

Question on Notice
No. 759
Asked on 13 June 2023

MR T WATTS ASKED MINISTER FOR EDUCATION, MINISTER FOR INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS AND MINISTER FOR RACING (HON G GRACE)

QUESTION:

With reference to the significant financial investment in infrastructure at the Denise Kable Centre, and the Workplace Health and safety concerns of Education Department staff across Toowoomba's five state high schools (Centenary Heights State High School, Harristown State High, Highfields State Secondary College, Toowoomba State High and Wilsonton State High)—

Will the Minister advise if there are any plans to maximise the use of the Denise Kable Centre, to create a 'Positive Learning Centre' for the most disengaged students in our state secondary schools for term 3 2023 or term 4 2023 or term 1 2024?

ANSWER:

The Denise Kable Centre (the Centre) provides outreach and support services for students with challenging behaviours, and young people who have either disengaged from the education system or who are at risk of disengaging. The Centre provides access to a range of cross agency services tailored specifically to meet the complex needs of young people from a dedicated facility.

Students who receive support from the Centre attend mainstream school or are enrolled in alternative pathways.

Once leaving the Centre, students and young people continue to receive targeted support under a case management approach and are supported within their school and classroom contexts.

In October 2022, the Denise Kable Centre recommenced operations in a newly constructed facility on the grounds of Clifford Park Special School, Hursley Road, Newtown. This prompted a review of the services provided by the Centre.

The current model of operation is a result of extensive consultation with principals, a review undertaken by the Department of Education's Education Improvement Branch and is consistent with the department's new strategy, *Equity and Excellence*.

Significantly, the Centre has established itself as a multi-agency service hub, engaging a range of services to meet the complex needs of young people, including:

- Act for Kids, a parenting program that strengthens parent and child connections;
- Choice and change, a youth engagement program with a focus on building emotional intelligence and social skills;
- Link and Launch, supporting Year 12 completers who are not in education, employment or training to navigate the options available to them; and
- Lives lived well, providing support for young people over 12 who are impacted by alcohol, drugs or mental health concerns.

Expanded services coming soon include:

- Project Booyah, as announced on 20 June 2023 by the Honourable Mark Ryan MP, Minister for Police and Corrective Services and Minister for Fire and Emergency Services, is currently being established in Toowoomba to commence in 2024. Project Booyah is a Youth Mentoring Program helping young people aged 14 to 17 years make better life choices;
- a range of health services, such as Deadly Ears screening, vaccination clinics, Child and Youth Mental Health First Aid programs, Child and Youth Mental Health Services; and
- Big Buddy program and Homework Club for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander youth.

The Centre is also in negotiations with service providers to expand service delivery including Adapt Mentoring, Drug Arm, EACH Wantima, DISCO, Goulburri, Lifeline, Mercy, PCYC and NDIS Local Area Coordinators.

The department is recruiting a psychologist to provide outreach services from the Centre to students from across the Darling Downs region.

The Regional Director and Director, Student Connect are currently investigating alternative education options to ensure the Centre's capacity is maximised, including alternative learning settings.