

Briefing Note

Deputy Director-General, Corporate Services Division
 Department of Education, Training and Employment

DRAFT

Action required: For Approval

Action required by: ASAP

Urgent – In order to review the School Viability Assessment procedure by end of Term 1, 2014.

SUBJECT: IMPROVEMENT REVIEW OF SCHOOL VIABILITY ASSESSMENT PROCEDURE

Summary of key objectives

- Following its initial implementation in 2013, the Infrastructure Strategy, Research and Performance (ISRP) unit seeks approval to review and make operational improvements to the School Viability Assessment procedure.
- Although the review of the procedure is not scheduled to occur until May 2015, in line with Departmental procedural requirements, ISRP has prepared a proposed consultation plan to enable the review to be completed by the end of Term 1, 2014 (**Attachment 1 – 13/395134**).
- ISRP will write to key education stakeholders to seek feedback for the review (**Attachment 2 – 13/XXXXXX**).

Key issues

1. The Department's School Viability Assessment procedure was approved and implemented for the first time in May 2013.
2. In the 2013 School Viability Assessment process, nine schools were approved to proceed to consultation for proposed closure or amalgamation.
3. At the conclusion of the assessment and consultation process, in September 2013, six schools were approved to close at the end of 2013—Charlton State School, Fortitude Valley State School, Nyanda State High School, Old Yarranlea State School, Stuart State School and Toowoomba South State School.
4. Two schools were approved to remain open—Everton Park State High School and Wyreema State School—while the proposed amalgamation of Coorparoo Secondary College with Brisbane State High School was not approved to proceed.
5. The Minister has publicly stated there will be no further school closures associated with a school viability assessment in this term of Government.
6. In line with departmental processes for developing and reviewing procedures, ISRP is scheduled to conduct a review of the School Viability Assessment procedure in May 2015.
7. ISRP considers it may be appropriate to conduct a review of the procedure earlier than 2015, in order to make improvements to the procedure for any subsequent round of the School Viability Assessment process.
8. As per Attachment 1, ISRP has proposed a process to review the procedure and consult with internal and external stakeholders.

9. While it is not a requirement for ISRP to seek input from external stakeholders in the review of this procedure, ISRP considers it would be good consultative practice, due to the community and political sensitivity around the school closure process.
10. Stakeholder groups are as follows:
 - INTERNAL:
 - a. Office of Education Queensland
 - b. Regional Directors
 - EXTERNAL:
 - c. Queensland Association of State School Principals (QASSP)
 - d. Queensland Secondary Principals Association (QSPA)
 - e. Queensland State P-10/12 School Administrators' Association (QSP-10/12SAA)
 - f. Association of Special Education Administrators of Queensland (ASEAQ) Inc
 - g. P&Cs Queensland
 - h. Isolated Children's Parents' Association (ICPA)
 - i. Queensland Teacher's Union (QTU)
 - j. Together Union
 - k. United Voice.
11. If appropriate, the Executive Director ISRP will write an email to these stakeholders to seek feedback on the existing procedure and the 2013 School Viability Assessment process.

Implications

12. There are no financial implications.
13. The review of the procedure and consultation with external stakeholders may generate media interest.

Background

14. The School Viability Assessment procedure, which was implemented for the first time in 2013, was developed in consultation with external stakeholders including P&Cs Queensland, the Queensland Teachers' Union, Isolated Children's Parents' Association and various principals associations.

Right to information

15. I am of the view that the contents or attachments contained in this brief **are suitable** for publication.

Recommendation

DRAFT

That the Deputy Director-General, Corporate Services Division

- **Note** ISRP's proposed consultation plan to review the School Viability Assessment procedure; and
- **Approve** ISRP to carry out the review and consult with relevant stakeholders prior to the end of Term 1, 2014.

NOTED / APPROVED/ NOT APPROVED

Jeff Hunt
Deputy Director-General
Corporate Services Division
Department of Education, Training and Employment

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Deputy Director-General's comments

