

WUBIN PRIMARY SCHOOL - CLOSURE

808. Hon KEN BASTON to the minister representing the Minister for Education and Training:

I refer to the letter reference D007/218214 written to the President of the Wubin Primary School Parents and Citizens Association.

- (1) Given the outstanding educational achievements of the Wubin students, does the minister agree that Wubin Primary School is a small rural school of excellence?
- (2) If yes, how can the minister be certain that the educational outcomes for the students will not be put at risk through the closure of the school?
- (3) What social and educational justification can the minister provide for closing this school and forcing preprimary and kindergarten children to travel up to 130 kilometres a day to attend the Dalwallinu or Buntine schools?

Hon LJILJANNA RAVLICH replied:

It always amazes me that when there is a school closure, for example -

The PRESIDENT: Is the Minister for Local Government referring to the answer given by the Minister for Education?

Hon LJILJANNA RAVLICH: Yes, I am.

The PRESIDENT: Perhaps the minister should read it.

Hon LJILJANNA RAVLICH: Thank you, Mr President. It is amazing that a school is always a school of excellence when it is closing down.

The PRESIDENT: Order!

Hon LJILJANNA RAVLICH: I thank the member for some notice of this question.

- (1)-(2) It is acknowledged that there will always be a sense of sadness in a community when a school is closed. However, the government has a responsibility to provide the best quality education and range of educational opportunities, not only to those students, but across the whole state. The opposition was no doubt confronted with the same issues when it closed 29 regional schools when last in government.
- (3) In addition, some students are already travelling significant distances to attend Wubin Primary School. The closure implementation committee, as part of its role, will liaise with the Public Transport Authority on the issue of student transport.