

Minister's Office File Ref:	
Department File Ref:	12/293265

Briefing Note

Chief of Staff

Office of the Minister for Education, Training and Employment

Action required: For Noting

Action required by: 08/08/12

Urgent – To address a policy void regarding school viability assessment and school closures.

SUBJECT: MINISTERIAL ISSUES BRIEF - SCHOOL CLOSURES

Summary of key objectives

- The Department currently has no active procedure in place to assess the viability of Queensland state schools or to make recommendations to the Minister regarding proposed school closures.
- The Infrastructure Services Branch (ISB) has proposed three options for the Minister's consideration, in order to progress the direction around school closures.
- There is sensitivity around the issue of school closures and the development of any new procedure would attract significant interest from education stakeholders.
- Seek direction regarding the proposed school closure summary and consultation requirements.

Key issues

1. The previous procedure – *Assessment, Closure or Mothballing of Unviable State Schools (FCM-PR-002)* – was suspended in 2010 at the request of the former Education Minister, the Hon. Geoff Wilson MP, following a large amount of negative feedback about the process from education stakeholders.
2. A Working Party was formed, chaired by the Director-General, and consisting of representatives from the Queensland Council of Parents and Citizens' Association (QCPCA), the Isolated Children's Parents' Association (ICPA), Principals Associations and union representatives and a representation of local Mayors.
3. During 2011, the Working Party developed a draft *School Sustainability* procedure to replace the previous procedure.
4. The draft *School Sustainability* strategy proposed a long-term viability assessment process to allow consultation with school communities over a three year period.
5. The draft procedure was not approved by the previous Education Minister, the Hon. Cameron Dick, prior to the state election in March 2012 (*See TRIM Ref: 11/223550*).
6. The Department needs a procedure in place to assess the viability of schools and to make recommendations to the Minister regarding proposed school closures.
7. In accordance with Chapter 2, Part 3, Sections 18 and 20 of the *Education (General Provisions) Act 2006* (the Act), the Minister **must**:
 - announce all proposed school closures in the Government Gazette at least six months prior to any actual closure; and
 - carry out 'adequate consultation' with school communities.
8. Under the previous procedure, public notices appeared in the Government Gazette after the students no longer attended and the school was "mothballed" for 12 months.
9. However, on advice from the Legislative Services unit of the Department's Strategic Policy and Research Branch, proposed school closures should be advertised in the Government Gazette **prior to** the community consultation period in order for the process to more closely align with the Act.

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10. This means the viability assessment and school closure processes could effectively be completed within a single school year, without the need for any mothballing period or prolonged consultation period.
11. The Infrastructure Services Branch (ISB) has identified three School Closure Policy options to address the current policy void:
 - a) Reinstate the previous *Assessment, Closure or Mothballing of Unviable State Schools* which allowed for consultation and mothballing period over two years.
 - b) Implement the as yet unapproved *School Sustainability* procedure, which allowed for up to three years of consultation to occur before a decision was made on a school's closure.
 - c) Develop a new *School Closure* procedure which allows for consultation and closure processes to occur within one school year.
12. DETE is presently undertaking its annual review of schools, in consultation with Regional Directors, to identify schools that could be considered for closure at the end of 2012. A total of 55 schools have been identified for possible closure. Refer Attachment 1.
13. No market valuations have been obtained to identify potential sale proceeds. The estimated ongoing annual savings of approximately \$13 million as per attachment may be achieved from the 2013-14 financial year should the school closures proceed. In addition a one off saving of an estimated \$2.8 million maintenance liability will be achieved should these schools close.
14. Significant consultation has been undertaken with Education Queensland, including Regional Directors. Should school closures proceed, *Education (General Provisions Act) 2006* (EGPA) requires consultation with school staff, parents and school communities following gazettal of the school closure would be required.
15. Dependent on the closure policy position, school closure and associated consultation processes will take between two to three months (Option c) and three years (Option b).

Implications

16. School viability assessments and proposed school closures are issues which attract significant media and public interest.
17. Once a preferred policy/procedure option has been identified by the Minister, ISB would consult the policy/procedure with:
 - Regional Directors
 - Executive Director, Education Queensland
 - Corporate Communications and Marketing (CCM)
 - Legal and Administrative Law Branch (LALB)
 - Representatives from the four Queensland State Principal Associations:
 - o Queensland Association of State School Principals (QASSP)
 - o Queensland Secondary Principals' Association (QSPA)
 - o Association of Special Education Administrators in Queensland (ASEAQ)
 - o Queensland State P-10/12 School Administrators' Association.
 - Representatives from the Parent associations:
 - o Queensland Council of Parents and Citizens' Association (QCPCA)
 - o Isolated Children's Parents' Association (ICPA).
18. If consultation regarding closure was to occur in 2012 for school closure by end of 2012, resources would be needed to assist Regional Directors.

Background

19. Although the draft *School Sustainability* procedure received support from members of the Working Party, Infrastructure Services Branch had significant reservations as to the workability of the solution, due to the length of time proposed for a decision on school closures.
20. The previous method of 'mothballing' schools for 12 months prior to a final decision on closure was also not workable, as the facility lay vacant risking vandalism and facility deterioration, and it prolonged the time taken for the property to be declared surplus, and added to the Government Land Register (GLR) for disposal.
21. ICPA, one of the members of the Working Party, has enquired about the status of the draft *School Sustainability* procedure and there is an expectation that procedure will still be implemented.

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22. There have been no school viability assessments or proposed closures during 2011 or 2012, as a result of the policy 'suspension' in 2010. However, there has been one school which self-closed this year – Palmerston East State School – due to no enrolments.

Right to information

23. I am of the view that the contents or attachments contained in this brief **are not suitable** for publication as it relates to as yet unapproved Departmental policy.

Recommendation

That the Chief-of-Staff **note**:

- The Department currently has no active procedure in place to assess the viability of Queensland state schools or to make recommendations to the Minister regarding proposed school closures.
- The Infrastructure Services Branch (ISB) has proposed three options for the Minister's consideration, in order to address the policy void that currently exists around school closures.

NOTED

Fiona Crawford
Chief of Staff
Office of the Hon John-Paul Langbroek MP
Minister for Education, Training and Employment

/ /

☐ Copy to Assistant Minister

Chief of Staff's comments

Action Officer Emma Clarey Senior Project Officer	Endorsed by: Joe Willis Director, Infrastructure Strategy	Endorsed by: Lee Callum Executive Director, Strategy, Research & Performance	Endorsed by: Paul Hobbs Assistant Director-General Infrastructure Services	Endorsed by: Jeff Hunt A/Deputy Director-General Corporate Services	Endorsed by: Julie Grantham Director-General
Tel: 323 70026	Tel:323 71902 Mob: 0413 612 633 Date: / /	Tel:323 70950 Mob: 0408 018 611 Date: / /	Tel: 323 70658 Mob: 0439 720 664 Date: / /	Tel: 340 56329 Mob:0414 470 207 Date: / /	Tel: 323 70900 Mob: Date: / /

CONFIDENTIAL

**Attachment 1
2012 Proposed School Closure Summary**

CQR		NCR		DSR		FNR		MER		SER		NQR		
School	Electorate	School	Electorate	School	Electorate	School	Electorate	School	Electorate	School	Electorate	School	Electorate	
Disclosure would, on balance, be contrary to the public interest under s 49 of the RTI Act		Disclosure would, on balance, be contrary to the public interest under s 49 of the RTI Act		Disclosure would, on balance, be contrary to the public interest under s 49 of the RTI Act		Disclosure would, on balance, be contrary to the public interest under s 49 of the RTI Act		Disclosure would, on balance, be contrary to the public interest under s 49 of the RTI Act		Disclosure would, on balance, be contrary to the public interest under s 49 of the RTI Act		Stamford SS (4)		Total
												Mount Isa		26
												Yowah SS (5)		
Disclosure would, on balance, be contrary to the public interest under s 49 of the RTI Act		Disclosure would, on balance, be contrary to the public interest under s 49 of the RTI Act		Disclosure would, on balance, be contrary to the public interest under s 49 of the RTI Act		Disclosure would, on balance, be contrary to the public interest under s 49 of the RTI Act		Disclosure would, on balance, be contrary to the public interest under s 49 of the RTI Act		Disclosure would, on balance, be contrary to the public interest under s 49 of the RTI Act		Disclosure would, on balance, be contrary to the public interest under s 49 of the RTI Act		22
														7
Totals														Grand Total
6		8		8		14		7		2		10		55

Secondary Schools Phased Closure - to accommodate Yr12 Senior Completion 2013
Disclosure would, on balance, be contrary to the public interest under s 49 of the RTI Act

Schools amalgamated via a cluster approach.

Cluster Regional/Provincial Schools to Amalgamate
Disclosure would, on balance, be contrary to the public interest under s 49 of the RTI Act

	Potential Savings (2013/14 FY Projections) - From Primary Schools Closures
Recurrent Savings	\$13,884,418
Land Value	Not available at this time
Backlog Maintenance	\$2,852,557
ICT Cost Savings	\$980,037
TOTAL	\$17,717,012

Rebecca Beaumont

From: donotreply_webcontactform@cabinet.qld.gov.au
Sent: Friday, 9 November 2012 9:19 AM
To: Education
Subject: Closure of the Barrett Adolescent Centre School

Importance: High

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

Categories: Corro

Cabinet Contact email for John-Paul Langbroek MP Minister for Education, Training and Employment

Subject: Closure of the Barrett Adolescent Centre School

Title: Mrs

First Name: ary to the p

Family Name: ance, be contrary to the public interest

Email: alance, be contrary to the public interest un

Address:

Town:

State: alance, be contrary to the public interest un

Postcode:

Email:

Comment:

The Barrett Adolescent Centre School, an Education Queensland School currently operates in the adolescent ward of the Park Centre for Mental Health. Please don't let this one go. Mainstream schools cannot cope with these troubled teens. They cannot compensate for the loss of expertise needed for these troubled adolescents. Indeed with Australian teen suicide rates in the top 30 internationally, and probably even higher given the almost 30% increase since 2004, we need more services.



Hon John-Paul Langbroek MP
Minister for Education, Training and Employment

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- 7 JAN 2013

ould, on balance, be contrary to the public interest under s 49 of

Dear [redacted] in balance, be contrary to the public interest under

Thank you for your email dated 9 November 2012 regarding the Barrett Adolescent Centre Special School and your advocacy for the continuation of a specialised program through the Centre.

I can assure you that decisions on the proposed changes to delivering the health services provided by the Centre are not taken lightly by Government and my Department is committed to providing equitable educational opportunities for all students of school age in Queensland.

In meeting this commitment, Education Queensland schools strive to address the diverse needs of all students in their care.

I understand that Queensland Health is investigating future options for the adolescent patients who currently attend the Barrett Centre, as well as alternative contemporary models of care to replace the current services. Officers from my Department, including Mr Kevin Rogers, Principal of the Barrett Centre, have been invited to participate in Planning Groups with Queensland Health in this regard.

Once Queensland Health finalises its recommendations, my Department will design and implement appropriate educational support to address the needs of students who require the educational services provided at the Barrett Centre.

My Department remains committed to supporting current students and those who, in future, may require the specialised and intensive educational services currently provided at the Centre.

Thank you for raising this important matter with me. Should you wish to discuss this matter further, I invite you to contact Mr Peter Blatch, Assistant Regional Director, Metropolitan Region by email at peter.blatch@dete.qld.gov.au or on telephone 3422 8330.

Yours sincerely

JOHN-PAUL LANGBROEK MP
Minister for Education, Training and Employment

Ref: 12/452076 ETE/12/4123

Rebecca Beaumont

From: [redacted]
Sent: Friday, 9 November 2012 1:26 PM
To: Communities, Child Safety and Disability Services
Subject: Barrett Adolescent Centre Closure

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

Categories: Corro

I am writing with very deep concern about the closure of the Barrett Adolescent School announced yesterday in the media.

The closure concerns me on many fronts.

1. [redacted] I see this school as an essential support in the network of my profession. [redacted] Aside from the obvious loss of their teaching positions at the centre, I see this as an attack on their professionalism. The Principal of that school recently returned from a conference in Amsterdam where he spoke on the role of hospital schools. These professionals are experts in their field and have earned my highest regard. Has someone of his standing – a practitioner, not an academic or bureaucrat been consulted?

2. I am a parent of a patient of the school. We live in [redacted] and for more than 3 years sought assistance from our local services to no avail. My daughter's position deteriorated to the point where she had not attended school [redacted] despite all efforts of the local high school and other support networks. I have had extended periods of leave to support her in that time. [redacted]

[redacted]
Disclosure would, on balance, be contrary to the public interest under s 49 of the RTI Act

[redacted] At home she had withdrawn to the point of not leaving her room. Since her time at Barrett, she has increased her social confidence dramatically. She is proud of the fact that she has real friends and speaks of contacting her old friends when she comes home [redacted]

[redacted]
Disclosure would, on balance, be contrary to the public interest under s 49 of the RTI Act

[redacted] We miss her more terribly than you can imagine but she is alive. The night I had to leave her at the centre and [redacted] was the worst time in my life. But I can think of something worse. The impact on [redacted] is so strong. [redacted] We are so fortunate to have [redacted] to support us and their teachers at [redacted] have been our rock. [redacted] When

they heard the media reports of the Barrett closure with me on the radio and later the ABC news they were dumbfounded. Shock masked their faces. Would you care to hear what they said and how I could not answer their simple, direct, obvious concerns? After [redacted] at Barrett, my daughter shows genuine affection and is lively, vibrant and making plans for the future. We had a meeting with [redacted]

[redacted]
Disclosure would, on balance, be contrary to the public interest under s 49 of the RTI Act

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3. **As a citizen who has seen how the centre operates and met other patients, I fear for some of the other patients.** Whilst my daughter and our family have [balance, be contrary to the public interest under s 49 of the RTI Act] not all of these kids do! [contrary to the public interest under s 49 of the RTI Act] There simply are no private centres like this. Some of the patients/students come from dysfunctional homes and can articulate that they fear to return home – this is pre closure feelings, to my knowledge the students have not yet been informed of the closure. The stress on them when they find out will be significant. I try to imagine a last day at the centre...what does it look like? I see a young 15 year old with bags in hand and doona over shoulders heading aimlessly across Gailes golf course... of course it will not be like this...perhaps she will go to a foster home if her own home is deemed unsafe...perhaps she will take to the streets rather than remain with an addict parent...can you tell me?...does she turn to addiction herself because her safety net has been pulled away? Or does she take her life finally as she has tried to many, many times before. These are real questions. I am not one bent to drama.
4. I fear that the decision is based on the fact the building is in poor condition and needs urgent replacing. When possums in the roof urinate it drips through the ceiling onto furniture and furnishings for example. Despite this I have kept my daughter there as the benefits far outweigh the negatives. The centre might cater for only 16 patients to live in but more attend as day patients and these figures do not account for the hundreds, possibly thousands of teenagers across Qld that should be accessing such a unit in their regional centres. I thought my fight would be to have more such centres open in regional centres; not a **fight to keep the one centre for the whole of Queensland open.**
5. A spokeswoman on the ABC news report last night, mentioned that the closure is due to the fact that the strategy upon which the centre operates is outdated and that they plan to put other measures in place. I cannot comment on the currency of the strategies. It is outside my professional domain but they are working for us! More importantly though in my view is the gap that is left. How can this centre be closed by the end of December less than 2 months away, and an alternative be ready for those patients currently admitted/enrolled or on waiting lists? **Surely if this reason for closure is genuine, "they" would keep the Barrett centre open during a transition period.**

Please consider these statements and call me if there is anything further I can do to support the Centre, its clients, its staff and your work regarding the matter. The timelines provided make this a matter of great urgency. You can see that it is already impacting on individuals like my daughter and families like ours.

Phone: [balance, be contrary to the public interest under s 49 of the RTI Act]
Mobile: [balance, be contrary to the public interest under s 49 of the RTI Act]

Yours sincerely

[balance, be contrary to the public interest under s 49 of the RTI Act]



Hon John-Paul Langbroek MP
Minister for Education, Training and Employment

- 7 JAN 2013

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Dear [contrary to the public i

Thank you for your email dated 9 November 2012 regarding the Barrett Adolescent Centre Special School and your advocacy for the continuation of a specialised program through the Centre.

The difference that the Barrett Adolescent Centre Special School had made for your daughter is evident from your letter.

I can assure you that the decisions on the proposed changes to delivering the health services provided by the Centre are not taken lightly by Government and my Department is committed to providing equitable educational opportunities for all students of school age in Queensland.

In meeting this commitment, Education Queensland schools strive to address the diverse needs of all students in their care.

I understand that Queensland Health is investigating future options for the adolescent patients who currently attend the Barrett Centre, as well as alternative contemporary models of care to replace the current services. Officers from my Department, including Mr Kevin Rogers, Principal of the Barrett Centre, have been invited to participate in Planning Groups with Queensland Health in this regard.

Once Queensland Health finalises its recommendations, my Department will design and implement appropriate educational support to address the needs of students who require the educational services provided at the Barrett Centre.

My Department remains committed to supporting current students and those who, in future, may require the specialised and intensive educational services currently provided at the Centre.

Thank you for raising this important matter with me. Should you wish to discuss this matter further, I invite you to contact Mr Peter Blatch, Assistant Regional Director, Metropolitan Region by email at peter.blatch@dete.qld.gov.au or on telephone 3422 8330.

Yours sincerely

JOHN-PAUL LANGBROEK MP
Minister for Education, Training and Employment

Ref: 12/457196 ETE/12/4144

Rebecca Beaumont

From: disclosure would, on balance, be contrary to the public interest under s 49 of the RTI Act
Sent: Wednesday, 14 November 2012 8:23 AM
To: Education
Subject: ATTENTION...BARRETT CENTRE CLOSURE
Attachments: contrary to the public interest to Education Minister.docx

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

Categories: Corro

disclosure would, on balance, be contrary to the public interest under s 49

13 November 2012

Hon John-Paul Langbroek MP
Minister for Education, Training and Employment
PO Box 15033, City East QLD 4002
education@ministerial.qld.gov.au

Dear Minister

Proposed closure of the Barrett Centre

As an employee at the Barrett Centre, I wish to draw to your attention to the proposed closure of this important facility.

The Barrett Adolescent Centre School, an Education Queensland school, has operated in the adolescent ward of the Park Centre for Mental Health at Wacol for 30 years. It is an inpatient Adolescent Psychiatry Unit where young people with severe mental health issues have access to treatment and services, including important learning and vocational opportunities.

As you may be aware, in his evidence at the Child Protection Commission of Inquiry, Dr Brett McDermott, executive director of the Mater Child and Youth Mental Health Service indicated that the Barrett Centre would be closed in December.

The school was contacted by media outlets on Thursday afternoon and told that a decision had been taken by the Government to close the Barrett Centre. Subsequently, we have seen media reports that the West Moreton Hospital and Health Service has indicated that a final decision to close the facility has not been taken.

However, to date, the school, staff or students have had no official contact from the Department to indicate the future of our centre or the service we provide.

Students, parents and staff at the school are very distressed - not only at the prospect of the closure of the school, but also the manner in which this information has been transmitted and the lack of an apparent plan for continuation of this vital service.

The way that this process has been conducted is unacceptable and has caused extreme distress to vulnerable young people and their families.

Rumours of the closure of the Barrett Centre have also concerned the local community. To date, almost 3000 people have signed an online petition which was initiated by a member of the community over the weekend.

It is vital that, as Minister, you ensure that the young people, staff and families associated with the Barrett Centre have some certainty and security around any decisions that may have been taken or may be taken in the future in relation to this facility.

The Barrett Centre plays a critical role in the health, safety and recovery of children and young people at risk. The way that this process has been conducted indicates that the health of these young people and the future of the staff is not a priority for your Government.

If you would like to discuss this matter with me, please contact me on the details above.

Yours sincerely

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Hon John-Paul Langbroek MP
Minister for Education, Training and Employment

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Dear [redacted]ntrary to the publ

Thank you for your email dated 14 November 2012 regarding the Barrett Adolescent Centre Special School and your advocacy for the continuation of a specialised program through the Centre.

I am concerned to hear of the distress you have felt about the way in which the school community became aware of the proposed changes to delivering the health services provided by the Centre. I can assure you that decisions of this nature are not taken lightly by Government and my Department is committed to providing equitable educational opportunities for all students of school age in Queensland.

In meeting this commitment, Education Queensland schools strive to address the diverse needs of all students in their care.

I understand that Queensland Health is investigating future options for the adolescent patients who currently attend the Barrett Centre, as well as alternative contemporary models of care to replace the current services. Officers from my Department, including Mr Kevin Rogers, Principal of the Barrett Centre, have been invited to participate in Planning Groups with Queensland Health in this regard.

Once Queensland Health finalises its recommendations, my Department will design and implement appropriate educational support to address the needs of students who require the educational services provided at the Barrett Centre.

My Department remains committed to supporting current students and those who, in future, may require the specialised and intensive educational services currently provided at the Centre.

Thank you for bringing your concerns to my attention. Should you wish to discuss this matter further, I invite you to contact Mr Rogers on telephone 3271 8739.

Yours sincerely

JOHN-PAUL LANGBROEK MP
Minister for Education, Training and Employment

Ref: 12/454627 ETE/12/4247

Rebecca Beaumont

From: [disclosure would, on balance, be contrary to the public interest under s 49 of the RTI Act]
Sent: Monday, 12 November 2012 3:55 PM
To: Education
Subject: Concerning the closure of the Barrett Centre

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

Categories: Corro

Dear Mr Langbroek

I am writing this in protest of the closure of the Barrett Adolescent Centre at Wacol. It is inconceivable to believe that the government is so heartless to close a much needed facility that saves our youth, it is the only facility in Queensland that supplies intensive treatment that is needed, especially at such a crucial time where youth suicide has reached crisis levels. How many of our children are they going to let die all for the sake of the mighty dollar.

In the Herald on Thursday 8th November, it states they are in the middle of an inquiry to better protect our children, by this action how is this protecting them, it will be killing them. That money should be used to renovate the facility not close it down, as always Mental health is at the bottom of the list, the government is acting like it is an embassament to them, thinking get rid of it, out of sight out of mind, it's a wonder they don't still bring them in from the river like they did in the 1800's.

Dr McDermott openly admits that by the closure of the Barrett Centre, it will cause more suicides, so knowing that, what does that make the government, and how do they sleep at night knowing that they are willing killing our children. Mental health does not discriminate, it can reach anyone, from a Barristers son, down to the lower class. How would Campbell Newman feel if one of his children was an inpatient there and the opposition was closing down the facility

They have given no indication on what the future plans are for the kids that are out there now, and by the looks of it they want to close it down underhandedly while a lot of them are on leave at Christmas. What about the children in the future who need intensive treatment the only the Barrett Centre supplies. Are they just going to shove them into a understaffed hospital bed, where they won't get any specialized treatment, doped up then sent home as the hospital needs the bed. How is that protecting the children. The Government doesn't live in the real world.

They have no regard for the youth of today or the children at the Barrett, or their families as they still haven't informed the parents of this decision.

At the end of the day these children are the future generation and by every indication given at this time, the Newman Government is telling us they don't care if they live or die, how coldharded is that, they are taking away all hope from the children and their families.

Hope you can help in this matter

[disclosure would, on balance, be contrary to the public interest under s 49 of the RTI Act]



Hon John-Paul Langbroek MP
Minister for Education, Training and Employment

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ould, on balance, be contrary to the public interest under s 49 of

Dear [redacted] contrary to the public

Thank you for your email dated 12 November 2012 regarding the Barrett Adolescent Centre Special School and your advocacy for the continuation of a specialised program through the Centre.

I can assure you that decisions on the proposed changes to delivering the health services provide by the Centre are not taken lightly by Government and my Department is committed to providing equitable educational opportunities for all students of school age in Queensland.

In meeting this commitment, Education Queensland schools strive to address the diverse needs of all students in their care.

I understand that Queensland Health is investigating future options for the adolescent patients who currently attend the Barrett Centre, as well as alternative contemporary models of care to replace the current services. Officers from my Department, including Mr Kevin Rogers, Principal of the Barrett Centre, have been invited to participate in Planning Groups with Queensland Health in this regard.

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Thank you for raising this important matter with me. Should you wish to discuss this matter further, I invite you to contact Mr Peter Blatch, Assistant Regional Director, Metropolitan Region by email at peter.blatch@dete.qld.gov.au or on telephone 3422 8330.

Yours sincerely

JOHN-PAUL LANGBROEK MP
Minister for Education, Training and Employment

Ref: 12/457200 ETE/12/4243

Rebecca Beaumont

From: [redacted] re would, on balance, be contrary to the public interest under s 49 of the
Sent: Sunday, 11 November 2012 7:42 AM
To: thepremier@premiers.qld.gov.au; Education; Health
Subject: Barrett Adolescent Centre Closure

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

Categories: Corro

Dear Sir,

I received the news on Friday 9/11/2012 that you intend to close the Barrett Adolescent Centre in December, just 3 weeks away.

My daughter has been a patient in care at the centre since [redacted] she is an intelligent and beautiful young girl who is sadly severely affected by her mental illness. [redacted] has been sick now for nearly [redacted] in the hope she would become well with the help of a psychiatrist and medication and all the care and love I could give her. [redacted] needs 24 hour care as she [redacted] and struggles daily to survive her illness [redacted] and I struggle to care for my precious girl. I wish you could understand what it is like to need to go to work to support your family, having to leave your unwell child not knowing if when you return she will still be alive. I pray that none of us have to experience the trauma of losing a child to suicide but by closing Barrett Adolescent Centre this could become my reality. I am begging you as a parent to please reconsider this decision. This is the only facility of its kind in Queensland if you take this away there is nothing to replace it. These Beautiful young people have very troubled minds and are very vulnerable, the staff at Barrett help them to cope with their illness and support them on a path to recovery. They attend school and work towards a future and have a place of safety while they recover. Please don't close their lifeline

I hope you are prepared for the consequences of your decision for I fear it will be devastating.

Yours faithfully

[redacted] nce, be contrary to the public interest



Hon John-Paul Langbroek MP
Minister for Education, Training and Employment

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Dear [redacted], be contrary to the public inter

Thank you for your email dated 11 November 2012 regarding the Barrett Adolescent Centre Special School and your advocacy for the continuation of a specialised program through the Centre.

The support that the Barrett Adolescent Centre Special School provides for your daughter, [redacted] is evident from your letter.

I can assure you that the decisions on the proposed changes to delivering the health services provided by the Centre are not taken lightly by Government and my Department is committed to providing equitable educational opportunities for all students of school age in Queensland.

In meeting this commitment, Education Queensland schools strive to address the diverse needs of all students in their care.

I understand that Queensland Health is investigating future options for the adolescent patients who currently attend the Barrett Centre, as well as alternative contemporary models of care to replace the current services. Officers from my Department, including Mr Kevin Rogers, Principal of the Barrett Centre, have been invited to participate in Planning Groups with Queensland Health in this regard.

Once Queensland Health finalises its recommendations, my Department will design and implement appropriate educational support to address the needs of students who require the educational services provided at the Barrett Centre.

My Department remains committed to supporting current students and those who, in future, may require the specialised and intensive educational services currently provided at the Centre.

Thank you for raising this important matter with me. Should you wish to discuss this matter further, I invite you to contact Mr Peter Blatch, Assistant Regional Director, Metropolitan Region by email at peter.blatch@dete.qld.gov.au or on telephone 3422 8330.

Yours sincerely

JOHN-PAUL LANGBROEK MP
Minister for Education, Training and Employment

Ref: 12/457199 ETE/12/4231

Rebecca Beaumont

From: Surfers Paradise Electorate Office <Surfers.Paradise@parliament.qld.gov.au>
Sent: Wednesday, 14 November 2012 10:51 AM
To: Education
Subject: FW: Save the Barrett Adolescent Centre (BAC)
Attachments: letter to the Honourable John-Paul Langbroek.doc

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

Categories: Corro

From: Disclosure would, on balance, be contrary to the public interest under s 49 of the RTI Act
Sent: Wednesday, 14 November 2012 10:47 AM
To: Surfers Paradise Electorate Office
Subject: Save the Barrett Adolescent Centre (BAC)

Dear Mr Langbroek,

I would like to ask you to read my letter, which is included as an attachment.

I would like to ask for your help in saving the Barrett Adolescent Centre – a very special service combining Education Queensland and Queensland Health services to provide the necessary level of care for adolescents with severe mental illness.

I would welcome the opportunity to talk to you if you feel that you would like more information about BAC.

Thank you for your time,

be contrary to the public int

Honourable John-Paul Langbroek
Minister for Education, Training
and Employment

14th November, 2012

Dear Minister Longbroek,

I work at the Barrett Adolescent Centre at The Park - Centre for Mental Health, Wacol. BAC is a 15 bed inpatient unit treating adolescents with severe and complex mental illnesses. We also offer 5-10 day patient places for those able to have leave or who are transitioning back into the community but still require support. We are tertiary referral, supra-regional and our strength is the close working relationships between Qld Health and Education Queensland staff at the Centre.

BAC helps the most vulnerable and deserving Young People in our community. In the recent past, BAC has helped YP who have gone on to:

- be voted apprentice of the year in Qld,
- achieve an OPI at a mainstream high school and to study Physiotherapy,
- finish a nursing degree,
- obtain a national chess ranking.

We currently have one young woman, who had

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Disclosure would, on balance, be contrary to the public interest under s 49 of the RTI Act

Staff were told on 09/11/12 that there are discussions taking place in regards to the future of Barrett Adolescent Centre (BAC). As part of this, a number of issues have been raised and I would like the opportunity, here, to put the opinions of myself and staff.

1A. The National Mental Health Service Planning Framework recommends community-based treatment, close to where adolescents/young people live.

We support this also, however, the National Mental Health Service Planning Framework is exactly that – a framework which elucidates the aspirations of our mental health service. It is not possible in a document of its scope to deal with the circumstances of all individuals who present in our mental health sector. Young People admitted to BAC have already accessed, sometimes for years, their local, community-based Child and Youth Mental Health Service (CYMHS). In many cases, the YP have also had multiple admissions to acute adolescent MH units, attended Mater Hospital Day Program and had multiple presentations to emergency departments. Those services (although excellent) have not managed the needs of these YP who form a sub-set of the MH population.

A BAC closure would return these YP to services which cannot meet their needs, burdening the CYMHS and acute units, causing other children and families, who may have benefited, to remain on waiting lists for longer. Additionally, these YP, in the future, will place pressure on General Practitioners, the social security sector, adult mental health services and, in some cases, the criminal justice and forensic services.

1B. The National Mental Health Service Planning Framework recommends a least restrictive environment with minimum disruption to families, educational and social/community networks.

We support this also; however, the YP of BAC have typically been out of school, confined to home and completely withdrawn from social networks for many months or years, before coming to BAC. Their local CYMHS's have little hope of re-engaging these YP in educational and social settings. However,

BAC, with its unique combining of Qld Health and Education Qld can create both social and educational experiences and YP can form friendships with co-consumers, with staff support; therapeutic interventions such as social skills training groups and groups to teach daily living skills (catching public transport/budgeting) along with psychotherapy and pharmacotherapy offer the best environment to manage individuals with such severe and complex needs.

There is an important point to be made about families. Many of the parents of the YP of BAC have had to take leave from their workplaces to care for their YP; many have lived in fear that their child would harm themselves or others. The burden on parents and siblings is often immense. Having their child admitted to BAC gives parents peace of mind, allows them to resume work and to re-establish normal family routines and to support the other children of the family; this is the best environment for families to undergo family therapy and work with staff support to promote the mental health and functioning of their child.

2. *BAC sits on the grounds of The Park- Centre for Mental Health.* The Park now has a role as an adult forensic service. There are some who feel that it is not appropriate to co-locate an adult secure service and an adolescent service. To this I offer two points:

- BAC staff are willing to re-locate to a new site; however,
- In BAC's history there has always been a forensic service at The Park and there has been not one incident, to date, which would validate the concern for the co-location.

3. *The buildings of BAC are out-dated and run-down.*

Staff agree that the buildings are sub-standard and this has been noted in the last two accreditation reviews. However, this, along with the co-location argument, have nothing to do with need for BAC to provide a service and to support our colleagues in CYMHS by being a point of referral for their most difficult cases.

As you would be aware, there was a planned move to Redlands Hospital and staff put hours of work into meetings to design a unit and to plan how it would function. This proposal has now been rejected; however, its important to note that the rejection was not based on the need for a unit such as BAC; the principle objection was based on environmental grounds and the costs of building on a koala habitat.

Lastly, BAC provides much to the MH community beyond the primary care of our Young People. We have a strong interest in research, with links to Universities; we provide placements to nursing and allied health students and form an important part of the Child and Adolescent Psychiatrist trainee program; we provide support and mentorship to Qld CYMHS.

Disclosure would, on balance, be contrary to the public interest under s 49 of the RTI Act

Disclosure would, on balance, be contrary to the public interest under s 49 of the RTI Act

I hope that I have set out a cogent rationale for BAC to remain operating and have counted a number of arguments. I respectfully ask you to raise my concerns with Lawrence Springborg, Minister for Health and ask him to intervene to save the Barrett Adolescent Centre.

Yours sincerely,

Disclosure would, on balance, be contrary to the public interest under s 49 of the RTI Act



Hon John-Paul Langbroek MP
Minister for Education, Training and Employment

- 7 JAN 2013

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Queensland 4002 Australia
Telephone +61 7 3237 1000
Facsimile +61 7 3211 8011
Email education@ministerial.qld.gov.au

on balance, be contrary to the public interest under s

Dear [contrary to the public]

Thank you for your email dated 14 November 2012 regarding the Barrett Adolescent Centre Special School and your advocacy for the continuation of a specialised program through the Centre.

I can assure you that decisions on the proposed changes to delivering the health services provided by the Centre are not taken lightly by Government and my Department is committed to providing equitable educational opportunities for all students of school age in Queensland.

In meeting this commitment, Education Queensland schools strive to address the diverse needs of all students in their care.

I understand that Queensland Health is investigating future options for the adolescent patients who currently attend the Barrett Centre, as well as alternative contemporary models of care to replace the current services. Officers from my Department, including Mr Kevin Rogers, Principal of the Barrett Centre, have been invited to participate in Planning Groups with Queensland Health in this regard.

Once Queensland Health finalises its recommendations, my Department will design and implement appropriate educational support to address the needs of students who require the educational services provided at the Barrett Centre.

My Department remains committed to supporting current students and those who, in future, may require the specialised and intensive educational services currently provided at the Centre.

Thank you for raising this important matter with me. Should you wish to discuss this matter further, I invite you to contact Mr Rogers on telephone 3271 8739.

Yours sincerely

JOHN-PAUL LANGBROEK MP
Minister for Education, Training and Employment

Ref: 12/465065 ETE/12/4251



QUEENSLAND
TEACHERS' UNION
OF EMPLOYEES

RECEIVED 23 NOV 2012

IN REPLY PLEASE QUOTE. srl/wj

15 November 2012

Ms Annette Whitehead
Director-General
Department of Education Training and Employment
PO Box 15033
CITY EAST QLD 4002

Dear Mrs Whitehead

Re: Barrett Adolescent Centre Special School closure

I write to express the Queensland Teachers' Union's deep concerns about the closure of the Barrett Adolescent Centre Special School. This facility caters for some of the most at risk students in Queensland.

The Barrett Adolescent Centre is the only extended care centre of its kind in Queensland.

Programs and protocols are based on best practice and informed by research and visits to like facilities interstate and overseas.

Since the centre opened in 1983 there has been an average of one suicide attempt every two weeks. No adolescent has ever been able to complete a suicide attempt at the centre or hospital grounds since the centre opened.

In the last teaching and learning audit the school achieved the second highest score of the 24 schools in the Metropolitan region. This decision therefore is not based on educational outcomes.

The building of a new Barrett Adolescent Centre at Redlands as part of the state-wide Mental Health Plan is no longer going to occur. This will leave these very vulnerable young people without the much needed facilities provided at the Barrett Centre.

This decision will potentially lead to an increase in suicides among Queensland adolescents.

Address all correspondence to:

The General Secretary, Queensland Teachers' Union
PO Box 1750, Milton BC Qld 4064 • 21 Graham St, Milton
Ph: (07) 3512 9000 • Fax: (07) 3512 9050
ABN 62 408 519 861
Email: qtu@qtu.asn.au • Website: www.qtu.asn.au

The severe psychiatric conditions of the students who access the centre cannot be catered for in community, or in the acute adolescent services in major Queensland hospitals.

The QTU formally requests the reversal of this decision.

In the absence of a decision to reverse the closure, the QTU seeks information concerning the alternative care to be provided for these students.

Yours sincerely

balance, be contrary to the public interest unde

Graham Moloney
General Secretary

cc: [REDACTED]	Minister for Education, Training and Employment
Hon Lawrence Springborg MP	Minister for Health
Hon Tracy Davis MP	Minister for Communities, Child Safety and Disability Services
Ms Annastacia Palaszczuk MP	Member for Inala, Shadow Minister for Education, Training and Employment
Mrs Jo-Ann Miller MP	Shadow Minister for Health
Mrs Desley Scott	Shadow Minister for Disability Services and Mental Health



Office of the Premier

For reply please quote: ECU/RS – TF/12/9118 – DOC/12/82149

11 MAY 2012

on balance, be contrary to the public interest under

Dear [redacted], be contrary to the public interest

Executive Building
100 George Street Brisbane
PO Box 15185 City East
Queensland 4002 Australia
Telephone +61 7 3224 4500
Facsimile +61 7 3221 3631
Email ThePremier@premiers.qld.gov.au
Website www.thepremier.qld.gov.au

Thank you for your email of 14 April 2012 about Yowah State School. I have been requested to reply to you on the Premier's behalf.

The contents of your correspondence have been noted.

This matter has been referred to the Honourable John-Paul Langbroek MP, Minister for Education, Training and Employment for consideration and direct reply to you.

Please be assured that Minister Langbroek will give your concerns full consideration.

Again, thank you for bringing this matter to the Premier's attention.

Yours sincerely

M Weaver
Director
Executive Correspondence

B/C The Honourable the Minister for Education, Training and Employment.

**By direction. For your information and direct reply please.
Copy of inwards correspondence is attached.**

M Weaver
Director
Executive Correspondence



**Queensland
Government**

Michele Rice

From: Karen Cowell
Sent: Monday, 16 April 2012 3:57 PM
To: The Premier
Subject: FW: Shocking waste of Money

Digitised?	YES	NO
If digitised this is not an ELECTRONIC DOCUMENT Enter ALL DATA IN TRIM		
17 APR 2012	Date Received in DPC	
Document No:	Doc/12/74831	
File No:		
Tracking Folder No:	TF/12/9118	

-----Original Message-----

From: [redacted] [redacted] would, on balance, be contrary to the public interest under s 49 of the RTI
Sent: Saturday, 14 April 2012 8:57 PM
To: Director General DPC
Subject: Shocking waste of Money

The Premier,

Dear Sir,

I wish to bring to your attention the shocking waste of money that is happening in the Town of Yowah.

The Primary school is operating with just 2 children.

This is an outrageous waste of taxpayers money and the school should be shut down immediately.

There is a Primary school at Eulo a short distance away that has a residence to house children during the week with a house mother.

The deception of promised attendance numbers has been going on ever since the school opened and continues to this day.

Please don't be deceived any longer and shut this school down.

Yours Sincerely,

[redacted]
[redacted] would, on balance, be contrary to the public interest under s 49 of the RTI



Hon John-Paul Langbroek MP
Member for Surfers Paradise



14 JUL 2012

Minister for Education, Training
and Employment

balance, be contrary to the public interest under

Dear [redacted] contrary to the public i

I refer to your email dated 14 April 2012 to the Honourable Campbell Newman MP, Premier, regarding student enrolment at Yowah State School. The Premier has asked me to respond on his behalf.

Yowah State School was one of a number of small schools across the State that was identified in the 2010 viability assessment process.

The Department of Education, Training and Employment is working closely with schools that have identified viability issues, to implement strategies over a three year period with the aim of strengthening the long term sustainability of the school.

Under the school viability assessment process, the enrolment of Yowah State School is being monitored to determine its future viability.

Should you wish to discuss this matter further, I invite you to contact Ms Desley Gobbert, Principal Advisor, Darling Downs and South West Region, on telephone 4622 9788.

Thank you for your feedback and for bringing this matter to the Government's attention.

Yours sincerely

JOHN-PAUL LANGBROEK MP
Minister for Education, Training and Employment

Ref: 12/189966 ETE/12/0634

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