

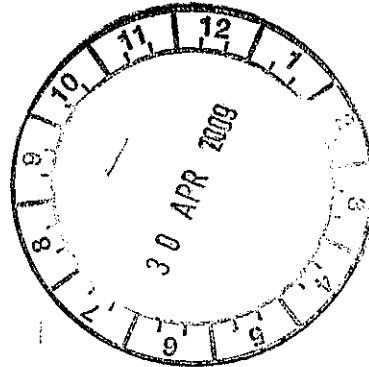


Hon. Wendy **DUNCAN** MLC
Member for the Agricultural Region

21 April 2009

BY EMAIL

PUBLIC



Miss Linda Omar
Committee Clerk
Parliament House
PERTH WA 6000

Dear Miss Omar

**Re: Submission to the Standing Committee on Environment and Public Affairs
Petition no 25- Regarding Esperance Residential College - Upgrade and Expansion**

The Country High School Hostels Authority advised several years ago that the Esperance Residential college was a top priority for upgrade and expansion and made a submission to the State Government for funding within the 2008/09 budget. The government gave no commitment to upgrade ERC in that budget, and requests for funding for an upgrade were ignored in each of the previous three year's State Government budgets.

Esperance Residential College situated in the south-east town of Esperance located 750km from Perth, crams more than 100 boarders into a facility designed for 80. Excess students are housed in transportables, very few have the luxury of their own room and the student-to-bathroom ratio is twice what it should be. The dining room cannot cope with all the students in one sitting and there is insufficient staff accommodation to facilitate the proper supervision of the students.

At the beginning of this year students were turned away from Esperance Residential College because of overcrowding. These students come from Eucla, Leinster, Leonora, Lake King, Ravensthorpe and Hopetoun. The next nearest facility is Merredin or Katanning which places undue burden on parents in the north and east.

The college was built in 1968 to accommodate 75-80 students in dormitory-style accommodation. In 1997, 14 single rooms were added and the remaining dormitories were made into rooms to accommodate 2 and 4 students. Two new staff flats were also built. In 2005 a new roof and alterations to the foyer were carried out.

A significant impact was felt by the college after the 2004 upgrade of the Esperance Senior High School which led to an increase in enrolments of students needing accommodation in town. This in turn led to pressure on the college's capacity – suddenly numbers went from the capacity of 80 to 95-105 for each of the past 4 years.



C:\Vv\eo\letters\090421residentialcollege

Phone 08 9071 1500 Fax 08 9071 1633

Email wendy.duncan@mp.wa.gov.au

Web www.nationalswa.com

Shop 5, Dutton Arcade Esperance WA 6450

All correspondence to Private Bag 1, Esperance WA 6450

What is required:

1. A modern, spacious accommodation facility to house students attending the Esperance Senior High School.
2. Replacement of old demountables with new buildings to house 50 student with a single room each.
3. A larger dining room to accommodate up to 100 students.
4. Five new staff houses, to attract long-term staff and provide continuity for the students.
5. Realignment of the access road.

The future:

With the growth of the Esperance port, changing needs of the mining industry and a strong agricultural sector, education resources in Esperance continue to be placed under pressure to provide competitive educational facilities and opportunities for students and families.

Facilities such as the Esperance Residential College are an integral part of meeting the needs of education in our region. With the opening of the first private high school in Esperance, the Esperance Anglican Community School, we have the chance to give families more choice about educating their children closer to home.

I see a bright future for education in the south-east and would not rule out a multi-purpose residential facility in the future. The Esperance Residential College is uniquely located in proximity to the Esperance Senior High school, Curtin VTEC and the Esperance Anglican Community School which offers an excellent opportunity to co-locate residential accommodation to service each facility.

Yours sincerely



Hon Wendy Duncan MLC
Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister for Regional Development; Lands
Member for the Agricultural Region