

Question on Notice

No. 699

Asked on 22 May 2007

Mr Gibson asked the Minister for Education and Training and Minister for the Arts (Mr Welford) —

QUESTION:

With reference to the recent announcement of the forced relocation of the Year 10 students from the Cooroora Secondary College in Pomona to the Cooroy campus of the Noosa District High School and a public meeting held at Cooroora Secondary Campus in Pomona on 15 May 2007 which parents and stakeholders attended as a result of the announcement, and a subsequent letter issued from the Regional Education Director for the Sunshine Coast Region on 17 May in response to the meeting.

- (1) If the impacts of the new Senior Phase of Learning for Queensland Certificate of Education (QCE) are the impetus to move the Year 10 students from Cooroora Secondary Campus to the Noosa District State High School Cooroy Campus, what other forced relocations of Year 10 students are being planned for other P-10 schools in the Gympie Electorate and within the State?
- (2) If no other P-10 schools are considering relocating their Year 10 students as a result of dealing with the Senior Phase of Learning changes, what is the basis for the decision at Cooroora Secondary College?
- (3) How many teaching and ancillary positions will be lost from the Cooroora Secondary College if the forced relocation of Year 10 students is undertaken?
- (4) Is it the intention of Education Queensland to sell off all or a part of the site of the Cooroora Secondary College to developers?
- (5) What public consultation occurred before the public meeting on 15 May 2007 that resulted in the conclusion that the forced relocation of Year 10 students would improve the continuity of learning and curriculum for these students?
- (6) Has any disciplinary action been taken against teaching or ancillary staff member from Education Queensland who have spoken out publicly to protect the students from these forced changes?

ANSWER:

- (1) The recognition of Year 10 as the first or foundation year of the senior phase of learning should not, in itself, force any relocation of students from one site to another.

There are no plans for relocating Year 10 students at other local high schools.

- (2) On 25 September 2006, I approved for Cooroora Secondary College, in Pomona, to become a campus of the Noosa District State High School (NDSHS), whose main campus is in Cooroy. This occurred after consultation with the wider community. This arrangement became effective in January 2007. The Cooroora Secondary College is now known as the Pomona campus of the NDSHS.

The rationale was to enable access for the secondary students on the Pomona campus to the broader range of opportunities and facilities offered by the NDSHS.

Students will be able to select from 26 authority subjects and 16 non-authority or vocational education programs and the Cooroy campus has facilities commensurate with this broad range of program choices.

I object to the Member's claim that the decision to relocate the Year 10 students to the Cooroy community has been "forced" upon the community. This is an over-exaggeration by the Member and almost as harmful as the scaremongering campaign he started when he contacted media and incorrectly claimed that the school was closing. These claims unnecessarily generated anxiety in the local community. He would do well to get his facts right before making such announcements.

Early in the school year, the principal of NDSHS communicated with the parents of Year 10 students about the possibility of moving the Year 10 students to the Cooroy campus in Semester 2 when the students began studying their senior subjects. Parents were supportive of the move because it would give students access to specialist facilities and programs not available at the Pomona campus. There has been ongoing written communication between the principal and parents about the relocation.

- (3) It may be necessary for some teachers to relocate from the Pomona campus to the Cooroy campus from the start of Semester 2, 2007. This will depend on timetabling arrangements. It is not anticipated that there will be any movement of non-teaching staff for Semester 2, 2007.

From 2008 onwards, as the Pomona campus is part of NDSHS, staffing will be determined on the total student enrolment for Noosa District State High School as at Day 8 each year. The principal considers a range of factors across all campuses of the school and final deployment is at the principal's discretion.

- (4) It is not the intention of Education Queensland at this time to sell the site or any part thereof.
- (5) From as early as February 2007 and throughout Term 1, the Principal of NDSHS in conjunction with the parents and citizens association (P&C), school council and the parents of Year 10 students from the Pomona campus has engaged with parents through letters to parents, parent meetings, newsletters, P&C meetings and school council meetings.

- (6) No.