



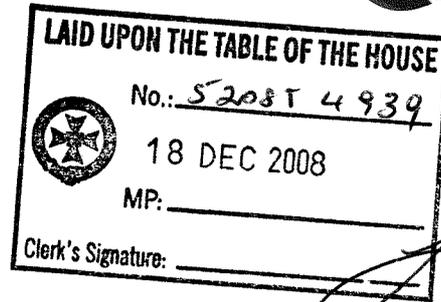
The Honourable Rod Welford MP

17 DEC 2008

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



Queensland
Government



Minister for Education and Training
Minister for the Arts

Dear Mr Laurie

Thank you for your letter dated 26 November 2008 regarding Dows Creek State School.

Please be assured that when making a decision regarding the ongoing viability of Queensland schools, I consider a broad range of information. This information is gathered from numerous sources and includes input from a range of stakeholders, ensuring that the latest data is available prior to a decision being made.

The advice received from my department was to 'mothball' Dows Creek State School at the end of the 2008 school year, and I supported this recommendation taking into consideration:

- continuing low enrolments over the last three years;
- access to appropriate student support services;
- proximity to schools in the local area; and
- the impact low enrolments have on the breadth of curriculum offerings to the students attending the school, particularly when compared to larger schools.

Immediately following this decision, Mr Wayne Butler, Regional Executive Director, Mackay-Whitsunday Region, informed the Dows Creek State School community, on my behalf, that the school will be 'mothballed' in December 2008.

The 'mothballing' period may extend for more than 12 months, during which time my department will monitor the demand in the school's catchment area.

My department is committed to working closely with students who attended Dows Creek State School and their families to support their transition to the nearby Mirani State School (13km from Dows Creek) or Gargett State School (6.7km) in 2009.

Financial support is available to students of Dows Creek State School to assist in relocating to another school site. All Prep to Year 6 primary school students (nine students in total) are eligible for \$250.

While any decision to 'mothball' a small school is difficult to make, and there will often be parents/caregivers who are unhappy with the decision, please be assured that this decision was made in the best interests of the students at the school.

Should you wish to discuss this matter further, you can contact Mr Wayne Butler, Regional Executive Director, Mackay-Whitsunday Region by email at wayne.butler@deta.qld.gov.au or on telephone (07) 4951 6902.

Thank you for bringing your concerns to my attention and for your ongoing support for students at Dows Creek State School.

I wish all of the students who will be transitioning from Dows Creek State School the best success with their education for 2009 and beyond.

Yours sincerely

Rod Welford MP

Ref: 08/198657

Your ref: Petitions

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