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7th September 2010

Hon Brian Ellis MLC
Chairman
Standing Committee on Environment and Public Affairs
Parliament House
Harvest Terrace
PERTH WA 6000

Dear Mr Ellis

**Re: Submission- Petition No 91, Dampier Primary School- Year 7 Children
relocating to High School**

I thank you for the opportunity to make a submission on the petition relating to the proposed relocation of Year 7 children to High School.

The petition is in response to concerns regarding the proposed relocation of Year 7 children to High School, and in particular the effect of this on schools such as the Dampier Primary School.

The impact of moving Year 7 children to High School in regional areas cannot be underestimated. For a School such as Dampier Primary School, it will result in fewer children attending the School and run the risk of possible closure.

Many parents argue that their children are not mature enough to enter High School at the age of 11 and for those wanting their children to attend Boarding School in Perth, it can be daunting to say the least to relocate to a city over 1400kms away at such a young age.

Given the decrease in physical numbers at regional Primary Schools, we also run the risk of these Schools being downgraded. Regional areas such as the Pilbara are of particular concern as student numbers tend to fluctuate depending on the Resource Sector. Downgrading of a School or loss of staff numbers as a result of the relocation of children to High School will have a significant impact on these areas to provide suitable quality education.

Of further concern is the fact that many schools will lose significant funding with the relocation of the students, as funding is dependent on the number of children attending the school.



I urge you to consider the negative impact of relocating Year 7 students to High School for regional Western Australia. I can see little to no benefit of such a move, but the fallout will have a significant impact on many schools such as the Dampier Primary School.

This complaint has not been taken by me to the Ombudsman.

Yours sincerely



Hon Wendy Duncan MLC

Member for Mining and Pastoral

Parliamentary Secretary to Minister for Regional Development