

**Question on Notice  
No. 156  
Asked on 22 April 2004**

MRS PRATT asked the Minister for Education and the Arts (Ms Bligh) -

QUESTION:

With reference to expulsion of students from State schools—

- (1) How many have been expelled each year for the last three financial years, year by year?
- (2) What are the four most common grounds for students to be expelled in that three year period, year by year?
- (3) How many students in the same period have been expelled from State schools in the Nanango Electorate?
- (4) How many expulsions in the Nanango Electorate were from primary schools and how many from high schools in the past three years?
- (5) What alternative education is offered to expelled students in the Nanango Electorate who are too young to receive Commonwealth income support?
- (6) Over the past three financial years how many students have been suspended, compared to expulsions, from primary and high schools in the Nanango Electorate and what was the average time of suspension in that period?

ANSWER:

It should be noted that exclusions (expulsions) data held by the Department represent recommendations for exclusion only and not the outcome of any related appeal decisions, or the outcome of decisions made by Executive Directors (Schools) or the Director-General in relation to amending or overturning recommendations from schools.

- (1) There were 910 incidents where students were recommended for exclusion for the 2000-01 financial year, 926 for the 2001-02 financial year, and 895 for the 2002-03 financial year. These figures do not represent the number of students, but rather the number of incidents of recommendations for exclusion.
- (2) School Disciplinary Absence data, including reasons for exclusion recommendations, has only been collected centrally from Term 4 2002 with the introduction of the new School Disciplinary Absence Collection System. The four most common reasons for students to be recommended for exclusion from state schools from Term 4 2002 to Term 4 2003 are, in order:
  - i) Persistently disruptive behaviour adversely affecting others;
  - ii) Physical misconduct involving students not involving an object;
  - iii) Other serious conduct prejudicial to the good order and management of the school (s33 (b) of Act); and
  - iv) Substance misconduct involving an illicit substance.

In relation to the responses to questions 3, 4 and 6 below School Disciplinary Absence data are reported for the four Education Districts within which the Nanango Electorate falls, i.e. South Burnett, Mooloolaba, Nambour and West Moreton. Year level is used as the basis for

calculating data at the primary and secondary education levels. Year level information for School Disciplinary Absences has been collected only since Term 4 2002.

(3) In the districts that cover the Nanango Electorate, there were 85 incidents where students were recommended for exclusion during the period from Term 4 2002 to Term 4 2003. Total enrolments across the four districts at July 2003 were 51,844.

(4) In primary schools in the districts that cover the Nanango Electorate there were seven incidents where students were recommended for exclusion during the period from Term 4 2002 to Term 4 2003. Total enrolments in primary schools across the four districts at July 2003 were 32,021.

In high schools in the districts that cover the Nanango Electorate there were 78 incidents where students were recommended for exclusion during the period from Term 4 2002 to Term 4 2003. Total enrolments in high schools across the four districts at July 2003 were 19,823.

(5) Several alternative education programs, some of which receive government funding, have been established in the Nanango area to assist students who have been suspended or who are at risk of being expelled. The programs currently operate in regional and remote communities, including Nanango, Yarraman, Blackbutt, Benarkin and Kingaroy, and run in conjunction with the South Burnett Community Training Centre. As well as having an educational component, the programs also teach life skills.

These programs have had considerable success in assisting young people to remain within the education system.

(6) In primary schools in the districts that cover the Nanango Electorate there were 1,018 short suspensions and 59 long suspensions during the period from Term 4 2002 to Term 4 2003. Total enrolments in primary schools across the four districts at July 2003 were 32,021.

In high schools in the districts that cover the Nanango Electorate there were 3,315 short suspensions and 292 long suspensions during the period from Term 4 2002 to Term 4 2003. Total enrolments in high schools across the four districts at July 2003 were 19,823.

Suspensions are classified as either a short suspension (one to five days) or a long suspension (six to 20 days). The exact number of days for each disciplinary absence is not collected centrally and therefore the average time of suspension cannot be calculated from the data presently available.

Refer to (4) above for the corresponding exclusion information for comparison.