2013

s.47(3)(b) – Contrary to t

Email: s.47(3)(b) – Contrary to the Public Interest

Dear s.47(3)(b) – Co

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Thank you for your email dated 21 September 2013 regarding my decision to close Nyanda State High School and Old Yarranlea State School from the end of Term 4 this year.

I appreciate you advising me of your concerns and understand that you do not agree with the decision I have reached. I also appreciate that the school communities are disappointed that these schools will be closed.

This was an extremely difficult decision to make. I can assure you that I gave full and proper consideration to concerns raised with me and the issues outlined in submissions provided.

I note your concerns about the closure timeframe for Nyanda State High School. While it is true that my Department's *School Viability Assessment* procedure offers an option for a secondary school to be closed over an extended period—i.e. up to two years—this is not a requirement, but a guide. In this case, I determined that Nyanda State High School would be closed at the end of 2013 in order to allow all students to transition to a new school sooner. Had the school remained open for another year, even for one or two year levels, there was a risk that the total student cohort would have diminished significantly in 2014, with students electing to go to a new school earlier, further limiting the educational and extra-curricular opportunities for students at Nyanda.

I also note s.47(3)(b) comments and statements made in the media recently about these school closures being a revenue raising exercise by the Government. However, I can assure you, when a school is identified for closure the focus is not around making money. While it is likely that school sites that are no longer required will not be retained by the State Government, any funds realised from the sale of such a site would be used for investing in new and upgraded school infrastructure. This reinvestment ensures that the educational facilities across the state continue to provide a world-class learning environment that helps students to achieve positive outcomes.

In relation to Old Yarranlea State School, as you may be aware, this school was originally established as a training school for prospective one teacher school Principals, and as a result, enrolments have always been capped at 18 students. My Department has a range of strategies to develop aspiring teaching Principals other than placing them at Old Yarranlea State School. As you have noted, this school is located on land owned by Griffith University, and this also demonstrates that these school closures are not about raising revenue for the Queensland Government.

As Minister for Education, Training and Employment, it is important that I ensure our educational facilities are appropriately managed. As part of ensuring that we have the best facilities for our students, we need to identify where it is appropriate to close a particular school or where it is necessary to build a school. This planning process enables the Government to ensure that all children have access to a quality education and that our school facilities are being used to their maximum potential. This can involve making decisions that may not be popular but are in the broader interests of Queenslanders.

In addition, to ensure schools are being built where they are needed, the Queensland Schools Planning Commission was established to develop a 20 year demand map to identify where new school facilities are required. This is the first time that the State Government, along with the Catholic and Independent education sectors, and local government, have worked together to coordinate future school locations and expansion of existing schools.

As a result of this, the Government has announced its plan to deliver 11 new schools, three secondary and eight primary schools, in areas where facilities will be needed to accommodate student growth. We are working towards having the first of these schools open for the 2015 school year.

As part of the Government's ongoing commitment to education in Queensland, we also need to make sure our schools are properly maintained, something that has not been addressed in previous years. Therefore, in the 2013-14 State Budget the Newman Government provided an additional \$100 million, over and above the previous \$200 million commitment, to reduce the maintenance backlogs in our schools.

While I understand that the building of new schools or the increased funding for maintenance commitments will not address your desire for Nyanda State High School or Old Yarranlea State School to remain open, I trust you can appreciate that we are working to ensure that all Queensland students are able to learn in appropriate learning environments.

In regard to what happens from here with the closure of Nyanda State High School and Old Yarranlea State School, these schools and my Department will be working with staff, parents and students to ensure that the remainder of the school year continues as smoothly as possible, and that there is a supported transition to other schools for next year.

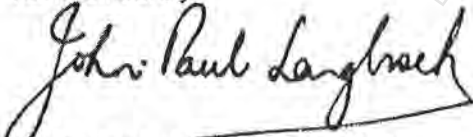
I note that you have raised concerns in relation to alternative arrangements for students at Nyanda State High School. In most cases, students will be able to enrol in their neighbouring school of choice, including Sunnybank State High School. However, due to individual circumstance, there may be a small number of students who may not be able to be accommodated at the school of their choice. In these cases, school and regional staff will work with the student and their family to negotiate an alternative school.

While I also note your comments about the former Acacia Ridge State High School, these circumstances were different as Acacia Ridge State High School was amalgamated with Salisbury State High School to become Nyanda State High School. Please be assured that Student Transition Kits will be developed for all students at Nyanda State High School to help them move to their new school from the start of 2014.

Thank you again for bringing your concerns to my attention and I trust you will find this information useful.

Should you require any further information, I invite you to contact Ms Lee Callum, Executive Director, Infrastructure Strategy, Research and Performance, Department of Education, Training and Employment by email to lee.callum@dete.qld.gov.au or on telephone 3237 0950.

Yours sincerely



JOHN-PAUL LANGBROEK MP
Minister for Education, Training and Employment

Ref: 13/345220



25 SEP 2013

Department of
Education, Training and Employment

s.47(3)(b) – Contrary to the Public Interest

Dear s.47(3)(b) – Contrary to the Public Interest

I refer to your letter dated 19 July 2013 to the Office of the Queensland Ombudsman regarding the Department of Education, Training and Employment's (DETE's) *School Viability Assessment* procedure. The Office of the Queensland Ombudsman has referred your letter to this Department for consideration.

I note your concerns about the development and implementation of the procedure and the proposal to close eight Queensland state schools in 2013.

Firstly, I can assure you that prior to its implementation in May 2013, the *School Viability Assessment* procedure was developed in consultation with key education stakeholders, including P&Cs Queensland, the Isolated Children's Parents' Association, various Principals' associations and the Queensland Teachers' Union.

The procedure ensures the Department has a formal process in place to meet its obligations under the *Education (General Provisions) Act 2006* (the Act) around school closures. Although the *School Viability Assessment* procedure is new in 2013, the premise behind the procedure is not. The Department has a long-standing practice of assessing the viability of its state schools, because it has a responsibility to ensure these important community assets are operated efficiently and appropriately utilised. The *School Viability Assessment* procedure will assist in delivering an effective and efficient public education system that is sustainable now and in the future.

As you are aware, eight Queensland state schools, including Stuart State School in Townsville, were proposed for closure in 2013. These schools were identified for proposed closure based on the four criteria listed within the *School Viability Assessment* procedure: enrolments, accessibility, curriculum and resourcing equity.

When a school is proposed to close, consultation occurs to ensure the school community has an opportunity to have their say about the future education options for the school community. Community consultation also allows for a process to identify local circumstances that may lead to a determination that the school should remain open.

The community consultation process is pivotal to the final Ministerial decision-making process around school closures. In 2013, the Department engaged an external consultancy company, JTA Australia, to lead and manage an open, transparent and robust community consultation process associated with the proposed school closures.

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The consultant conducted a series of community meetings in the Stuart State School community and parents, caregivers and the broader community were invited to participate. Community members were also invited to make written submissions as part of the consultation process. All submissions received by 5.00pm on 26 July 2013 were collated and compiled as part of the consultant's report to the Honourable John-Paul Langbroek MP, Minister for Education, Training and Employment.

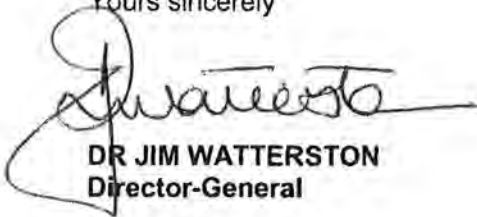
Following careful consideration of the results of the school viability assessment and the consultation process, the Minister determined that Stuart State School along with Charlton State School, Fortitude Valley State School, Old Yarranlea State School, Toowoomba South State School and Nyanda State High School would close at the end of 2013.

In regard to what happens from here with the closure of these schools, the Department will be working with staff, parents and students to ensure that the remainder of the school year continues as smoothly as possible, and that there is a supported transition to other schools for next year.

I appreciate that these school communities will be disappointed that their schools will be closed. These were extremely difficult decisions for the Minister to make. I can assure you that full and proper consideration was given to the issues outlined in submissions provided.

Should you require any further information regarding the Department's School Viability Assessment procedure, I invite you to contact Ms Lee Callum, Executive Director, Infrastructure Strategy, Research and Performance by email at lee.callum@dete.qld.gov.au or on telephone 3237 0950.

Yours sincerely



DR JIM WATTERSTON
Director-General

Ref: 13/340365



Department of
Education, Training and Employment

14 OCT 2013

Mr Graham Moloney
General Secretary
Queensland Teachers' Union
PO Box 1750
MILTON BC QLD 4064

Dear Mr Moloney *Graham*

Thank you for your letter dated 23 September 2013 regarding the school viability consultation reports.

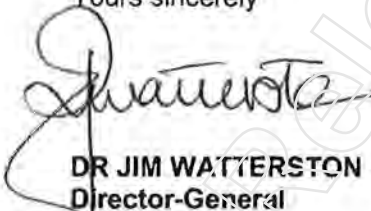
As you know, the Minister announced the outcome of the school viability assessment and consultation process on 17 September 2013. The consultation reports for all eight schools were intended to be uploaded to the Department's website on the day of the Minister's announcement, along with various other documents and communication materials. However, due to an administrative oversight, the two reports for the schools which the Minister approved to remain open—Everton Park State High School and Wyreema State School—were inadvertently not uploaded at the time.

Once the Department became aware of this oversight on 20 September 2013, steps were taken immediately to have the reports uploaded to the Department's website. All eight reports are now available at www.education.qld.gov.au/schools/school-viability/index.html.

Thank you for bringing this matter to my attention. I trust this response addresses your concerns.

Should you require any further information regarding the school viability assessment procedure or consultation process, I invite you to contact Ms Lee Callum, Executive Director, Infrastructure Strategy, Research and Performance by email at lee.callum@dete.qld.gov.au or on telephone 3237 0950.

Yours sincerely


DR JIM WATTERSTON
Director-General

Ref: 13/345551

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Page 38 redacted for the following reason:

Sch.3(6)(c)(i) – Exempt information not subject to release

Released under the
RTI Act by DETE

**Question on Notice
No. 714
Asked on 16 October 2013**

Mr Judge asked the Minister for Education, Training and Employment (MR LANGBROEK)—

QUESTION:

With reference to the assessment criteria applied to determine a school's viability, that is enrolments, accessibility, curriculum and resourcing equity, and in light of the Newman Government's position that Everton Park State High School had increased its viability by offering to sell some land and increase public access—

Why were these options not afforded to other schools?

ANSWER:

I thank the Member for his question.

I acknowledge the significant feedback and submissions provided during the recent community consultation period associated with the proposed closure of eight Queensland state schools.

The community consultation process afforded an opportunity for each school community to identify local issues and unique circumstances which may not have been captured in the Department's initial data analysis.

Following careful consideration of the results of the school viability assessment and the consultation reports, including the submissions provided by each community, I determined that six schools would close and two would remain open.

The decision to close Charlton State School, Fortitude Valley State School, Nyanda State High School, Old Yarranlea State School, Stuart State School and Toowoomba South State School was extremely difficult and not made lightly.

In considering the issues raised during the community consultation process, including submissions presented by each of the communities, I determined that both Everton Park State High School and Wyreema State School would remain open.

I considered that the Everton Park State High School community presented proposals in their written submissions that warranted further investigation, including a reduction of the school's significant footprint by excising part of the site and increased third-party access to the school site. This is not to say that the school's viability has automatically improved. The school will need to work proactively with the Department to implement a range of proposals to improve the overall viability of the school.

The ability for other schools to identify proposals similar to that put forward by Everton Park State High School was not restricted. Each school community was encouraged to put forward issues specific to their school in submissions during the consultation period.

Pages 40 through 64 redacted for the following reasons:

Sch.3(6)(c)(i) – Exempt information not subject to release

Released under the
RTI Act by DETE



Hon John-Paul Langbroek MP
Minister for Education, Training and Employment

05 DEC 2013

s.47(3)(b) – Contrary to the Public Interest

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Dear s.47(3)(b) – Contrary to

Thank you for your correspondence dated 8 October, 8 November and 16 November 2013 regarding your ongoing concerns about my decision to close six Queensland state schools. I understand you have also written to the Honourable Campbell Newman MP, on 18 November 2013 and Dr Jim Watterston, Director-General, Department of Education, Training and Employment, on 4 November 2013 about your concerns.

I note that you have signed the recently closed e-petition 2173-13: *Save Our Schools*. The Clerk of Parliament has forwarded your e-petition to me for a formal response, which will be tabled in line with Parliamentary timeframes and processes.

With regard to the decision to close Stuart State School, I can appreciate the disappointment of the school community and acknowledge your concerns regarding this situation. Please understand that this was an extremely difficult decision to make.

I note your request, within the e-petition, for an extension of 12 months to be granted to allow the six communities more time to improve the viability of the schools. However, I can advise you that the school closure date will not be changed. As the Minister for Education, Training and Employment, I have authority under the *Education (General Provisions) Act 2006*, to close a state school.

My Department's School Viability Assessment procedure provides the framework for the assessment, consultation and decision-making processes associated with school closures. This procedure was developed in consultation with key education stakeholder groups, including P&Cs Queensland and the Queensland Teachers' Union.

Each of the school communities had an opportunity to have their say in relation to the proposed school closure during the consultation period. I carefully considered the findings of the consultation reports and the school viability assessment prior to making a decision on whether a school would close or remain open. As a result of this process, it was determined that six schools would close and two schools would remain open, which demonstrates that there was no pre-determined outcome in this process.

The transition planning process in the schools approved for closure at the end of 2013 is well advanced, with students and staff being supported as they prepare to move to new schools for 2014.

I can assure you that the school viability assessment process applies to all state schools in Queensland. Following Day 8 of the school year, all schools are assessed using the school viability assessment criteria, specifically the enrolment and accessibility criteria before being categorised into groups for further analysis. However, it is important to note that I have previously stated in the public domain, there will be no further school closures during the remainder of this term of Government.

I note you have requested a statement of reasons under s.32 of the *Judicial Review Act 1991* (JR Act) in regard to the decision to close Stuart State School.

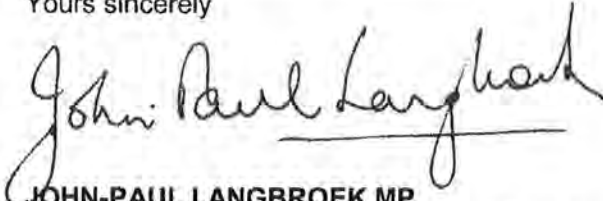
As I am advised by my Department that my decision is not a decision to which the JR Act applies, under s.33(2)(a) of the JR Act (which states that a decision maker may give written notice of their opinion about a request), I inform you that you are unable to make a request under that Act for a statement of reasons as set out in your letter of 8 October 2013.

Although I am not required to provide a statement of reasons under the JR Act, I trust that the information provided in this letter will be useful in assisting you to understand my determination to close Stuart State School.

While I understand that this information does not provide the outcome you are seeking, please be assured that my Department will be working with staff, parents and students at Stuart State School to ensure that the remainder of the school year continues as smoothly as possible, and that there is a supported transition to other schools for next year.

Should you require any further information, I invite you to contact Ms Lee Callum, Executive Director, Infrastructure Strategy, Research and Performance, on telephone 3034 4634 or by email at lee.callum@dete.qld.gov.au.

Yours sincerely



JOHN-PAUL LANGBROEK MP
Minister for Education, Training and Employment

Ref: 13/421336



Hon John-Paul Langbroek MP
Minister for Education, Training and Employment

17 DEC 2013

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Mr Neil Laurie
The Clerk of the Parliament
Parliament House
George Street
BRISBANE QLD 4000

Dear Mr Laurie

Neil,

I acknowledge receipt of e-Petition 2173-13 tabled in the Legislative Assembly of Queensland on 19 November 2013 regarding the closure of six Queensland state schools.

I acknowledge the concern of the 820 petitioners regarding the decision to close Charlton State School, Fortitude Valley State School, Nyanda State High School, Old Yarranlea State School, Stuart State School and Toowoomba South State School from the end of Term 4 2013.

While I understand that these school communities would like to stay open for a further 12 months, I can advise that the school closure date will not be changed. As the Minister for Education, Training and Employment, I have authority under the *Education (General Provisions) Act 2006* (the Act) to close a state school.

My Department's School Viability Assessment procedure provides the framework for the assessment, consultation and decision-making processes associated with school closures. This procedure was developed in consultation with key education stakeholder groups including P&Cs Queensland and the Queensland Teachers' Union.

Under the School Viability Assessment procedure, a school is identified for proposed closure based on four criteria – enrolments, accessibility, resourcing equity and curriculum. In 2013, eight schools were identified for proposed closure using these criteria and approved to proceed to community consultation. After carefully considering the results of the school viability assessment and consultation process, I made a determination that the six schools listed above would close, while two other schools, Everton Park State High School and Wyreema State School, would remain open.

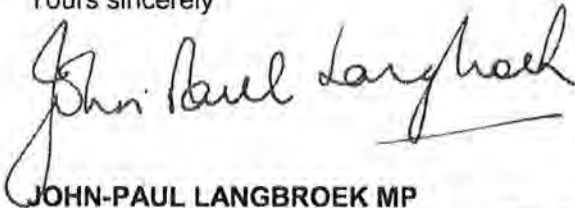
An extension of 12 months is unlikely to change the long-term viability of the schools which have been approved for closure. Therefore, in line with the requirements of the Act, my decision to close these six schools at the end of Term 4 2013 stands.

As Minister for Education, Training and Employment, it is important that I ensure our educational facilities are appropriately managed. As part of ensuring that we have the best facilities for our students, we need to identify where it is appropriate to close a particular school or where it is necessary to build a school. This planning process enables the Government to ensure that all Queensland students have access to a quality education and that our school facilities are being used to their maximum potential. This can involve making decisions that may not be popular, but are in the broader interests of all of Queensland.

I acknowledge this is a challenging time for community members affected by an approved school closure. I can assure you that I have not taken this action lightly. My Department has been working to support students, families and staff to transition to alternative schools for the start of 2014. I can advise that the transition planning process is well advanced, with school and regional office staff working hard to ensure the remainder of the 2013 school year runs as smoothly as possible.

I would like to thank petitioners for raising this matter with me and for their ongoing interest in the welfare and wellbeing of Queensland state school students.

Yours sincerely



JOHN-PAUL LANGBROEK MP
Minister for Education, Training and Employment

Ref: 13/420308

Released under the
RTI Act by DETE



Department of
Education, Training and Employment

28 NOV 2013

s.47(3)(b) – Contrary to the Public Interest

Email: s.47(3)(b) – Contrary to the Public Interest

Dear s.47(3)(b) – Contrary to the Public Interest

Thank you for your letter dated 4 November 2013 regarding the process by which Stuart State School was announced for closure.

As you are aware, following careful consideration of the results of the school viability assessment and consultation process, the Honourable John-Paul Langbroek MP, Minister for Education, Training and Employment, announced his decision to close six schools, including Stuart State School, at the end of the 2013 school year.

Prior to his announcement, the Minister's priority in the first instance was to inform the school communities of his decision through their respective Parents and Citizens' (P&C) Association Presidents and school principals. I personally contacted each of the principals to advise them of the Minister's decision, while at the same time, the Minister contacted the P&C Presidents. Only after this had occurred did the Minister inform the general public of which schools had been approved for closure by way of a media release.

I note that you would have preferred the Principal or the Department to have sought your permission to advise your children of the Minister's decision, prior to any announcement being made. While it would be difficult for Principals to seek parental permission before making announcements such as this, I will ask my Department to consider implementing an improved process for communicating with parents in the lead up to any School Viability Assessment decision, so that parents can better prepare their children for the outcome as you suggested.

Principals, as the managers of their schools, were charged with the responsibility to communicate the Minister's decision to their school communities in a way that best suited the needs of their community. In the case of Stuart State School, the Principal, Ms Allison Greenaway, opted to hold a school assembly on the day of the announcement and send a letter home to parents/caregivers.

I commend Ms Greenaway on her leadership of the school community during this challenging time and I am satisfied with the way she managed the announcement of the school closure decision. I am also satisfied with the way that Mr Richard English, North Queensland Regional Director, and other regional staff supported Ms Greenaway during the consultation process, on the day of the announcement and since that date.

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On 17 September 2013 at the school assembly, the role of the Regional Director was to provide support to the Principal, but not to overshadow her important leadership role. While it may have appeared as though the Regional Office staff in attendance at the school were not supporting Ms Greenaway and school staff, I can assure you this is not the case. Mr English and other senior regional office staff spent many hours with Ms Greenaway during the consultation process and in the lead up to the announcement to prepare for the Minister's decision and announcement. The Principal was also provided with support to assist her in preparing for the announcement to the school.

Since the day of the announcement, I am aware that additional support for students, families and staff has been in place at the school. Mr English has provided additional teacher hours so that the Principal is not required to teach classes and can focus on leading the school through the closure and transition planning process. Additional administrative support is in place to assist with the day-to-day management of the school office, and to support Ms Greenaway with various duties associated with the closure process, additional teacher aide hours have also been provided.

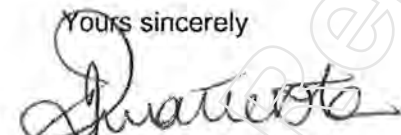
There has been an increase in the level of Guidance Officer support available at the school to support transition planning for students, with an additional Guidance Officer placed in the school full-time for a four-week period this term. The Regional Human Resources Manager has also attended the school on a number of occasions to meet with the Ms Greenaway, individual staff members and groups of staff members, and the Employee Advisor has met with staff to provide individual support.

While the decision to close Stuart State School was not one that was welcomed by the school community, I am confident this additional assistance is helping students, families and staff members to transition to new schools for the start of 2014.

Thank you again for raising your concerns with me and for your interest in the welfare of students and staff at Stuart State School. While I understand that this response does not provide the outcome you are seeking, I trust that you will accept this account of actions that have occurred since the announcement, in order to support the Stuart State School community.

Should you require any further information, I invite you to contact Ms Lee Callum, Executive Director, Infrastructure Strategy, Research and Performance, Department of Education, Training and Employment by email at lee.callum@det.qld.gov.au or on telephone 3034 4634.

Yours sincerely



DR JIM WATTERSTON
Director-General

Ref: 13/401169



Hon John-Paul Langbroek MP
Minister for Education, Training and Employment

29 NOV 2013

s.47(3)(b) – Contrary to the Public Interest

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Dear s.47(3)(b) – Contrary

Thank you for your letter dated 16 October 2013 seeking a statement of reasons regarding the decision to close Toowoomba South State School.

I understand you are disappointed in the decision to close Toowoomba South State School and acknowledge your concerns for s.47(3)(b) – Contrary to the education.

I can assure you that this was an extremely difficult decision to make and I gave full and proper consideration to all concerns and submissions received.

I note you have requested a statement of reasons under s.32 of the Judicial Review Act 1991 (JR Act) in regard to my decision to close Toowoomba South State School.

As I am advised by my Department that my decision is not a decision to which the JR Act applies, under s.33(2)(a) of the JR Act (which states that a decision maker may give written notice of their opinion about a request), I inform you that you are unable to make a request under that Act for a statement of reasons as set out in your letter of 16 October 2013.

Although I am not required to provide a statement of reasons under the JR Act, I trust that the information provided in this letter will be useful in assisting you to understand my determination to close Toowoomba South State School.

As Minister for Education, Training and Employment, it is important that I ensure our educational facilities are appropriately managed. As part of ensuring that we have the best facilities for our students, we need to identify where it is appropriate to close a particular school or where it is necessary to build a school. This planning process enables the Government to ensure that all children have access to a quality education and that our school facilities are being used to their maximum potential. This can involve making decisions that may not be popular but are in the broader interests of Queensland.

Toowoomba South State School was identified for proposed closure and underwent community consultation in line with the criteria set out in the *School Viability Assessment* procedure – enrolments, accessibility, curriculum and resourcing equity. This procedure is detailed online at www.ppr.det.qld.gov.au/corp/infrastructure/facilities/Pages/School-Viability-Assessment.aspx.

Following careful consideration of the results of the school viability assessment and the consultation report, I determined that Toowoomba South State School would close at the end of this year.

While I understand this information does not provide the outcome you are seeking, please be assured that my Department will be working with staff, parents and students to ensure that the remainder of the school year continues as smoothly as possible, and that there is a supported transition to other schools for next year.

Should you require any further information, I invite you to contact Ms Lee Callum, Executive Director, Infrastructure Strategy, Research and Performance, on telephone 3034 4634 or by email at lee.callum@dete.qld.gov.au.

Yours sincerely



JOHN-PAUL LANGBROEK MP
Minister for Education, Training and Employment

Ref: 13/392374

Released under the
RTI Act by DETE



Hon John-Paul Langbroek MP
Minister for Education, Training and Employment

6 DEC 2013

s.47(3)(b) – Contrary to the Public Interest

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Dear s.47(3)(b) – Contra

Thank you for your email dated 19 September 2013 regarding my decision to close Nyanda State High School from the end of Term 4 this year.

I appreciate you advising me of your concerns and understand that you do not agree with the decision I have reached. I also appreciate that the school community is disappointed that the school will be closed.

This was an extremely difficult decision to make. I can assure you that I gave full and proper consideration to concerns raised with me and the issues outlined in submissions provided.

I note you have requested a statement of reasons under s.32 of the *Judicial Review Act 1991* (JR Act) in regard to the decision to close Nyanda State High School.

As I am advised by my Department that my decision is not a decision to which the JR Act applies, under s.33(2)(a) of the JR Act (which states that a decision maker may give written notice of their opinion about a request), I inform you that you are unable to make a request under that Act for a statement of reasons as set out in your letter of 19 September 2013.

Although I am not required to provide a statement of reasons under the JR Act, I trust that the information provided in this letter will be useful in assisting you to understand my determination to close Nyanda State High School.

As Minister for Education, Training and Employment, it is important that I ensure our educational facilities are appropriately managed. As part of ensuring that we have the best facilities for our students, we need to identify where it is appropriate to close a particular school or where it is necessary to build a school. This planning process enables the Government to ensure that all children have access to a quality education and that our school facilities are being used to their maximum potential. This can involve making decisions that may not be popular but are in the broader interests of the State.

While it is true that my Department's *School Viability Assessment* procedure offers an option for a secondary school to be closed over an extended period—i.e. up to two years—this is not a requirement. In this case, I determined that Nyanda State High School would be closed at the end of 2013 in order to allow all students to transition to a new school sooner. Had the school remained open for another year, even for one or two year levels, there was a risk that the total student cohort would have diminished significantly in 2014, with students electing to go to a new school earlier, further limiting the educational and extra-curricular opportunities for students at Nyanda.

I note many comments have been made in the media about the closure of schools being a revenue raising exercise by the Government. However, when a school is identified for closure the focus is not around making money. While it is likely that school sites that are no longer required will not be retained by the State Government, I can assure you that any funds realised from the sale of a site would be used for school infrastructure, including supporting schools in the local communities. This reinvestment ensures that the educational facilities across the state continue to provide a world-class learning environment that helps students to achieve positive outcomes.

As part of the Government's ongoing commitment to education in Queensland, we also need to make sure our schools are properly maintained, something that has not been addressed in previous years. Therefore, in the 2013-14 State Budget the Newman Government provided an additional \$100 million, over and above the previous \$200 million commitment, to reduce the maintenance backlogs in our schools.

While I understand that the increased funding for maintenance commitments will not address your desire for Nyanda State High School to remain open, I trust you can appreciate that we are working to ensure that all Queensland students are able to learn in appropriate learning environments.

While all efforts were made to visit each of the eight schools proposed for closure during the consultation period, due to my portfolio commitments I was unable to attend each one. However, I can assure you that full consideration was given to the report supplied by the independent consultant which can be viewed on the Department's website at: www.education.qld.gov.au/schools/school-viability/index.html.

In regard to what happens from here with the closure of Nyanda State High School, your school and my Department will be working with staff, parents and students to ensure that the remainder of the school year continues as smoothly as possible, and that there is a supported transition to other schools for next year.

I encourage you to make full use of the support available at your current or new school to discuss and assist in planning for the transition. Guidance Officer support is available to your sons to assist with the transition process as required.

Should you require any further information, I invite you to contact Ms Lee Callum, Executive Director, Infrastructure Strategy, Research and Performance on telephone 3237 0950 or by email at lee.callum@det.qld.gov.au.

Yours sincerely



JOHN-PAUL LANGBROEK MP
Minister for Education, Training and Employment

Ref: 13/345206

**MESU MINISTERIAL APPROVAL
PREMIERS LIAISON LETTER REQUEST**

Document type **PREMIERS REQUEST FOR RESPONSE LETTER**

Topic: s.47(3)(b) – Contrary to the Pu Closure of Nyanda SHS

- ☐ Initiated by DETE for DPC/Premier
- ☐ Requested by MO
- ☒ Requested by DPC

Action required: **To be provided to DPC: ASAP**



Minister's Office

21.11.13

Date

Released under the
RTI Act by DETE

For reply please quote: DETE/SHP – TF/13/21893 – Department Tracking No 13/383189

s.47(3)(b) – Contrary to the Public Interest

Dear s.47(3)(b) – Contrary

Thank you for your further email of 3 October about various issues surrounding the closure of Nyanda State High School.

After receiving your email, I contacted my Cabinet colleague the Honourable John-Paul Langbroek MP, Minister for Education, Training and Employment (DETE), who told me that you had also written to him directly about your concerns. Therefore, I wish to also respond on Minister Langbroek's behalf.

Please be assured that the Queensland Government is committed to providing the best possible education for all children in our state, regardless of where they live or their circumstances. As part of ensuring that we have the best facilities for students, and in addition to the key initiatives highlighted in the Budget, we needed to identify where it was appropriate to close a particular school or where it was necessary to build a school. This planning process enables the Government to ensure that all children have access to a quality education and that our school facilities are being used to their maximum potential.

As you would be aware, eight Queensland state schools were identified for community consultation as part of the Department of Education, Training and Employment's (DETE) school viability assessment procedure. The criteria used for the school viability assessment program took account of the schools' enrolments, accessibility, curriculum and resourcing equity. To ensure that the process was independent, open and transparent, DETE engaged an external consultant, JTA Australia, to lead and manage the consultation process.

JTA compiled its final report, detailing findings of the consultation process, and on 17 September 2013, following careful consideration of the results of the school viability assessment and the independent consultation reports, the Minister for Education, Training and Employment announced that six schools will close at the end of 2013. These schools are Charlton State School, Fortitude Valley State School, Nyanda State High School which was formed in 1997 following the amalgamation of Acacia Ridge State High School and Salisbury State High School, Old Yarranlea State School, Stuart State School and Toowoomba South State School.

I want to assure you that the Government is committed to genuine community consultation. This was demonstrated in our decision not to proceed with the closure of Everton Park State High School and Wyreema State School, or the proposed amalgamation of Brisbane State High School and Coorparoo Secondary College. With this in mind there has been a firm commitment made that there will be no further school closures as a result of any School Viability Assessment during this term of government.

While I can appreciate your concern about the effect such a closure would have on any community, I hope you can understand the importance of the Government being able to manage Queensland schools effectively. Sometimes this can mean difficult decisions need to be made. Please be assured that DETE will be working closely with the schools identified for closure, and their communities, to ensure that all students are placed in a local school.

The appointment of a Principal Project Officer to assist with this transition occurred in line with the announcement of closures. Parents of affected students have been provided with resources to assist them in choosing the nearest neighbouring schools that suits the needs of their child. The Department is working to support students and families in the transition to new schools for 2014, with support from Regional Office and Guidance Officers. School staff are also being supported through the transition with access to Human Resources staff and the Employee Assistance Service. All permanent staff will be transitioned to alternative locations. Human Resources staff are working with all school staff to discuss placement preferences and options.

Students enrolled in a school scheduled for closure prior to the Minister's announcement will be able to attend the neighbouring school of their choice from 2014 in most cases. However, due to individual schooling history, there may be a small number of students who will not be able to be accommodated at the school of their choice. In these cases, school/regional staff will work with the student and their family to negotiate an alternative school.

A detailed analysis of the curriculum offered at surrounding neighbouring high schools to Nyanda State High School was part of the process undertaken by DETE prior to the announcement of any school closures. Future needs of students can be met within the curriculum offered at these schools.

As a result of these school closures, there will be changes to catchment areas for neighbouring schools for the 2014 school year onwards in order to maintain equidistant boundaries. Maps outlining the realigned catchment boundaries of neighbouring schools are available on the Department's website at: <http://education.qld.gov.au/schools/school-viability/index.html> and will indicate to you which state school is now your local school.

While it is true that the DETE School Viability Assessment procedure offers an option for a secondary school to be closed over an extended period—i.e. up to two years—this is not a requirement. In this case, it was determined that Nyanda State High School would be closed at the end of 2013 in order to allow all students to transition to a new school sooner.

Had the school remained open for another year, there was a risk that the total student cohort would have diminished significantly in 2014, with students electing to go to a new school earlier, further limiting the educational and extra-curricular opportunities for students at Nyanda.

I note you have referenced a judicial review process being led by the affected Year 11 students. Minister Langbroek has confirmed that he has received numerous requests for a statement of reasons under s.32 of the *Judicial Review Act 1991* (JR Act) in regard to his decision to close Nyanda State High School.

The Minister has advised that his decision is not a decision to which the JR Act applies, under s.33(2)(a) of the JR Act (which states that a decision maker may give written notice of their opinion about a request), I inform you that you are unable to make a request under that Act for a statement of reasons as set out in your letter of 3 October 2013.

Although the Minister is not required to provide a statement of reasons under the JR Act, I trust that the information provided in this letter will be useful in assisting you to understand his determination to close Nyanda State High School.

In reference to the Nyanda Community Garden, the Principal, Principal Project Officer, and Regional Director will work with all community stakeholders regarding future arrangements following Term 4.

Given the significant nature of the artwork in the Nyanda State High School art collection, its value and its long association with the school and the wider community, a current valuation is being conducted by the Department. The current status of the collection indicates that restoration work is required to bring the pieces up to gallery standards. It is the intention of the Department that the complete collection remains within the Salisbury/Acacia Ridge community for all to enjoy. Currently, the school and region are negotiating with art galleries and councils to find a suitable place to display the works.

You may also be interested to know that any funds realised from a future sale of schools will be reinvested back into schools, making sure that those facilities are providing a world-class learning environment that help students to achieve positive outcomes.

Again, thank you for writing to me about your concerns and I hope this information is of assistance to you.

Should you require any further information, I invite you to contact Ms Lee Callum, Executive Director, Infrastructure Strategy, Research and Performance, Department of Education, Training and Employment, by email at lee.callum@dete.qld.gov.au or on telephone 3034 4634.

Yours sincerely

CAMPBELL NEWMAN



Hon John-Paul Langbroek MP
Minister for Education, Training and Employment

7 JAN 2014

s.47(3)(b) – Contrary to the Public Interest

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Dear s.47(3)(b) – Contr

Thank you for your letter dated 9 October 2013 seeking a statement of reasons regarding the decision to close Old Yarranlea State School. I note you have also written to Dr Jim Watterston, Director-General, regarding this matter. The Director-General has asked me to respond on his behalf.

I understand you are disappointed in the decision to close Old Yarranlea State School and acknowledge your concerns for your children's education.

I can assure you that this was an extremely difficult decision to make and I gave full and proper consideration to all concerns and submissions received.

I note you have requested a statement of reasons under s.32 of the Judicial Review Act 1991 (JR Act) in regard to my decision to close Old Yarranlea State School.

As I am advised by my Department that my decision is not a decision to which the JR Act applies, under s.33(2)(a) of the JR Act (which states that a decision maker may give written notice of their opinion about a request), I inform you that you are unable to make a request under that Act for a statement of reasons as set out in your letter of 9 October 2013.

Although I am not required to provide a statement of reasons under the JR Act, I trust that the information provided in this letter will be useful in assisting you to understand my determination to close Old Yarranlea State School.

As Minister for Education, Training and Employment, it is important that I ensure our educational facilities are appropriately managed. As part of ensuring that we have the best facilities for our students, we need to identify where it is appropriate to close a particular school or where it is necessary to build a school. This planning process enables the Government to ensure that all children have access to a quality education and that our school facilities are being used to their maximum potential. This can involve making decisions that may not be popular but are in the broader interests of Queensland.

Old Yarranlea State School was identified for proposed closure and underwent community consultation in line with the criteria set out in the *School Viability Assessment* procedure – enrolments, accessibility, curriculum and resourcing equity. This procedure is detailed online at www.ppr.det.qld.gov.au/corp/infrastructure/facilities/Pages/School-Viability-Assessment.aspx.

Following careful consideration of the results of the school viability assessment and the consultation report, I determined that Old Yarranlea State School would close at the end of this year.

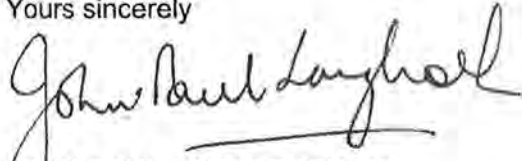
In relation to the *Old Yarranlea State School Admission Guidelines (September 2000)*, I can advise that as the Minister for Education, Training and Employment, I have the authority to close a Queensland state school under the *Education (General Provisions) Act 2006*. I can confirm that all necessary legislative requirements to formally close the school have been met.

My Department is working to support students and families affected by the closure of Old Yarranlea State School. All students are being supported to transition to new state schools in 2014 with assistance from the Metropolitan Regional Office and guidance officers.

While I understand this information does not provide the outcome you are seeking, please be assured that my Department will be working with staff, parents and students to ensure that the remainder of the school year continues as smoothly as possible, and that there is a supported transition to other schools for next year.

Should you require any further information, I invite you to contact Ms Lee Callum, Executive Director, Infrastructure Strategy, Research and Performance, on telephone 3034 4634 or by email at lee.callum@dete.qld.gov.au.

Yours sincerely



JOHN-PAUL LANGBROEK MP
Minister for Education, Training and Employment

Ref: 13/377065



Hon John-Paul Langbroek MP
Minister for Education, Training and Employment

22 NOV 2013

s.47(3)(b) – Contrary to the Public Interest

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Dear [s.47(3)(b) – Contrary to the Public Interest]

Thank you for your email dated 30 September and your letter of 9 October 2013 regarding my decision to close Old Yarranlea State School from the end of Term 4 this year.

I understand you are disappointed that the school will be closed. I appreciate you advising me of your concerns and that you do not agree with the decision I have reached.

I can assure you this was an extremely difficult decision to make. However, I gave full and proper consideration to concerns raised with me and the issues outlined in submissions provided.

I note you have requested a statement of reasons under s.32 of the *Judicial Review Act 1991* (JR Act) in regard to my decision to close Old Yarranlea State School.

As I am advised by my Department that my decision is not a decision to which the JR Act applies, under s.33(2)(a) of the JR Act (which states that a decision maker may give written notice of their opinion about a request), I inform you that you are unable to make a request under that Act for a statement of reasons as set out in your letter of 30 September 2013.

Although I am not required to provide a statement of reasons under the JR Act, I trust that the information provided in this letter will be useful in assisting you to understand my determination to close Old Yarranlea State School.

As Minister, I have the authority to close a Queensland state school, under the *Education (General Provisions) Act 2006*. With reference to your concerns regarding the agreement with Griffith University, I can confirm that all necessary legislative requirements to formally close this school have been met.

I note your comments about one-teacher schools and multi-age teaching. While I acknowledge that there are many unique aspects of small schools and the necessity to service rural and remote communities, these schools are less likely to have the flexibility, breadth and economies of larger schools in delivering education services.

I also note your concerns about the closure timeframe for Nyanda State High School. While it is true that my Department's *School Viability Assessment* procedure offers an option for a secondary school to be closed over an extended period—i.e. up to two years—this is not a requirement, but an option. In this case, I determined that Nyanda State High School would be closed at the end of 2013 in order to allow all students to transition to a new school sooner. Had the school remained open for another year, even for one or two year levels, there was a risk that the total student cohort would have diminished significantly in 2014, with students electing to go to a new school earlier, further limiting the educational and extra-curricular opportunities for students at Nyanda.

As Minister for Education, Training and Employment, it is important that I ensure our educational facilities are appropriately managed. As part of ensuring that we have the best facilities for our students, we need to identify where it is appropriate to close a particular school or where it is necessary to build a school. This planning process enables the Government to ensure that all children have access to a quality education and that our school facilities are being used to their maximum potential. At times, this can involve making decisions that may not be popular but are in the broader interests of the State.

In addition, to ensure schools are being built where they are needed, the Queensland Schools Planning Commission was established to develop a 20 year demand map to identify where new school facilities are required. This is the first time that the State Government, along with the Catholic and Independent education sectors, and local government, have worked together to coordinate future school locations and expansion of existing schools.

As a result of this, the Government has announced its plan to deliver 11 new schools, three secondary and eight primary schools, in areas where facilities will be needed to accommodate student growth. We are working towards having the first of these schools open for the 2015 school year.

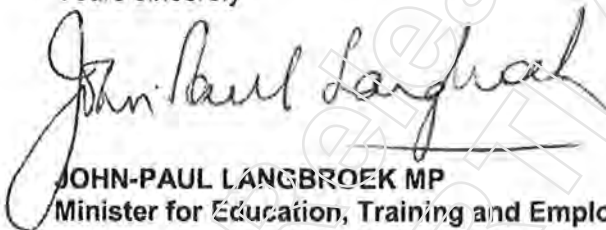
As part of the Government's ongoing commitment to education in Queensland, we also need to make sure our schools are properly maintained, something that has not been addressed in previous years. Therefore, in the 2013-14 State Budget the Newman Government provided an additional \$100 million, over and above the previous \$200 million commitment in 2012-13, to reduce the maintenance backlogs in our schools.

While I understand that the building of new schools and investment in maintaining existing schools will not address your desire for Old Yarranlea State School to remain open, I trust you can appreciate that we are working to ensure that all Queensland students are able to learn in appropriate learning environments.

In regard to what happens from here with the closure of Old Yarranlea State School, your school and my Department will be working with staff, parents and students to ensure that the remainder of the school year continues as smoothly as possible, and that there is a supported transition to other schools for next year.

Should you require any further information, I invite you to contact Ms Lee Callum, Executive Director, Infrastructure Strategy, Research and Performance, by email at lee.callum@dete.qld.gov.au or on telephone 3034 4634.

Yours sincerely



JOHN-PAUL LANGBROEK MP
Minister for Education, Training and Employment

Ref: 13/351700



Hon John-Paul Langbroek MP
Minister for Education, Training and Employment

Ms Mary-Anne Burns
President
Parents and Citizens' Association
Nyanda State High School
19 Fairlie Terrace
SALISBURY QLD 4107

22 NOV 2013

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Dear Ms Burns

Thank you for your letters dated 18 and 23 September 2013, regarding my decision to close Nyanda State High School from the end of Term 4 this year. I acknowledge that you also wrote to the Honourable Campbell Newman MP, Premier on 20 September 2013 about this issue. Further, Mr Carl Judge MP, Member for Yeerongpilly forwarded correspondence to me on your behalf on 11 October 2013, for consideration.

I appreciate you advising me of your concerns and understand that you do not agree with the decision I have reached. I also acknowledge that the school community is disappointed that the school will be closed.

This was an extremely difficult decision to make. I can assure you that I gave full and proper consideration to concerns raised with me and the issues outlined in submissions provided.

I note you have requested a statement of reasons under s.32 of the *Judicial Review Act 1991* (JR Act) in regard to my decision to close Nyanda State High School.

As I am advised by my Department that my decision is not a decision to which the JR Act applies, under s.33(2)(a) of the JR Act (which states that a decision maker may give written notice of their opinion about a request), I inform you that you are unable to make a request under that Act for a statement of reasons as set out in your letter of 23 September 2013.

Although I am not required to provide a statement of reasons under the JR Act, I trust that the information provided in this letter will be useful in assisting you to understand my determination to close Nyanda State High School.

As Minister for Education, Training and Employment, it is important that I ensure our educational facilities are appropriately managed. As part of ensuring that we have the best facilities for our students, we need to identify where it is appropriate to close a particular school or where it is necessary to build a school. This planning process enables the Government to ensure that all children have access to a quality education and that our school facilities are being used to their maximum potential. This can involve making decisions that may not be popular but are in the broader interests of the State.

While it is correct that my Department's *School Viability Assessment* procedure offers an option for a secondary school to be closed over an extended period—i.e. up to two years—this is not a requirement. In this case, I determined that Nyanda State High School would be closed at the end of 2013 in order to allow all students to transition to a new school sooner. Had the school remained open for another year, even for one or two year levels, there was a risk that the total student cohort would have diminished significantly in 2014, with students electing to go to a new school earlier, further limiting the educational and extra-curricular opportunities for students at Nyanda.

The Department is working to support students and families in the transition to new schools for 2014, with support from Regional Office and school staff, including Guidance Officers. This Transition Planning process will involve assisting students and parents to select the most suitable school which meets a range of needs, including subject choice, accessibility based on location and transport options and extra-curricular activities. School staff are also being supported through the transition with access to Human Resourcing and Employee Assistance Services.

I note many comments have been made in the media about the closure of schools being a revenue raising exercise by the Government. However, when a school is identified for closure the focus is not around making money. While it is likely that school sites that are no longer required will not be retained by the State Government, I can assure you that any funds realised from the sale of a site would be used for investment in new and upgraded school infrastructure. This reinvestment ensures that the educational facilities across the state continue to provide a world-class learning environment that helps students to achieve positive outcomes.

To ensure schools are being built where they are needed, the Queensland Schools Planning Commission was established to develop a 20 year demand map to identify where new school facilities are required. This is the first time that the State Government, along with the Catholic and Independent education sectors, and local government, have worked together to coordinate future school locations and expansion of existing schools.

In addition, the Government has announced its plan to deliver 11 new schools, three secondary and eight primary schools, in areas where facilities will be needed to accommodate student growth. We are working towards having the first of these schools open for the 2015 school year.

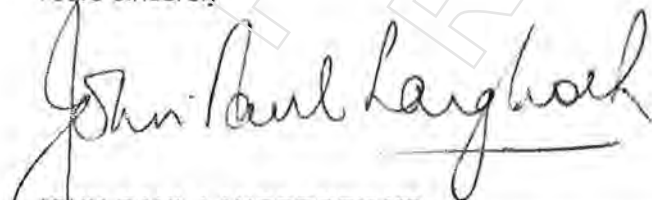
As part of the Government's ongoing commitment to education in Queensland, we also need to make sure our schools are properly maintained, something that has not been addressed in previous years. Therefore, in the 2013-14 State Budget the Newman Government provided an additional \$100 million, over and above the previous \$200 million commitment in 2012-13, to reduce the maintenance backlogs in our schools.

While I understand that the building of new schools or the increased funding for maintenance commitments will not address your desire for Nyanda State High School to remain open, I trust you can appreciate that we must operate in the broader, statewide context.

My Department will be working with staff, parents and students to ensure that the remainder of the school year continues as smoothly as possible, and that there is a supported transition to other schools for next year.

Should you require any further information, I invite you to contact Ms Lee Callum, Executive Director, Infrastructure Strategy, Research and Performance, on telephone 3034 4634 or by email at lee.callum@det.qld.gov.au.

Yours sincerely



JOHN-PAUL LANGBROEK MP
Minister for Education, Training and Employment

Ref: 13/342711

CC: Mr Carl Judge MP, Member for Yeerongpilly

DOT POINTS FOR PREMIER CORRESPONDENCE – Minister's decision to keep open Wyreema State School

- Eight state schools across Queensland were identified for proposed closure under the Department of Education, Training and Employment's (DETE's) 2013 School Viability Assessment process.
- The schools proposed for closure were - Charlton State School; Everton Park State High School; Fortitude Valley State School; Nyanda State High School; Old Yarranlea State School; Stuart State School; Toowoomba South State School; and Wyreema State School.
- These schools were approved to proceed to community consultation regarding proposed closure based on the four criteria outlined in the School Viability Assessment procedure – enrolments, accessibility, curriculum and resourcing equity.
- In particular, each of these schools was located in metropolitan or provincial zones with at least one alternative state school within a 5km radius and had a low number of students attending from the local catchment area over a five-year period.
- During the consultation period, all school communities were afforded an opportunity to identify local issues and unique circumstances which may not have been captured in the Department's initial data analysis.
- At the conclusion of the community consultation process, which was led by an independent consultancy company, the Minister for Education, Training and Employment determined that both Wyreema State School and Everton Park State High School would remain open while the remaining six schools would close.
- In the case of Wyreema State School, the school community identified that low enrolment numbers may be due to regular changes in school principals which has been unsettling for students and staff.
- Further, the Queensland Schools Planning Commission (QSPC) has recently developed detailed demand maps which indicate there will be significant growth in the Cambooya and Wyreema area. This analysis confirmed there is anticipated growth in the broader area, but not significantly in the local Wyreema State School catchment. Between now and 2031 the number of primary school-aged student in this broader area will grow from around 500 to around 900 -- i.e. almost double.
- The Wyreema State School community is now presented with a great opportunity to find ways to build a strong and viable school that takes advantage of the predicted primary-school aged student growth in the Cambooya and Wyreema area.

Contact Officer:

Dave Sullivan
Director, Infrastructure Strategy Schools
Infrastructure Strategy, Research and Performance
3034 4635

Approved by:

Jeff Hunt
Deputy Director-General
Corporate Services
3405 6329





Hon John-Paul Langbroek MP
Minister for Education, Training and Employment

22 NOV 2013

s.47(3)(b) – Contrary to the Public Interest

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Dear s.47(3)(b) – Contrary

Thank you for your email dated 20 September 2013 regarding my decision to close Nyanda State High School (NSHS) from the end of Term 4 this year.

I appreciate you advising me of your concerns and understand that you do not agree with the decision I have reached. I also appreciate that the school community is disappointed that the school will be closed.

This was an extremely difficult decision to make. I can assure you that I gave full and proper consideration to concerns raised with me and the issues outlined in submissions provided.

I note you have requested a statement of reasons under s.32 of the *Judicial Review Act 1991* (JR Act) in regard to my decision to close NSHS.

As I am advised by my Department that my decision is not a decision to which the JR Act applies, under s.33(2)(a) of the JR Act (which states that a decision maker may give written notice of their opinion about a request), I inform you that you are unable to make a request under that Act for a statement of reasons as set out in your letter of 20 September 2013.

Although I am not required to provide a statement of reasons under the JR Act, I trust that the information provided in this letter will be useful in assisting you to understand my determination to close Nyanda State High School.

While it is true that my Department's *School Viability Assessment* procedure offers an option for a secondary school to be closed over an extended period—i.e. up to two years—this is not a requirement. In this case, I determined that Nyanda State High School would be closed at the end of 2013 in order to allow all students to transition to a new school sooner. Had the school remained open for another year, even for one or two year levels, it was likely that the total student cohort would have diminished significantly in 2014, with students electing to go to a new school earlier, further limiting the educational and extra-curricular opportunities for students at Nyanda.

As Minister for Education, Training and Employment, it is important that I ensure our educational facilities are appropriately managed. As part of ensuring that we have the best facilities for our students, we need to identify where it is appropriate to close a particular school or where it is necessary to build a school. This planning process enables the Government to ensure that all children have access to a quality education and that our school facilities are being used to their maximum potential. This can involve making decisions that may not be popular but are in the broader interests of the State.

I note many comments have been made in the media about the closure of schools being a revenue raising exercise by the Government. However, when a school is identified for closure the focus is not around making money. While it is likely that school sites that are no longer required will not be retained by the State Government, I can assure you that any funds realised from the sale of a site would be used for investing in new and upgraded school infrastructure. This reinvestment ensures that the educational facilities across the state continue to provide a world-class learning environment that helps students to achieve positive outcomes.

In addition, to ensure schools are being built where they are needed, the Queensland Schools Planning Commission was established to develop a 20 year demand map to identify where new school facilities are required. This is the first time that the State Government, along with the Catholic and Independent education sectors, and local government, have worked together to coordinate future school locations and expansion of existing schools.

As a result of this, the Government has announced its plan to deliver 11 new schools, three secondary and eight primary schools, in areas where facilities will be needed to accommodate student growth. We are working towards having the first of these schools open for the 2015 school year.

As part of the Government's ongoing commitment to education in Queensland, we also need to make sure our schools are properly maintained, something that has not been addressed in previous years. Therefore, in the 2013-14 State Budget the Newman Government provided an additional \$100 million, over and above the previous \$200 million commitment in 2012-13, to reduce the maintenance backlogs in our schools.

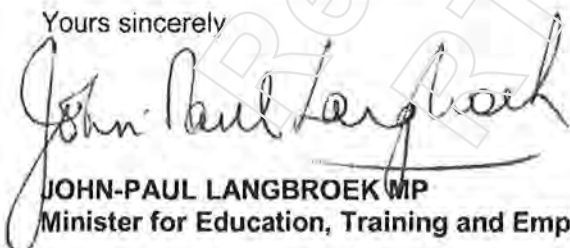
While I understand that the building of new schools or the increased funding for maintenance commitments will not address your desire for NSHS to remain open, I trust you can appreciate that we are working to ensure that all Queensland students are able to learn in appropriate learning environments.

In regard to what happens from here with the closure of NSHS, your school and my Department will be working with staff, parents and students to ensure that the remainder of the school year continues as smoothly as possible, and that there is a supported transition to other schools for next year.

I thank you for raising your concerns with me and trust you will find this information of assistance.

Should you require any further information, I invite you to contact Ms Lee Callum, Executive Director, Infrastructure Strategy, Research and Performance, on telephone 3034 4634 or by email at lee.callum@det.qld.gov.au.

Yours sincerely



JOHN-PAUL LANGBROEK MP
Minister for Education, Training and Employment

Ref: 13/361199



Office of the Premier

For reply please quote: *DETE/SHP – TF/13/21967 – DOC/13/197282*

08 NOV 2013

s.47(3)(b) – Contrary to the Public Interest

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Dear s.47(3)(b) – C

Thank you for your email of 4 October about the closure of Old Yarrarlea State School (OYSS). I have been requested to reply to you on the Premier's behalf and I apologise for the delay in responding.

The Premier appreciates you telling him about your concerns and he acknowledges your involvement since the school's foundation. He understands that you do not agree with the decision that the Honourable John Paul Langbroek MP, Minister for Education, Training and Employment has reached and appreciates that you are disappointed that the school will be closed.

As part of ensuring that we have the best facilities for our students, the Government needs to identify where it is appropriate to close a particular school or where it is necessary to build a school. This planning process enables the Government to ensure that all children have access to a quality education and that our school facilities are being used to their maximum potential. You may also be interested to know that this Government has started planning for a new secondary school at Highfields and building ten new schools at Pimpama, Burpengary, Pallara, Ripley Valley, Springfield, Griffin, Bellbird Park, Redbank Plains and two schools at Caboolture.

You would be aware that eight Queensland state schools were identified for community consultation under the school viability assessment program announced early this year. The criteria used took account of the schools' enrolments, accessibility, curriculum and resourcing equity. To ensure that the process was independent, open and transparent, the Department of Education, Training and Employment (DETE) engaged an external consultant, JTA Australia, to lead and manage the consultation process.

By way of comparison, the previous Government closed on average seven schools per year. In fact, the Goss, Beattie and Bligh governments closed 139 facilities between them over their 20 years in power.



**Queensland
Government**

The Premier acknowledges the submissions made by school community members, Griffith University, the local Member and other stakeholders and appreciates the time and effort taken to prepare each submission. However, after careful consideration of community feedback and submissions, the results of the viability assessment and the consultation reports, Minister Langbroek made the difficult decision that OYSS and five other schools did not meet the criteria to be viable.

The Government recognises the need for a long-term strategy and has established the Queensland Schools Planning Commission to develop a 20-year demand map to identify where new school facilities are required. This is the first time that the State Government, along with the Catholic and independent education sectors, and local government, have worked together to coordinate future school locations and expansion of existing schools.

The Premier agrees with you about the necessity to service rural and remote communities and the desirability of providing teacher training in operating multi-age teaching in one-teacher schools. While OYSS has been an effective tool in preparing pre-service teachers for working in one-teacher schools, please be assured DETE will continue to develop and deliver a range of other strategies to support this specialist teacher training, such as the *Take the lead: Aspiring principals' leadership and development program*.

The Premier also agrees with you that OYSS is a unique school and is advised that members of the community have expressed an interest in investigating whether there might be alternative providers who could continue to operate the school. If you would like further information on this, please contact Ms Tracey Jarrett, Manager, Non-State School Accreditation on telephone (07) 3234 1627 or by email at tracey.jarrett@dete.qld.gov.au.

Also let me assure you that DETE will be working closely with all schools identified for closure, as well as their community, to ensure that the remainder of the school year continues as smoothly as possible and that all students are placed in an alternative school and supported in the transition.

Should you require any further information, I encourage you to contact Ms Lee Callum, Executive Director, Infrastructure Strategy, Research and Performance, DETE on telephone (07) 3237 0950 or by email at lee.callum@dete.qld.gov.au.

Again, thank you for writing to the Premier about your concerns and I hope this information is of assistance to you.

Yours sincerely



MICHAEL PRAWN
DIRECTOR OF POLICY



Hon John-Paul Langbroek MP
Minister for Education, Training and Employment

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19 NOV 2013

s.47(3)(b) – Contrary to the Public Interest

Dear s.47(3)(b) – Cont

Thank you for your letter dated 28 September 2013 regarding my decision to close Old Yarranlea State School from the end of Term 4 this year.

I understand you are disappointed that the school will be closed and I appreciate you advising me of your concerns. I note that you have requested a more detailed explanation for my decision to close Old Yarranlea State School.

As you know, the school was identified for proposed closure as it did not meet the criteria outlined in the *School Viability Assessment* procedure which are enrolments, accessibility, curriculum and resourcing equity.

I note your concerns regarding the utilisation rates of the schools approved for closure. While enrolment and school capacity information were considered as part of the *School Viability Assessment* process, I can assure you that I am aware of the built capacity restrictions at Old Yarranlea State School. I understand that the school currently has an agreed enrolment cap of 18 students and that the school community was willing to expand this to 24 students in future years. Likewise, in relation to the accessibility criteria, I am aware that Old Yarranlea State School does not have a catchment area like other state schools and has a selective enrolment process.

In terms of resourcing equity, the fact remains that the cost per student per year at Old Yarranlea State School is two-and-a-half times more than the Queensland average. While I acknowledge that increasing the enrolment count from 18 students to 24 students from next year would have decreased costs, the cost per student per year would still not have been comparable to nearby schools.

The 'internal holding lines' you referred to in your letter, were drafted by my Department to outline, for internal stakeholders, some of the reasons that schools had been identified for proposed closure. It was by no means a formal report, nor a comprehensive account of all issues associated with the *School Viability Assessment* process.

Following consultation with the community, and upon careful consideration of the results of the viability assessment and the consultation reports, I determined that Old Yarranlea State School would close at the end of this year. I can assure you this was an extremely difficult

decision to make. However, I gave full and proper consideration to concerns raised with me and the issues outlined in submissions provided.

As Minister for Education, Training and Employment, it is important that I ensure our educational facilities are appropriately managed. As part of ensuring that we have the best facilities for our students, we need to identify where it is appropriate to close a particular school or where it is necessary to build a school.

This planning process enables the Government to ensure that all children have access to a quality education and that our school facilities are being used to their maximum potential. At times, this can involve making decisions that may not be popular but are in the broader interests of all Queenslanders.

As Minister, I have the authority to close a Queensland state school, under the *Education (General Provisions) Act 2006* (the Act). With reference to your concerns regarding the agreement with Griffith University, I can confirm that all necessary legislative requirements to formally close this school have been met.

I note your comments about one-teacher schools and multi-age teaching. While I acknowledge that there are many unique aspects of small schools and the necessity to service rural and remote communities, these schools are less likely to have the flexibility, breadth and economies of larger schools in delivering education services. While Old Yarranlea State School has been an effective tool in preparing pre-service teachers for working in one-teacher schools, my Department will continue to develop and deliver a range of other strategies to support this specialist teacher training, such as the *'Take the Lead: Aspiring Principals' leadership and development program*.

To ensure schools are being built where they are needed, the Queensland Schools Planning Commission was established to develop a 20 year demand map to identify where new school facilities are required. This is the first time that the State Government, along with the Catholic and Independent education sectors, and local government, have worked together to coordinate future school locations and expansion of existing schools.

As a result of this, the Government has announced its plan to deliver 11 new schools, three secondary and eight primary schools, in areas where facilities will be needed to accommodate student growth. We are working towards having the first of these schools open for the 2015 school year.

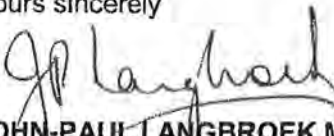
As part of the Government's ongoing commitment to education in Queensland, we also need to make sure our schools are properly maintained, something that has not been addressed in previous years. Therefore, in the 2013-14 State Budget the Newman Government provided an additional \$100 million, over and above the previous \$200 million commitment in 2012-13, to reduce the maintenance backlogs in our schools.

While I understand that the building of new schools and investment in maintaining existing schools will not address your desire for Old Yarranlea State School to remain open, I trust you can appreciate that we are working to ensure that all Queensland students are able to learn in appropriate learning environments.

With regard to what happens from here with the closure of Old Yarranlea State School, your school and my Department will be working with staff, parents and students to ensure that the remainder of the school year continues as smoothly as possible, and that there is a supported transition to other schools for next year.

Should you require any further information, I invite you to contact Ms Lee Callum, Executive Director, Infrastructure Strategy, Research and Performance, by email at lee.callum@dete.qld.gov.au or on telephone 3034 4634.

Yours sincerely



JOHN-PAUL LANGBROEK MP
Minister for Education, Training and Employment

Ref: 13/374574

Released under the
RTI Act by DETE



Hon John-Paul Langbroek MP
Minister for Education, Training and Employment

22 NOV 2013

s.47(3)(b) – Contrary to the Public Interest

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Dear s.47(3)(b) – Contrary to

Thank you for your letter regarding my decision to close Nyanda State High School from the end of Term 4 this year.

I appreciate you advising me of your concerns and understand that you do not agree with the decision I have reached and that the school community is disappointed that the school will be closed.

I can assure you this was an extremely difficult decision to make and that I gave full and proper consideration to concerns raised with me and the issues outlined in submissions provided.

I note you have requested a statement of reasons under s.32 of the Judicial Review Act 1991 (JR Act) in regard to my decision to close Nyanda State High School.

As I am advised by my Department that my decision is not a decision to which the JR Act applies, under s.33(2)(a) of the JR Act (which states that a decision maker may give written notice of their opinion about a request), I inform you that you are unable to make a request under that Act for a statement of reasons as set out in your letter of 24 September 2013.

Although I am not required to provide a statement of reasons under the JR Act, I trust that the information provided in this letter will be useful in assisting you to understand my determination to close Nyanda State High School.

As Minister for Education, Training and Employment, it is important that I ensure our educational facilities are appropriately managed. As part of ensuring that we have the best facilities for our students, we need to identify where it is appropriate to close a particular school or where it is necessary to build a school. This planning process enables the Government to ensure that all children have access to a quality education and that our school facilities are being used to their maximum potential. This can involve making decisions that may not be popular but are in the broader interests of Queensland.

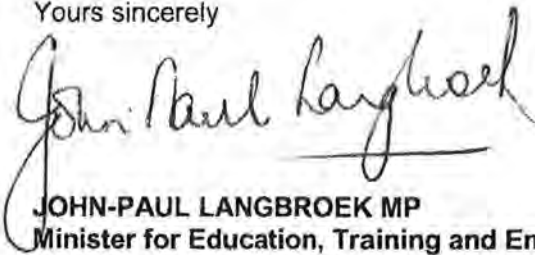
While it is true that my Department's *School Viability Assessment* procedure offers an option for a secondary school to be closed over an extended period—i.e. up to two years—this is not a requirement. In this case, I determined that Nyanda State High School would be closed at the end of 2013 in order to allow all students to transition to a new school sooner. Had the school remained open for another year, there was a risk that the total student cohort would have diminished significantly in 2014, with students electing to go to a new school earlier, further limiting the educational and extra-curricular opportunities for students at Nyanda.

The Department is working to support students and families in the transition to new schools for 2014, with support from Regional Office and Guidance Officers. School staff are also being supported through the transition with access to Human Resourcing and Employee Assistance Services.

I understand your son is being supported through this transition process with assistance from the Head of Special Education Services (HOSES) and the Senior Guidance Officer at Nyanda State High School. I am advised that you are considering a transfer to either Glenala State High School or MacGregor State High School.

Should you require additional support for your son and daughter, I would encourage you to contact Mr Myles Kapatana, Senior Guidance Officer, Nyanda State High School, on telephone 3712 1222. Alternatively, should you require additional information regarding the school closure you are invited to contact Ms Karyn Hart, Principal Project Officer, on telephone 3422 8666.

Yours sincerely



JOHN-PAUL LANGBROEK MP
Minister for Education, Training and Employment

Ref: 13/375585



Hon John-Paul Langbroek MP
Minister for Education, Training and Employment

22 NOV 2013

s.47(3)(b) – Contrary to

Email: s.47(3)(b) – Contrary to the Public Inte

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Dear s.47(3)(b) – Cor

Thank you for your email regarding my decision to close Nyanda State High School from the end of Term 4 this year.

I appreciate you advising me of your concerns and understand that you do not agree with the decision I have reached and that the school community is disappointed that the school will be closed.

I can assure you this was an extremely difficult decision to make and that I gave full and proper consideration to concerns raised with me and the issues outlined in submissions provided.

I note you have requested a statement of reasons under s.32 of the *Judicial Review Act 1991* (JR Act) in regard to my decision to close Nyanda State High School.

As I am advised by my Department that my decision is not a decision to which the JR Act applies, under s.33(2)(a) of the JR Act (which states that a decision maker may give written notice of their opinion about a request), I inform you that you are unable to make a request under that Act for a statement of reasons as set out in your letter of 26 September 2013.

Although I am not required to provide a statement of reasons under the JR Act, I trust that the information provided in this letter will be useful in assisting you to understand my determination to close Nyanda State High School.

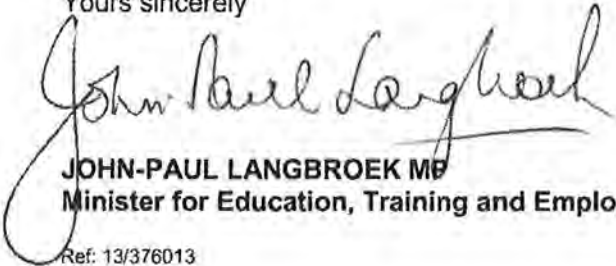
As Minister for Education, Training and Employment, it is important that I ensure our educational facilities are appropriately managed. As part of ensuring that we have the best facilities for our students, we need to identify where it is appropriate to close a particular school or where it is necessary to build a school. This planning process enables the Government to ensure that all children have access to a quality education and that our school facilities are being used to their maximum potential. This can involve making decisions that may not be popular but are in the broader interests of the state.

While it is true that my Department's School Viability Assessment procedure offers an option for a secondary school to be closed over an extended period—i.e. up to two years—this is not a requirement. In this case, I determined that Nyanda State High School would be closed at the end of 2013 in order to allow all students to transition to a new school sooner. Had the school remained open for another year, there was a risk that the total student cohort would have diminished significantly in 2014, with students electing to go to a new school earlier, further limiting the educational and extra-curricular opportunities for students at Nyanda.

The Department is working to support students and families in the transition to new schools for 2014, with support from Regional Office and Guidance Officers. School staff are also being supported through the transition with access to Human Resources staff and the Employee Assistance Service. All permanent staff will be transitioned to alternative locations. Human Resources staff are working with all school staff to discuss placement preferences and options.

I understand your daughter is being supported through this transition process with assistance from Mr Myles Kapatán, Senior Guidance Officer, Nyanda State High School. Should you require additional support for your daughter, I would encourage you to contact Mr Kapatán on telephone 3712 1222. Alternatively, should you require additional information in relation to the school closure you are invited to contact Ms Karyn Hart, Principal Project Officer, on telephone 3422 8666.

Yours sincerely



JOHN-PAUL LANGBROEK MP
Minister for Education, Training and Employment

Ref: 13/376013



Hon John-Paul Langbroek MP
Minister for Education, Training and Employment

22 NOV 2013

Mr Graham Perrett MP
Member for Moreton
PO Box 419
SUNNYBANK QLD 4109

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Queensland 4002 Australia
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Dear Mr Perrett

Thank you for your letter dated 17 September 2013 regarding my decision to close Nyanda State High School from the end of Term 4 this year.

I appreciate you advising me of your concerns and understand that you do not agree with the decision I have reached. I also appreciate that the school community is disappointed that the school will be closed.

This was an extremely difficult decision to make. I can assure you that I gave full and proper consideration to concerns raised with me and the issues outlined in submissions provided.

I note you have requested a statement of reasons under s.32 of the *Judicial Review Act 1991* (JR Act) in regard to my decision to close Nyanda State High School.

As I am advised by my Department that my decision is not a decision to which the JR Act applies, under s.33(2)(a) of the JR Act (which states that a decision maker may give written notice of their opinion about a request), I inform you that you are unable to make a request under that Act for a statement of reasons as set out in your letter of 17 September 2013.

Although I am not required to provide a statement of reasons under the JR Act, I trust that the information provided in this letter will be useful in assisting you to understand my determination to close Nyanda State High School.

As Minister for Education, Training and Employment, it is important that I ensure our educational facilities are appropriately managed. As part of ensuring that we have the best facilities for our students, we need to identify where it is appropriate to close a particular school or where it is necessary to build a school. This planning process enables the Government to ensure that all children have access to a quality education and that our school facilities are being used to their maximum potential. This can involve making decisions that may not be popular but are in the broader interests of the State.

While it is true that my Department's *School Viability Assessment* procedure offers an option for a secondary school to be closed over an extended period—i.e. up to two years—this is not a requirement. In this case, I determined that Nyanda State High School would be closed at the end of 2013 in order to allow all students to transition to a new school sooner. Had the school remained open for another year, there was a risk that the total student cohort would have diminished significantly in 2014, with students electing to go to a new school earlier, further limiting the educational and extra-curricular opportunities for students at Nyanda.

The Department is working to support students and families in the transition to new schools for 2014, with support from Regional Office and Guidance Officers. School staff are also being supported through the transition with access to Human Resourcing and Employee Assistance Services.

With reference to your query about a precedent for the closure of high schools in areas with high growth expectations, I can assure you that there are certainly instances of secondary school closures in the Metropolitan region under previous Queensland Governments. For example, Toowong College was closed at the end of 2006, Oxley Secondary College closed at the end of 2000 and Newmarket State High School closed at the end of 1996. One of the common factors in each of these school closure decisions was that there was limited population growth or enrolment expectations within the respective catchments, and with alternative schools within a close proximity. This was also the case for Nyanda State High School.

To ensure schools are being built where they are needed, the Queensland Schools Planning Commission was established to develop a 20 year demand map to identify where new school facilities are required. This is the first time that the State Government, along with the Catholic and Independent education sectors, and local government, have worked together to coordinate future school locations and expansion of existing schools.

As a result of this, the Government has announced its plan to deliver 11 new schools, three secondary and eight primary schools, in areas where facilities will be needed to accommodate student growth. We are working towards having the first of these schools open for the 2015 school year.

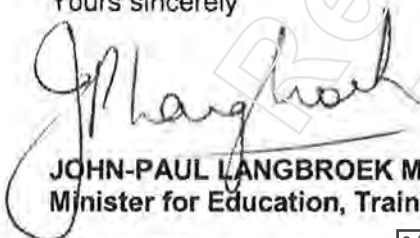
As part of the Government's ongoing commitment to education in Queensland, we also need to make sure our schools are properly maintained, something that has not been addressed in previous years. Therefore, in the 2013-14 State Budget the Newman Government provided an additional \$100 million, over and above the previous \$200 million commitment in 2012-13, to reduce the maintenance backlogs in our schools.

While I understand that the building of new schools or the increased funding for maintenance commitments will not address your desire for Nyanda State High School to remain open, I trust you can appreciate that we are working to ensure that all Queensland students are able to learn in appropriate learning environments.

My Department will be working with staff, parents and students at Nyanda State High School to ensure that the remainder of the school year continues as smoothly as possible, and that there is a supported transition to other schools for next year.

Should you require any further information, I invite you to contact my Chief of Staff, Ms Fiona Crawford on telephone 3237 1000.

Yours sincerely



JOHN-PAUL LANGBROEK MP
Minister for Education, Training and Employment

Ref: 13/343097

s.47(3)(b) – Contrary to the Public Interest

s.47(3)(b) – Contrary to the Public Interest



Hon John-Paul Langbroek MP
Minister for Education, Training and Employment

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1 NOV 2013

s.47(3)(b) – Contrary to the Public Interest

Email: s.47(3)(b) – Contrary to the Public Interest

s.47(3)(b) – Contrary to the Public Interest

Dear

I am writing in relation to your emails dated 18 and 19 September 2013 to Mr Ray Stevens MP, Member for Mermaid Beach, regarding the approved closure of Toowoomba South State School, the number of schools that were considered for proposed closure under the *School Viability Assessment* in 2013 and the future of Broadbeach State School. As these matters fall under my portfolio responsibilities, Mr Stevens has forwarded your correspondence to me, for consideration.

I understand you have also contacted the Honourable Campbell Newman MP, Premier in relation to your concerns. Therefore, I wish to also respond on the Premier's behalf.

I appreciate you taking the time to write to us regarding these issues. In particular, I note your concerns about my recent decision to close six state schools, including Toowoomba South State School. This was an extremely difficult decision to make and I can assure you that I gave full and proper consideration to concerns raised with me and the issues outlined in submissions provided.

In terms of your concerns regarding the number of schools that were proposed for closure in 2013, I would like to provide the following background information. In May 2013, I announced that nine Queensland state schools had been identified for community consultation regarding proposed closure or amalgamation as part of the 2013 *School Viability Assessment*.

Of these nine schools, eight were proposed for closure—Everton Park State High School, Nyanda State High School, Fortitude Valley State School, Old Yarranlea State School, Wyreema State School, Charlton State School, Toowoomba South State School and Stuart State School. One school, Coopers Secondary College (CSC), was proposed for amalgamation with Brisbane State High School (BSHS).

It should be noted that Broadbeach State School has not been proposed for closure and it was not identified in the *School Viability Assessment* consultation process in 2013.

On 19 July 2013, following a community consultation period, I announced my decision that CSC would not amalgamate with BSHS. On 17 September 2013, following a separate consultation process, I announced my decision that six of the eight schools proposed for closure would close at the end of 2013. More detailed information regarding the consultation processes and outcomes is available on my Department's website at: www.education.qld.gov.au/schools/school-viability/index.html.

The Department is working to support students and families at the schools approved for closure in order to transition to new schools for 2014, with support from Regional Offices and Guidance Officers. This Transition Planning process will involve assisting students and parents to select the most suitable school which meets a range of needs including subject choice, accessibility based on location and transport options, and extra-curricular activities. School staff are also being supported through the transition with access to Human Resources and Employee Assistance Services.


As the Minister for Education, Training and Employment, I have the authority to close and amalgamate schools under Chapter 2 Part 3 of the *Education (General Provisions) Act 2006* (the Act). I have met the requirements of the Act in relation to my recent school closure decision. In accordance with this legislation, my decision does not require further approval, and there is not appeals process through which the decision can be overturned.

These are difficult and complex decisions and, as Minister, it is important that I ensure our educational facilities are appropriately managed. As part of ensuring that we have the best facilities for our students, we need to identify where it is appropriate to close a particular school and where it is necessary to invest in building new schools. This planning process enables the Government to ensure that all children have access to a quality education and that our school facilities are being used to their maximum potential. This can involve making decisions that may not be popular but are in the best interests of all Queenslanders.

Thank you for raising this matter with the Government.

Should you have any further queries regarding the *School Viability Assessment* process, I invite you to contact Ms Lee Callum, Executive Director, Infrastructure Strategy, Research and Performance, by email at lee.callum@det.qld.gov.au or on telephone 3237 0950.

Yours sincerely



JOHN-PAUL LANGBROEK MP
Minister for Education, Training and Employment

Ref: 13/354159

cc Mr Ray Stevens MP, Member for Mermaid Beach
Surfers Paradise Electorate Office



Hon John-Paul Langbroek MP
Minister for Education, Training and Employment

1 NOV 2013

s.47(3)(b) – Contrary to the Public Interest

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Dear s.47(3)(b) – Con

Thank you for your email dated 18 September 2013 regarding my decision to close Old Yarranlea State School from the end of Term 4 this year.

I appreciate you advising me of your concerns and understand that you do not agree with the decision I have reached. I also appreciate that the school community is disappointed that the school will be closed.

While I understand that Old Yarranlea State School is a unique school which offers a range of learning experiences to students, the same can also be said of many other Queensland state schools, including others that have been approved to close. However, after carefully reviewing the results of the *School Viability Assessment* and the consultation process, I have determined that Old Yarranlea State School will close at the end of this year.

I can assure you that this was an extremely difficult decision to make and that I gave full and proper consideration to concerns raised with me and the issues outlined in submissions provided.

As Minister for Education, Training and Employment, it is important that I ensure our educational facilities are appropriately managed. As part of ensuring that we have the best facilities for our students, we need to identify where it is appropriate to close a particular school or where it is necessary to build a school. This planning process enables the Government to ensure that all children have access to a quality education and that our school facilities are being used to their maximum potential. At times, this can involve making decisions that may not be popular but are in the broader interests of all Queenslanders.

However, as Minister, I have the authority to close a Queensland state school, under the *Education (General Provisions) Act 2006*. With reference to your concerns regarding the agreement with Griffith University, I can confirm that all necessary legislative requirements to formally close this school have been met.

I note your concerns about the Transition Planning Kit, which was provided to families to assist in making arrangements to move students to their new schools for the start of 2014. These planning kits present a range of topics for parents and caregivers to consider prior to making a final decision on a future school for their child/children. Additional support is available from the school, guidance officer and Regional Office, if required.

I am pleased to hear that you have had several conversations with the school Guidance Officer, Mr Mike Kelly, Assistant Regional Director, Metropolitan Region and Ms Lee Callum, Executive Director, Infrastructure Strategy, Research and Performance regarding the closure of Old Yarranlea State school and possible alternative schools that may suit the needs of your family.

I am advised that there are other schooling options for your children. I would encourage you to take up Mr Kelly's offer to visit these schools with him during Term 4, in order to meet the Principals and get a better understanding of the educational and extra-curricular offerings available.


I have previously stated, on the record, there will be no *School Viability Assessment* process in 2014 so you can be assured that the school you choose for your children to attend in 2014 will not undergo a viability assessment over the next 12 months.

My Department will be continuing to work with staff, parents and students to ensure that the remainder of the school year continues as smoothly as possible, and that there is a supported transition to other schools for next year.

Thank you again for contacting me in relation to this matter and for providing feedback on the school viability process. I trust that the information I have provided will be of assistance to you.

Should you require any further information, I invite you to contact Ms Callum by email at lee.callum@dete.qld.gov.au or on telephone 3237 0950.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "John-Paul Langbroek". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a horizontal line drawn underneath the name.

JOHN-PAUL LANGBROEK MP
Minister for Education, Training and Employment

Ref: 13/342689



Hon John-Paul Langbroek MP
Minister for Education, Training and Employment

1 NOV 2013

s.47(3)(b) – Contrary to the Public Interest

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Dear s.47(3)(b) – Contrary to the Public Interest

Thank you for your email dated 17 September 2013 regarding my decision to close Old Yarranlea State School from the end of Term 4 this year.

I appreciate you advising me of your concerns and understand that you do not agree with the decision I have reached. I also appreciate that the school community is disappointed that the school will be closed.

While I understand that Old Yarranlea State School is a unique school which offers a range of learning experiences to students, the same can also be said of many other Queensland state schools, including others that have been approved to close.

I note your particular concerns regarding my comments about the utilisation rates of the schools approved for closure. While it is true that the enrolment and school capacity information was considered as part of the *School Viability Assessment* process, I can assure you that I am well aware of the built capacity restrictions at Old Yarranlea State School. I understand that the school currently has an agreed enrolment cap of 18 students, but that the school community was willing to expand this to 24 students in future years. However, after carefully considering all of the issues at hand, I have determined that Old Yarranlea State School will close at the end of this year.

This was an extremely difficult decision to make. I assure you that I gave full and proper consideration to concerns raised with me and the issues outlined in submissions provided.

As Minister for Education, Training and Employment, it is important that I ensure our educational facilities are appropriately managed. As part of ensuring that we have the best facilities for our students, we need to identify where it is appropriate to close a particular school or where it is necessary to build a school. This planning process enables the Government to ensure that all children have access to a quality education and that our school facilities are being used to their maximum potential. At times, this can involve making decisions that may not be popular but are in the broader interests of all Queenslanders.

However, as Minister, I have the authority to close a Queensland state school, under the *Education (General Provisions) Act 2006* (the Act). With reference to your concerns regarding the agreement with Griffith University, I can confirm that all necessary legislative requirements to formally close this school have been met.

I note your comments about other schools across the state, including Rocklea State School, which may be considered unviable. Rocklea State School was not subject to the *School Viability Assessment* conducted by my Department in 2013, nor were any other schools affected by recent natural disasters. Schools in rural and remote locations were also

excluded from the process. In the 2013 analysis, the focus was on schools in metropolitan and provincial zones within 5km of an alternative state school.

I can assure you that when a school is identified for closure the focus is not around making money. While it is likely that school sites, excluding Old Yarranlea State School, that are no longer required will not be retained by the State Government, any funds realised from the sale of a site would be used for investing in new and upgraded school infrastructure. This reinvestment ensures that the educational facilities across the state continue to provide a world-class learning environment that helps students to achieve positive outcomes.

To ensure schools are being built where they are needed, the Queensland Schools Planning Commission was established to develop a 20 year demand map to identify where new school facilities are required. This is the first time that the State Government, along with the Catholic and Independent education sectors, and local government, have worked together to coordinate future school locations and expansion of existing schools.

As a result of this, the Government has announced its plan to deliver 11 new schools, three secondary and eight primary schools, in areas where facilities will be needed to accommodate student growth. We are working towards having the first of these schools open for the 2015 school year.

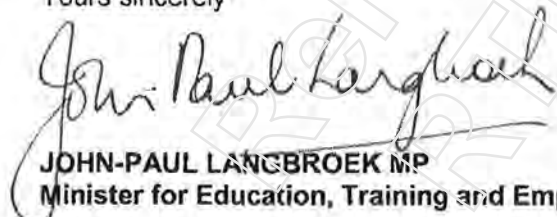
As part of the Government's ongoing commitment to education in Queensland, we also need to make sure our schools are properly maintained, something that has not been addressed in previous years. Therefore, in the 2013-14 State Budget the Newman Government provided an additional \$100 million, over and above the previous \$200 million commitment in 2012-13, to reduce the maintenance backlogs in our schools.

While I understand that the building of new schools or the increased funding for maintenance commitments will not address your desire for Old Yarranlea State School to remain open, I trust you can appreciate that we are working to ensure that all Queensland students are able to learn in appropriate learning environments.

In regard to what happens from here with the closure of Old Yarranlea State School, your school and my Department will be working with staff, parents and students to ensure that the remainder of the school year continues as smoothly as possible, and that there is a supported transition to other schools for next year.

Should you require any further information, I invite you to contact Ms Lee Callum, Executive Director, Infrastructure Strategy, Research and Performance by email at lee.callum@det.qld.gov.au or on telephone 3237 0950.

Yours sincerely



JOHN-PAUL LANGBROEK MP
Minister for Education, Training and Employment

Ref: 13/342677



Hon John-Paul Langbroek MP
Minister for Education, Training and Employment

24 OCT 2013

s.47(3)(b) – Contrary to the Public

Email: s.47(3)(b) – Contrary to the Public Interest

Dear s.47(3)(b) – Contrary

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Thank you for your email dated 19 September 2013 regarding my decision to close six state schools, including Nyanda State High School (SHS), from the end of Term 4 this year.

I appreciate you advising me of your concerns, particularly in relation to the senior students at Nyanda SHS, and understand that you do not agree with the decision I have reached. I also appreciate that the school community is disappointed that the school will be closed.

This was an extremely difficult decision to make. I can assure you that I gave full and proper consideration to concerns raised with me and the issues outlined in submissions provided.

As Minister for Education, Training and Employment, it is important that I ensure our educational facilities are appropriately managed. As part of ensuring that we have the best facilities for our students, we need to identify where it is appropriate to close a particular school or where it is necessary to build a school. This planning process enables the Government to ensure that all children have access to a quality education and that our school facilities are being used to their maximum potential. This can involve making decisions that may not be popular but are in the broader interests of all Queenslanders.

My Department's *School Viability Assessment* procedure offers an option for a secondary school to be closed over an extended period—i.e. up to two years. In this case, I determined that Nyanda State High School would be closed at the end of 2013 in order to allow all students to transition to a new school sooner. Had the school remained open for another year, even for one or two year levels, there was a risk that the total student cohort would have diminished significantly in 2014, with students electing to go to a new school earlier, further limiting the educational and extra-curricular opportunities for students at Nyanda.

The Department is working to support students and families with the transition to new schools for 2014, with support from Regional Office and Guidance Officers. This Transition Planning process will involve assisting students and parents to select the most suitable school which meets a range of needs, including subject choice, accessibility based on location and transport options and extra-curricular activities. School staff are also being supported through the transition with access to Human Resources and Employee Assistance Services.

I note your comments about the closure of schools being a revenue raising exercise by the Government. However, I can assure you that when a school is identified for closure, the focus is not around making money. While it is likely that school sites that are no longer required will not be retained by the State Government, it is important to note that any funds realised from the sale of a site would be used for school infrastructure, including supporting schools in the local communities. This reinvestment ensures that the educational facilities across the state continue to provide a world-class learning environment that helps students to achieve positive outcomes.

In addition, to ensure schools are being built where they are needed, the Queensland Schools Planning Commission was established to develop a 20 year demand map to identify where new school facilities are required. This is the first time that the State Government, along with the Catholic and Independent education sectors, and local government, have worked together to coordinate future school locations and growth of existing schools.

As a result of this, the Government has announced its plan to deliver 11 new schools, three secondary and eight primary schools, in areas where facilities will be needed to accommodate student growth. We are working towards having the first of these schools open for the 2015 school year.

As part of the Government's ongoing commitment to education in Queensland, we also need to make sure our schools are properly maintained, something that has not been addressed in previous years. Therefore, in the 2013-14 State Budget the Newman Government provided an additional \$100 million, over and above the previous \$200 million commitment in 2012-13, to reduce the maintenance backlogs in our schools.

While I understand that the building of new schools or the increased funding for maintenance commitments will not address your desire for these schools to remain open, I trust you can appreciate that we are working to ensure that all Queensland students are able to learn in appropriate learning environments.

Should you require any further information, I invite you to contact Ms Lee Callum, Executive Director, Infrastructure Strategy, Research and Performance by email at lee.callum@det.qld.gov.au or on telephone 3237 0950.

Yours sincerely



JOHN-PAUL LANGBROEK MP
Minister for Education, Training and Employment

Ref: 13/343115

24 October 2013

Department of
**Education, Training
and Employment**

s.47(3)(b) – Contrary to the P

Email: s.47(3)(b) – Contrary to the Public Interest

Dear s.47(3)(b) – Cont

Thank you for your email regarding the decision by the Honourable John-Paul Langbroek, Minister for Education, Training and Employment, to close Stuart State School from the end of Term 4 this year.

I appreciate that the school community is disappointed that the school will be closed. I also note your concerns regarding the way in which this announcement was made.

As I am sure you can appreciate, with eight school communities involved in the School Viability Assessment process in 2013, every effort was made to notify the schools of the Minister's closure decisions at the same time. I understand that, on the afternoon of 17 September 2013, the Minister personally telephoned each P&C President, while the Director-General, Dr Jim Watterston telephoned each of the Principals.

I, as the North Queensland Regional Director, and various support staff attended Stuart State School on the day of the Minister's announcement in order to offer assistance to the Principal, staff, students and parents. A Guidance Officer attended the school the following day to offer additional support to students and their parents, where possible. Increased levels of support will be available at Stuart State School for the remainder of the year. Your school and the Department of Education, Training and Employment will be working with staff, parents and students to ensure that the transition to alternative schools for next year goes as smoothly as possible.

I can assure you that this was an extremely difficult decision for the Minister to make. However, I am informed that the Minister gave full and proper consideration to concerns raised with him and the issues outlined in submissions provided.

It is important for the Minister for Education, Training and Employment to ensure our educational facilities are appropriately managed. As part of ensuring that we have the best facilities for our students, we need to identify where it is appropriate to close a particular school or where it is necessary to build a school. This planning process enables the Government to ensure that all children have access to a quality education and that our school facilities are being used to their maximum potential. This can involve making decisions that may not be popular but are in the broader interests of Queensland.

Should you require any further information, I invite you to contact Ms Cindy Mossop, Principal Advisor Education Services, or Ms Penny Edgerton, Principal Human Resource Consultant, by email at northqueensland.regionoffice@det.qld.gov.au or on telephone 4758 3222.

Yours sincerely



Richard English
Regional Director
North Queensland Region

Ref: 13/345185

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Hon John-Paul Langbroek MP
Minister for Education, Training and Employment

30 OCT 2013

s.47(3)(b) – Contrary to t

Email: s.47(3)(b) – Contrary to the Public Interest

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Dear s.47(3)(b) – Co

Thank you for your email dated 21 September 2013 regarding my decision to close Nyanda State High School and Old Yarranlea State School from the end of Term 4 this year.

I appreciate you advising me of your concerns and understand that you do not agree with the decision I have reached. I also appreciate that the school communities are disappointed that these schools will be closed.

This was an extremely difficult decision to make. I can assure you that I gave full and proper consideration to concerns raised with me and the issues outlined in submissions provided.

I note your concerns about the closure timeframe for Nyanda State High School. While it is true that my Department's *School Viability Assessment* procedure offers an option for a secondary school to be closed over an extended period—i.e. up to two years—this is not a requirement, but a guide. In this case, I determined that Nyanda State High School would be closed at the end of 2013 in order to allow all students to transition to a new school sooner. Had the school remained open for another year, even for one or two year levels, there was a risk that the total student cohort would have diminished significantly in 2014, with students electing to go to a new school earlier, further limiting the educational and extra-curricular opportunities for students at Nyanda.

I also note your comments and statements made in the media recently about these school closures being a revenue raising exercise by the Government. However, I can assure you, when a school is identified for closure the focus is not around making money. While it is likely that school sites that are no longer required will not be retained by the State Government, any funds realised from the sale of such a site would be used for investing in new and upgraded school infrastructure. This reinvestment ensures that the educational facilities across the state continue to provide a world-class learning environment that helps students to achieve positive outcomes.

In relation to Old Yarranlea State School, as you may be aware, this school was originally established as a training school for prospective one teacher school Principals, and as a result, enrolments have always been capped at 18 students. My Department has a range of strategies to develop aspiring teaching Principals other than placing them at Old Yarranlea State School. As you have noted, this school is located on land owned by Griffith University, and this also demonstrates that these school closures are not about raising revenue for the Queensland Government.

As Minister for Education, Training and Employment, it is important that I ensure our educational facilities are appropriately managed. As part of ensuring that we have the best facilities for our students, we need to identify where it is appropriate to close a particular school or where it is necessary to build a school. This planning process enables the Government to ensure that all children have access to a quality education and that our school facilities are being used to their maximum potential. This can involve making decisions that may not be popular but are in the broader interests of Queenslanders.

In addition, to ensure schools are being built where they are needed, the Queensland Schools Planning Commission was established to develop a 20 year demand map to identify where new school facilities are required. This is the first time that the State Government, along with the Catholic and Independent education sectors, and local government, have worked together to coordinate future school locations and expansion of existing schools.

As a result of this, the Government has announced its plan to deliver 11 new schools, three secondary and eight primary schools, in areas where facilities will be needed to accommodate student growth. We are working towards having the first of these schools open for the 2015 school year.

As part of the Government's ongoing commitment to education in Queensland, we also need to make sure our schools are properly maintained, something that has not been addressed in previous years. Therefore, in the 2013-14 State Budget the Newman Government provided an additional \$100 million, over and above the previous \$200 million commitment, to reduce the maintenance backlogs in our schools.

While I understand that the building of new schools or the increased funding for maintenance commitments will not address your desire for Nyanda State High School or Old Yarranlea State School to remain open, I trust you can appreciate that we are working to ensure that all Queensland students are able to learn in appropriate learning environments.

In regard to what happens from here with the closure of Nyanda State High School and Old Yarranlea State School, these schools and my Department will be working with staff, parents and students to ensure that the remainder of the school year continues as smoothly as possible, and that there is a supported transition to other schools for next year.

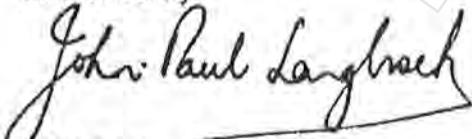
I note that you have raised concerns in relation to alternative arrangements for students at Nyanda State High School. In most cases, students will be able to enrol in their neighbouring school of choice, including Sunnybank State High School. However, due to individual circumstance, there may be a small number of students who may not be able to be accommodated at the school of their choice. In these cases, school and regional staff will work with the student and their family to negotiate an alternative school.

While I also note your comments about the former Acacia Ridge State High School, these circumstances were different as Acacia Ridge State High School was amalgamated with Salisbury State High School to become Nyanda State High School. Please be assured that Student Transition Kits will be developed for all students at Nyanda State High School to help them move to their new school from the start of 2014.

Thank you again for bringing your concerns to my attention and I trust you will find this information useful.

Should you require any further information, I invite you to contact Ms Lee Callum, Executive Director, Infrastructure Strategy, Research and Performance, Department of Education, Training and Employment by email to lee.callum@dete.qld.gov.au or on telephone 3237 0950.

Yours sincerely



JOHN-PAUL LANGBROEK MP
Minister for Education, Training and Employment

Ref: 13/345220



Department of
Education, Training and Employment

16 OCT 2013

Mr Graham Moloney
General Secretary
Queensland Teachers' Union
PO Box 1750
MILTON BC QLD 4064

Dear Mr Moloney

Graham

Thank you for your letter dated 23 September 2013 regarding the school viability consultation reports.

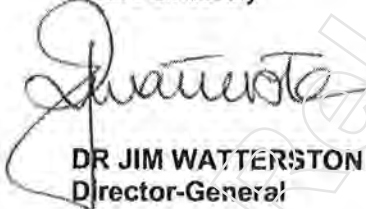
As you know, the Minister announced the outcome of the school viability assessment and consultation process on 17 September 2013. The consultation reports for all eight schools were intended to be uploaded to the Department's website on the day of the Minister's announcement, along with various other documents and communication materials. However, due to an administrative oversight, the two reports for the schools which the Minister approved to remain open—Everton Park State High School and Wyreema State School—were inadvertently not uploaded at the time.

Once the Department became aware of this oversight on 20 September 2013, steps were taken immediately to have the reports uploaded to the Department's website. All eight reports are now available at www.education.qld.gov.au/schools/school-viability/index.html.

Thank you for bringing this matter to my attention. I trust this response addresses your concerns.

Should you require any further information regarding the school viability assessment procedure or consultation process, I invite you to contact Ms Lee Callum, Executive Director, Infrastructure Strategy, Research and Performance by email at lee.callum@dete.qld.gov.au or on telephone 3237 0950.

Yours sincerely


DR JIM WATTERSTON
Director-General

Ref: 13/345551

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