

Education and Innovation Committee
Inquiry into the Education and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2014
Question on Notice
Asked on 27 August 2014

Mr Neil Symes asked Mr Bevan Brennan, Assistant Director-General, State Schools – Operation, Department of Education, Training and Employment –

QUESTION:

Mr Brennan, you briefed us recently on student attendance rates and you said that there had been only two prosecutions that you were aware of when you briefed us and that the warning notices were often very effective. Could you please advise the committee whether a warning notice is the first formal step in the legal process and therefore has to be approved by the DG and, under the bill, the regional director? Can you also update the committee about how many warning notices have been issued in the past 12 months?

ANSWER:

Information provided by the Queensland Police Service indicates that in 2013, there were six persons charged under “obligation of parent to ensure attendance”.

The notice process is the first step prescribed in the *Education (General Provisions) Act 2006* to officially inform a parent about their obligation to ensure their child is enrolled and attends a state school or a non-state school, on every school day for the educational program in which the child is enrolled, unless the parent has a reasonable excuse.

The notice must be issued by an “authorised officer” which includes a Principal, a Deputy Principal or a Head of Campus.

Schools are not required to report on the number of notices issued. However, in accordance with the Department of Education, Training and Employment’s *Managing Student Absences and Enforcing Enrolment and Attendance at State Schools* procedure, schools keep a copy of the notices and record the date, time and by whom the notices were posted.

State schools have the option to create the initial and warning notices using OneSchool (the student information management system) or using the templates available from the procedure. This decision is made by the school.

Data for a 12 month period from 26 August 2013 to 26 August 2014 shows the number of notices generated by the OneSchool system were as follows:

- 1416 Initial Notices
- 488 Warning Notices

It is important to note that this data may not reflect the number of notices issued to parents because:

- not all schools use the OneSchool system to create the notice/s; and
- individual circumstances may have changed and so the school may choose not to issue the notice.

The proposed amendment to the *Education (General Provisions) Act 2006* relates to the power to commence proceedings against a parent for failing to comply with their obligation to ensure enrolment and attendance of their child at school. It does not change provisions relating to the issuing of a warning notice.