

Question on Notice

No. 642

Asked on 23 May 2023

MR D PURDIE ASKED MINISTER FOR EDUCATION, MINISTER FOR INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS AND MINISTER FOR RACING (HON G GRACE)

QUESTION:

Will the Minister advise if funds will be allocated in the upcoming State Budget for the following state school infrastructure projects in the Ninderry Electorate (a) upgrading and replacement of demountable and asbestos-ridden classrooms and buildings at Coolum State School and (b) a new multipurpose hall for Coolum State High School?

ANSWER:

The Palaszczuk Government is committed to ensuring that schools are maintained to an appropriate standard and provide a safe, fit-for-purpose learning environment for all students.

Master planning is undertaken by the Department of Education for schools with multiple interrelated issues that require a holistic approach to planning. These plans are high-level concept documents that are used to guide and inform potential future investment in development or expansion of the master planned school to most effectively utilise available space and meet the specific needs of the school.

The master plan for Coolum State School, completed in December 2022, focuses on renewal of existing facilities and improved functionality of the school site. It outlines a potential future staged approach to replacing prefabricated buildings with permanent facilities and renewal of core service and curriculum areas.

A budget of \$385,000 (including GST) has been allocated for planning the future implementation of Stage 1 of the master plan to consider site hydraulics, new permanent learning and administration facilities, and the removal of the school's oldest prefabricated buildings. This planning is expected to commence in Term 3, 2023.

Stage 1, and ongoing stages of the master plan, will be considered and assessed through a prioritisation process against other priorities from across the State. This process is used to develop the department's short, medium and long-term investment priorities, which are subject to funding approved through the State budget process.

While buildings at Coolum State School are confirmed to have asbestos-containing material (ACM), the last assessment in 2019 indicated that these materials are in sound condition and do not pose a health risk unless disturbed. The next ACM assessment is scheduled for August 2023.

The department's highest priority is the health, safety and wellbeing of students and staff. The department continues to remove ACM in order of priority, based on ongoing assessments of the condition and likelihood of disturbance. In late 2022, ACM removal occurred in Coolum State School's Block H amenities.

When considering new infrastructure projects for school facilities, such as a multi-purpose facility, the department works with principals to develop a list of priorities through a School Strategic Infrastructure Plan (SSIP).

Coolum State High School has listed a new multi-purpose facility to accommodate whole-of-school events as priority one on its SSIP. Coolum State School's SSIP is currently under review.

Coolum State High School has a single court multi-purpose hall that is used for sports and smaller assemblies for separate cohorts.

The Palaszczuk Government continues to invest in Coolum State High School with a number of significant projects transforming the school's facilities, such as:

- a \$19.9 million (including GST) project to deliver a new learning centre with additional classrooms and expanded administration facilities. This project is currently underway and forecast to be completed in late June 2023; and
- a new school security fence valued at \$1 million (including GST). This project reached practical completion in March 2023.

The department will continue to support Coolum State School and Coolum State High School to identify and prioritise their infrastructure needs, and explore appropriate funding opportunities for any potential future projects.