



Minister for Education and Minister for Youth Justice

19 SEP 2024

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Mr Neil Laurie
The Clerk of the Parliament
Parliament House
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Dear Mr Laurie

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to be 'Neil Laurie', written over the typed name.

Thank you for your letter dated 21 August 2024 regarding Petition No. 4131-24 in relation to 'Save Our School Darlingia', received by the Queensland Legislative Assembly. I note Petition No. 4170-24 was tabled on 11 September 2024 which also relates to this matter.

It is acknowledged that the cancellation of the former Darlingia Forest School's accreditation by the Non-State Schools Accreditation Board (NSSAB) in June 2024 may have caused distress to students, parents and staff members. I understand this school community remains very passionate about the educational program offered and the democratic school philosophy.

Non-state schools are independent from the Government, and are responsible for their own operations and policies. This means neither I, nor the Department of Education, has jurisdiction to intervene in any matters at non-state schools.

A framework is in place in Queensland to ensure each school and its governing body meets prescribed standards for education and is accountable for its operations. The *Education (Accreditation of Non-State Schools) Act 2017* (the Act) and *Education (Accreditation of Non-State Schools) Regulation 2017* (the Regulation) provide the legislative basis for the operations of non-state schools.

NSSAB is the independent statutory body established under the Act and is responsible for the accreditation and ongoing monitoring of non-state schools in Queensland.

I note the request in this petition for Recommendation 2.1 from the recent Non-State Schools Accreditation Framework Review to be implemented and for NSSAB's functions to be expanded in accordance with this recommendation to better assist schools in achieving and maintaining compliance. I understand the petition also requested that NSSAB be directed to offer education, advice and support to the former school as outlined under Recommendation 2.1.

The Queensland Government is committed to implementing the Government's response to the Non-State Schools Accreditation Framework Review. The Department has established the Non-State Schools Accreditation Framework Review Implementation (NSSAFRI) Task Force, which will be delivering the implementation of several recommendations including Recommendation 2.1.

Further information about the NSSAB Framework Review and the NSSAFRI Task Force, including implementation timelines, is available at <https://alt-qed.qed.qld.gov.au/programs-initiatives/department/non-state-schools-accreditation-framework-review-implementation>.

Should the former school's governing body and/or principal wish to reopen the school, they may apply for accreditation with NSSAB by following the processes outlined on the NSSAB website at www.nssab.qld.edu.au/Accreditation/applications.php. Further information about this process is available by contacting NSSAB on (07) 3513 6773 or by email at nssab.admin@qed.qld.gov.au.

I would like to thank Ms Deborah Schiel Zaini, the principal petitioner, and every person who signed the petition for their advocacy for the former Darlingia Forest School.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'DI FARMER', with a large loop on the 'D' and a horizontal line extending from the 'F'.

DI FARMER MP
Minister for Education and
Minister for Youth Justice

Ref: 24/687380

Your Ref: A1335086