

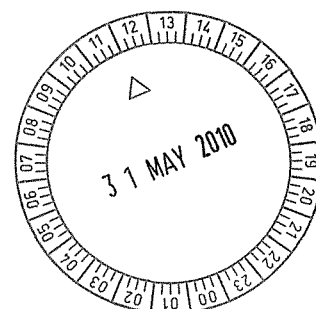


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# PUBLIC

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**Committee Clerk  
 Estimates and Operations Committee  
 Legislative Council  
 Parliament House  
 PERTH WA 6000**

## **SUBMISSION TO ESTIMATES AND OPERATIONS COMMITTEE: INQUIRY INTO THE REMOVAL OF SENIOR SCHOOL ALLOCATION FUNDING FOR YEAR 11 & 12 COURSES AT DISTRICT HIGH SCHOOLS**

### **Background**

The Corrigin Community is serviced by the Corrigin District High School which provides education for students Pre-Primary to Year 10. Students must relocate to other centres to access Year 11 & 12 courses as there are no options currently available in Corrigin. The nearest Senior High Schools are in the towns of Merredin and Narrogin both approximately 115km from Corrigin.

Whilst the majority of students who continue with Year 11 & 12 schooling do so at schools in the nearby regional centres or in the metropolitan area, there have been a number of students who in the past have taken advantage of the Year 11 & 12 course offered at Corrigin District High School. The removal of Year 11 & 12 courses from District High Schools has limited the options for some students to obtain a senior school education.

### **Response to the Inquiry terms of Reference**

- a. *the decision making process and rationale behind the decision.*  
 Individual schools have not been consulted, however the school Associations may have been. A more extensive consultation process would have been more appropriate in order for schools to evaluate the impact of the removal of Year 11 & 12 courses on their community.
- b. *the effect of the decision on the State budget, the affected students and communities:*  
 Students will now need to leave the local community to continue their compulsory education as there are now limited alternative options.

The increased costs of sending students away for school will have a significant impact on household budgets particularly for lower income earners.

Communities will potentially lose the lower income, casual or part time workforce, because the educational needs of their children can not be met locally and their income may not be sufficient to meet the costs of sending their children away.

Families will need to make decisions about leaving country communities based on the fact that their children's educational needs cannot be met locally. This will result in a further population drift away from some country towns.

c. *the adequacy, cost effectiveness and social impact of the educational alternatives proposed:*

As a result of the school leaving age being increased, schools attempted to offer a Year 11 and 12 program with minimal resourcing. However they were left with the disaffected students who didn't really want to learn and insufficient staff to closely supervise. This caused behaviour problems and had a social impact in schools.

However, there is also a social impact from the Year 11 and 12 students currently in the community who are home schooling through the SIDE program.

There is a strong case for district high schools to have the flexibility to offer a Year 11 and 12 program on an individual, case by case basis. For example, schools will have students with special needs who would like the flexibility of remaining in Corrigin to continue their schooling for Yr 11 and 12 as it is not appropriate, nor possible for them to board away from home.

**Local Government Perspective**

Local Governments in country towns are continuously looking for ways to improve the attractiveness of their communities to families so as to strengthen the overall sustainability of small towns. A viable population is the key to any sustainable community. Attracting and maintaining a viable population is highly dependent on the provision of basic services such as health care and education. The more difficult it is for the population to access these basic services then the less attractive it will be for people to continue live and work in country communities. It is important for the long term viability of country towns that a range of options are available to meet the educational needs of their children.

Yours sincerely



Julian Murphy  
Chief Executive Officer

31 May 2010