

Question on Notice

No. 35

Asked on 16 February 2011

Mr Knuth MP asked the Minister for Education and Training (Mr Wilson) —

QUESTION:

With reference to the withdrawal of music lessons in 2011 from both the Atherton and Mareeba State High Schools which has left students stranded with instruments and no teacher and as music lessons have long been considered an excellent and important part of curriculum activities in our schools—

Why has funding for music programs been withdrawn and is it intended to phase out music programs from the school curriculum altogether?

ANSWER:

While this question was asked of Minister Wilson, the Honourable Minister for Education and Training, due to recent changes in Ministerial responsibility, I am now the Minister responsible for this matter and therefore provide this response.

I have been advised by the Department of Education and Training that contrary to the Member's assertions, both Atherton and Mareeba State High Schools continue to offer both classroom music and instrumental music instruction in 2011.

The Tablelands cluster of schools received a proportionate instrumental music funding allocation from the Far North Queensland budget based on the student enrolment in these schools.

After the resignation of the strings instrumental music instructor at the end of the 2010 school year, regional staff obtained feedback from principals of affected schools, including Atherton and Mareeba State High Schools, regarding options for the program.

It was determined that the Instrumental Music Program for the Tablelands cluster of schools would be more effectively serviced within the areas of expert teaching that was available. This has resulted in Atherton and Mareeba State High Schools moving to a concert band program in 2011 and, as such, will be providing instruction in woodwind, brass and percussion.

The Queensland Government recognises the importance of music programs to a child's education and I can reassure the Member that there is no intention to phase out music programs from the school curriculum.