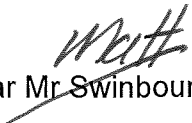




**Hon Sue Ellery MLC
Minister for Education and Training
Leader of the Legislative Council**

Your Ref Petition No 5
Our Ref 61-03496

Hon Matthew Swinbourn MLC
Chair
Standing Committee on Environment and Public Affairs
Legislative Council Committee Office
Parliament House
4 Harvest Terrace
WEST PERTH WA 6005


Dear Mr Swinbourn

Thank you for your letter dated 17 August 2017 regarding Petition No 5 – Oppose central education plan for Perth Modern School.

I am pleased to provide comment on the terms of the petition and the submissions from the principal petitioner and tabling member as requested.

1. Whether the decision to build a new school at Kitchener Park appropriately addresses the significant growth in demand for places at secondary schools in the western suburbs

The Government's decision to build Inner City College (planning name) in Subiaco – combined with current works at Churchlands Senior High School and Shenton College, and works in the future at Mount Lawley Senior High School – clearly addresses the significant growth in demand for places at secondary schools in the inner and western suburbs of Perth. Inner City College will be built on Kitchener Park, the grassed area located next to Subiaco Oval currently being used as a car park.

Due to significant growth in student numbers in nearby suburbs, the location of the new local-intake school in Subiaco will provide enrolment relief for Churchlands Senior High School, Shenton College and Mount Lawley Senior High School. Student enrolment projections show that growth is closer to the central business district than the coast. This is mainly due to future population growth on the coast being limited because the coastal strip to the north and south of City Beach has restrictions on the subdivision of land, and because there is a significant number of parks and green spaces in City Beach.

However, when sites were being investigated and assessed in 2014 for a school to open in 2019, Kitchener Park and Subiaco Oval were committed to football in 2018. With the new Perth Stadium able to provide for football for the 2018 season, the Subiaco Oval precinct became available earlier than expected. The McGowan Government took the opportunity to use this space rather than to pursue the previous Government's plan to use the former City Beach High School site.

Inner City College is being built for 2 000 students. When it is fully operational in 2025 with Years 7 to 12, it is expected to have 1 553 students and capacity to accommodate future growth. Projected student enrolments, as provided in the table below, show how Inner City College will provide relief for Churchlands Senior High School, Shenton College and Mount Lawley Senior High School.

	Projected student enrolments		
	2020	2025 (without Inner City College)	2025 (with Inner City College)
Churchlands Senior High School	3 158	3 557	2 306
Shenton College	2 226	2 480	2 426
Mount Lawley Senior High School	1 988	2 351	1 831

In addition, works at Churchlands Senior High School for an additional 750 students will be completed for the 2018 school year. Works at Shenton College for an additional 1 000 students are underway and will be completed for the 2019 school year.

Under the previous Government's plan to use the former City Beach High School site, a build for an additional 650 places would have been needed at Mount Lawley Senior High School. The previous Government made no provision in the State Budget and forward estimates for any allocation for these works. In this Government's plan for Inner City College, such a large build is not needed and an allocation of \$4 million has already been made in 2019-20. Further allocations will be considered in future budgets.

It is important to note that the McGowan Government is honouring the commitments in the previous Government's western suburbs strategy, with the exception of building a school at the former City Beach Senior High School site. This includes expanding Shenton College and Churchlands Senior High School, as described above, as well as Carine Senior High School. The City Beach Residential College facilities are also being upgraded. All of these works form part of the package of measures to address enrolment growth in the western suburbs.

2. A need for legislative protection for the location and status of Perth Modern School as well as selective academic secondary schooling

Legislative protection is not provided for any school, any location, any type of schooling or any program in the public education system in Western Australia. There is no intention to provide such legislative protection for Perth Modern School or any of the more than 800 public schools across Western Australia.

The Government of the day needs to have the capacity to shape public schooling to meet changing demographics, developing technologies, new teaching and learning requirements, and evolving aspirations of communities. Legislation that restricts this capacity would severely limit the agility of any Government to provide access to a public school education to students irrespective of their location, circumstances or whether or not that provision is taken up.

The determination of what schools will host the Gifted and Talented Secondary Selective Entrance Program is made by the Government of the day with advice from the Department of Education. The determination is not made by individual schools.

There are currently 18 schools that have been selected to host the Gifted and Talented Secondary Selective Entrance Program. The Government and the Department have determined that Inner City College will host the Gifted and Talented Secondary Selective Entrance Program (Selective Academic Program), starting with the first cohort of Year 7 students in 2020 – making it the nineteenth school.

While Perth Modern School has a long and proud history of achievement over more than 100 years, it has not always been a selective academic school. In 1958, Perth Modern School changed from being a select school to being a comprehensive school, although in 1968, the special Music Scholarship was established. It was not until 2007 that the school was selected to host a Gifted and Talented Secondary Selective Entrance Program, and it was determined that it would host the program on a fully selective basis – that is, all students applying to enrol in the school would be selected based on their results in the Academic Selective Entrance Test.

3. Consultation on the Education Central proposal

The Education Central policy was developed and released more than two months before the State Election in March 2017. It followed meetings with parents of children attending local public primary schools in the inner and western suburbs. Many of these families raised the need for a new local-intake secondary school in the inner western suburbs. Being in opposition at the time, there was limited opportunity for broader consultation with the Perth Modern School community.

Since the election, the Government has listened to the community and developed a new plan that delivers on the key election commitment to provide a new inner-city secondary school and relieve enrolment pressure on secondary schools in the inner western suburbs. This plan retains Perth Modern School in its current location and continuing to host the Gifted and Talented Selective Entrance Program (Selective Academic Program) on a fully selective basis.

4. Ensuring outdoor ground spaces for sport and recreation in schools

Planning for new schools is an integrated process with the Department working with developers and local authority planners to identify appropriate locations for school sites. In the case of Inner City College, detailed planning for the school is currently underway.

The Department is working with the Metropolitan Redevelopment Authority and the City of Subiaco to ensure planning provides suitable access to Subiaco Oval and other public open areas such as Mueller Park. Planning also includes a gymnasium and hardcourts so students have similar access to sport and recreation facilities that are provided in new secondary schools constructed in newly developed subdivisions.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comment on this matter.

Yours sincerely



SUE ELLERY MLC
MINISTER FOR EDUCATION AND TRAINING

- 4 OCT 2017