

Question on Notice

No. 18

Asked on 22 February 2022

MR A POWELL ASKED MINISTER FOR EDUCATION, MINISTER FOR INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS AND MINISTER FOR RACING (HON G GRACE)

QUESTION:

Will the Minister advise why the Minister and her department did not consult with Outdoor Education operators before denying them the opportunity to host school camps as part of the deferred start to the 2022 school term and will she provide the sector with an assistance package along similar lines to those provided by the New South Wales and Western Australia Governments?

ANSWER:

The health and wellbeing of students and staff is a priority for the Queensland Government.

To help manage the impacts of COVID-19 on students and their families the Department of Education follows the advice of Queensland's Chief Health Officer and the requirements outlined in Public Health Directions.

Based on this advice, the department developed the Back to School Plan 2022. The plan provides a summary of the COVID-19 safe measures in place for Term 1, 2022, including specific arrangements for the period 7 February to 4 March 2022.

During the four-week period, until 4 March 2022, school camps, excursions, assemblies and large gatherings were suspended. These measures were undertaken to keep school communities safe during the peak of the Omicron wave.

From 4 March 2022, schools returned to normal operations and have, where possible, rescheduled excursions they had planned during this period.

While the Palaszczuk Government continues to offer ongoing small business grant schemes, it has not provided COVID-specific financial assistance to any Queensland businesses in 2022.

While decisions around COVID safe measures have had ramifications for many across the community, including parents and students, these decisions have been taken in the best interests of the safety of all members of our school communities.