



Shire of Quairading

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PUBLIC

Your Ref:

REMOVAL OF COURSES DHS

Our Ref:

EDU 1

31st May 2010

Ms G Watson MLC
Chair
Standing Committee on Estimates and Financial Operations
Parliament House
PERTH WA 6000

Dear Ms Watson

Inquiry into Removal of Year 11 and 12 Courses at District High Schools

Since the school leaving age was raised, students are much more likely to need transition into the workforce, beginning in the senior school years. In the past few years, our local school has provided courses to Year 11 & 12 students which are specifically tailored to their needs. These courses often involve work placements which provide an opportunity for those students to experience a variety of work places before entering the workforce.

Through work experience and work placement programs offered by the School whilst students are in Year 11 & 12, students can attend work on a part time basis and become familiar with processes, receive training and develop skills prior to having to apply for positions. Therefore students experience more success through the application process. These work placements, from our perspective, are an opportunity for the Shire and local businesses to 'try out' and train prospective employees. Employees are local, settled in the town and provide a more stable workforce.

When the decision was made to raise the school leaving age earlier this decade, Quairading District High School made several integral changes and was able to provide services to small groups of students for those years.

The School has provided, over the time, a relevant program for each student that suits their individual social, educational and training needs specifically. They have liaised strongly with TAFE, the School of Isolated and Distance Education and local businesses for work placements.

Withdrawing the option of Year 11 & 12 at the local School closes down options for families who live in the town. Quairading District High School has no feeder school. The closest Senior High School is over 100kms away and there is no bus service. There is no option for students who would choose to stay in town other than home schooling.

As it stands, those who are forced to study at home find it very difficult to maintain focus and motivation. They tend to 'fall through the cracks', finding mischief to entertain themselves during the day.

Withdrawing the option of Year 11 & 12 at the local School is withdrawing choice for families and forcing them to make decisions they would rather not make, forcing them into situations in which they would rather not be.

I urge you to consider carefully the situation for students in Quairading.

Yours faithfully

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Dana O'Hare'.

Cr Dana O'Hare
Deputy Shire President
Shire of Quairading

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