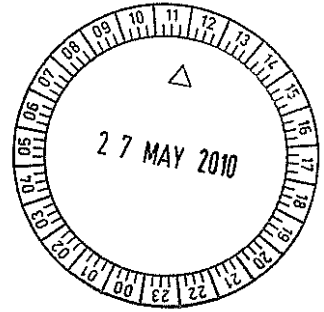


Parents & Citizen's Association  
Carnamah District High School  
48 McPherson Street  
CARNAMAH WA 6517

Submission 17

**PUBLIC**

Hon Giz Watson MLC  
Chair  
Estimates and Financial Operations  
Legislative Council  
Parliament House  
PERTH WA 6000



20 May 2010

**RE: INQUIRY INTO THE REMOVAL OF YEAR 11 AND 12 COURSES AT DISTRICT  
HIGH SCHOOLS**

Dear Madam,

We are writing to you in response to correspondence that we received on the 13<sup>th</sup> of May 2010 in regards to the Inquiry into the Removal of Year 11 & 12 Courses at District High Schools.

The Carnamah District High School Parents & Citizens' Association would like to thank the Legislative Council for taking the time to ask the opinions and concerns from the communities that such a decision will have an effect on.

The Carnamah District High School P & C was shocked and bewildered to hear of the proposed closure of the Vocational Education and Training (V.E.T) program that the Carnamah District High School (CDHS) has been running, with success, since 2005. There has been no consultation in this decision with the relevant people, those being, the school community, general community within the Carnamah District High School area or the students who are participating in the V.E.T program.

The School has, and will continue with your help, to give this program an enormous amount of support. The teachers that help the students are a committed group who go beyond the call of duty to help these students with their chosen path of education.

This program has a large impact on the general community. The local businesses that support this program are fully aware that if this program did not exist they would have to look elsewhere for employees. This is a growing problem in the smaller communities because not many people wish to live in communities that do not provide the amenities that Perth and larger centres provide. Therefore the placing the year 11 & 12 students in businesses within the communities of the Carnamah District High School's area is helping towards the problem with finding adequate employees.

As a parent and a former student, I know that having family close by and being in the knowledge that you have a strong support network, whether it be the local footy coach or your parents, you are able to commit yourself with more enthusiasm to your chosen path of studies, whether they be academic or work based. If the students cannot go to CDHS to further their education using the V.E.T program for year 11 & 12, then they have to either move to a boarding facility or their family has to move to a larger community that offers year 11 & 12. This has a massive impact on the community. When people leave they not only take one child from the school, but any other school aged siblings. It takes the parents from their jobs, therefore leaving that business to look for another person. It may take away a volunteer position, i.e. local netball or hockey coach, scout leader, (the list goes on), therefore placing further strain on the opportunities that are available in a regional community. This outlines what a large impact the V.E.T program has on the social implications within the students' communities.

While we acknowledge that some students have to move away from their local communities to further their education at a larger school because they are academically minded, some students are not, therefore not having this program available, limits their choices for their future.

There is also a huge cost factor involved. It costs an enormous amount of money for families to send their children away. Would it not cost the government more in the "Living Away from Home Allowance", then to pay one or two teachers to teach the V.E.T program per year?

Some families have no means to send their children away and are forced to move from their communities for their children's education. We have 17 students enrolled for the V.E.T program for 2010 and the trend has been increasing each year. If these families have to move from their communities then they take maybe four to six people away from the local shops in town. With that in mind there is less money being distributed within the communities therefore this would impact on which facilities are available within these communities. Personally I find it is hard enough to live in a community where there is no regular doctor. I would hate to think what would happen to our local grocery store if people were forced to leave. They could become unviable and have to leave? Where does it all end?

We are a very proud community, who are proud of our school and what it achieves. We are asking you to consider, very seriously, leaving the V.E.T program at Carnamah District High School to give those students who wish to stay in our communities a chance to do so. Allowing these students to stay in their communities is not "limiting their experiences", it is adding to their experiences. We believe this is a very important life skill. The television advert for being a well balanced adult, advises us to Act, Commit, Belong. We believe students in the V.E.T program staying within their communities are better able to do this.

Thankyou for your time in considering our submission for the Inquiry Into the Removal of Year 11 and 12 Courses at District High Schools.

We urge you to find in our favour.

Yours Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Colleen Bennier".

Colleen Bennier  
President