

Question on Notice
No. 714
Asked on 16 October 2013

Mr Judge asked the Minister for Education, Training and Employment (MR LANGBROEK)—

QUESTION:

With reference to the assessment criteria applied to determine a school's viability, that is enrolments, accessibility, curriculum and resourcing equity, and in light of the Newman Government's position that Everton Park State High School had increased its viability by offering to sell some land and increase public access—

Why were these options not afforded to other schools?

ANSWER:

I thank the Member for his question.

I acknowledge the significant feedback and submissions provided during the recent community consultation period associated with the proposed closure of eight Queensland state schools.

The community consultation process afforded an opportunity for each school community to identify local issues and unique circumstances which may not have been captured in the Department's initial data analysis.

Following careful consideration of the results of the school viability assessment and the consultation reports, including the submissions provided by each community, I determined that six schools would close and two would remain open.

The decision to close Charlton State School, Fortitude Valley State School, Nyanda State High School, Old Yarranlea State School, Stuart State School and Toowoomba South State School was extremely difficult and not made lightly.

In considering the issues raised during the community consultation process, including submissions presented by each of the communities, I determined that both Everton Park State High School and Wyreema State School would remain open.

I considered that the Everton Park State High School community presented proposals in their written submissions that warranted further investigation, including a reduction of the school's significant footprint by excising part of the site and increased third-party access to the school site. This is not to say that the school's viability has automatically improved. The school will need to work proactively with the Department to implement a range of proposals to improve the overall viability of the school.

The ability for other schools to identify proposals similar to that put forward by Everton Park State High School was not restricted. Each school community was encouraged to put forward issues specific to their school in submissions during the consultation period.