



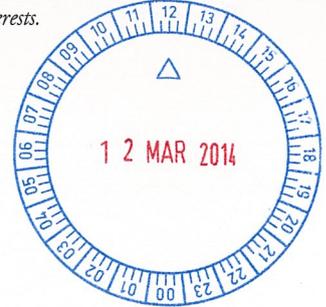
**Sue Ellery** MLC  
Member for South Metropolitan Region



*Leader of the Opposition in the Legislative Council; Shadow Minister for Education; Children's Interests.*

Tuesday, 11 March 2014

Standing Committee on Environment and Public Affairs  
Parliament House  
Harvest Tce  
WEST PERTH 6000



Dear Chairman

**Petition No. 21 funding and staff cuts to WA schools**

Thank you for the opportunity to provide a written submission regarding the issues that were raised in the above petition.

I have been contacted by numerous primary and secondary school Parents and Citizens (P&C) Associations, school boards and individual parents who are greatly concerned about the cuts, which were announced in general terms in August 2013 and then revealed in more detail subsequently to that, to the budgets at their schools.

They have taken the time to let me know the impact these changes have made at a local level. I believe there are in fact impacts at each public school in WA and I have not been able to identify any school community that is of the view these cuts have had a positive impact on their ability to continue to deliver high quality education. The impact these cuts are having is worthy of investigation by the Standing Committee on Environment and Public Affairs.

By way of example I refer below to just a few examples that have been provided to me either by the relevant P&C or by parents with children at the schools. Creaney Primary School, an Independent Public School in the northern suburbs, said the reduced school support funding has seen the cancellation of the *Mathletics* and *Spellodrome* programs this year, the loss of a Japanese program and computing program. The school says they will have less time to support teachers in school improvement roles and will have larger class sizes.

As a result of these cuts, Burrendah Primary School's (in the southern suburbs) Mathematics Extension program is at risk as well as its English as a Second Language program and gifted and talented support programs. The school also said all of its learning area budgets have been cut by 40 per cent as a result of the Long Service Leave Levy.

Willetton Senior High School (in the southern suburbs) will lose \$669,000 from its school budget this year alone. This amount includes a \$400,000 cut due to the change of staff multiplier (4 FTE); \$92,000 for the Long Service Leave Levy; \$24,000 for performance management; \$10,000 postage; \$3,000 ICT and \$140,000 for changes to Level 3 Classroom Teachers (1.4 FTE).

Similarly, Rossmoyne Senior High School (in the southern suburbs) will lose \$640,000 this year. This amount is made up of two major items; \$493,000 for staffing reduction and \$80,000 for a Long Service Leave Levy, with the balance comprising of a number of support

programs. The school says they will now not be able to run classes with small student numbers. The Year 7-8 transition program; the Year 11-12 tutorial program that offers students curriculum support outside the classroom; the Year 12 Private Study program that provides students with teacher supervision and the Year 11-12 Sport and Recreation program will all be scaled back or cut completely.

Neerigen Brook Primary School, in the eastern suburbs, says their school budget will be cut by \$90,461 this year even though school enrolments will stay the same as last year, North Beach Primary School (in the northern suburbs) will lose \$85,000 and Kalamunda Senior High School (in the eastern suburbs) will lose approximately \$500,000. Kununurra District High School (in the north west) parents advised me by phone they stand to lose 17 Education Assistants, the majority of whom are Aboriginal and who provide an invaluable service in a school where the majority of students are also Aboriginal.

I have enclosed material provided to me through a Freedom of Information application for the Committee's information. I asked for copies of communication from parents and/or their representative organisations to the Premier and the Minister for Education about the cuts announced in August 2013. The documents don't identify individual parents but give a good indication of how concerned parents are over the cuts to education. The documents include communication from parents across Western Australia. For several parents in regional WA they make the point that cuts to local schools in smaller regional communities will have a negative flow on effect in that community way beyond just the impact on the education of their children. The Committee will note from the covering material that for some of the pieces of communication were multiple copies from different parents sent. So when you add up the total pieces of communication received, it is over 1000.

I respectfully urge the Committee to conduct an investigation into the matters outlined in the petition. As Gavin Bradshaw, Vice President of Burrendah Primary School P&C Association says "we cannot see that any winners will result from these changes and the biggest losers of all will be our children."

Kind Regards



**Sue Ellery MLC**

Leader in the Legislative Council;  
Shadow Minister for Education; Children's Interests