

ALCOHOL BANS IN ABORIGINAL COMMUNITIES

4064. Mr M.P. Murray to the Minister for Education

I refer to the Aboriginal communities operating under an alcohol ban under section 175 of the *Liquor Control Act 1988*, and I ask:

- (a) what mechanisms are in place to monitor how community members deal with the retraction of alcohol from their lifestyle;
- (b) if a problem is identified, what support services will be implemented to deal with it; and
- (c) if a problem is identified as affecting family members, what support services have been put in place to assist these family members?

Dr E. CONSTABLE replied:

Department of Education

- (a) All public schools with an Aboriginal enrolment of 50% or more develop school/community partnerships which are facilitated by external agents to give community members the opportunity to advise their school on priorities that they would like addressed. These priorities include social issues such as alcohol related trauma. Schools and service providers then work with the community to address the issues.
- (b) Staff regularly monitor students and provide appropriate support should it be required from within school and education district resources, or from other agencies. With the retraction of alcohol in some communities this constant monitoring will continue by school staff. Within-school support can include assistance with clothing and food.

In some communities the retraction of alcohol may result in families relocating to other towns. School Based Attendance Officers liaise with families and schools to support student relocation where required.

Schools also have access to the services of a range of personnel, including school psychologists, community health nurses and chaplains. School psychologists provide consultation and, when the services of another agency are deemed needed, referral to inter-agency service providers will occur.

- (c) School Based Attendance Officers and Aboriginal and Islander Education Officers in each school work with the school and parents to broker support and individual counselling and mentoring. These staff keep teachers informed of concerns in the community and work with them to address the issues.

Principals are able to seek support from the District Office Aboriginal Education team who provide assistance and advice in their endeavour to address community issues.

Curriculum Council

- (a)-(c) Not applicable.

Department of Education Services

- (a)-(c) Not applicable.