



Minister for Education and Minister for Industrial Relations

30 NOV 2018

1 William Street Brisbane 4000
PO Box 15033 City East
Queensland 4002 Australia
Telephone +61 7 3719 7110
Email: education@ministerial.qld.gov.au
Email: industrialrelations@ministerial.qld.gov.au

Mr Neil Laurie
Clerk of the Parliament
Parliament House
Email: tableoffice@parliament.qld.gov.au

Dear Mr Laurie *Neil*,

I refer to Petitions 2957-18 and 3035-18 tabled on 31 October 2018 in the Legislative Assembly regarding anti-bullying education for primary school students.

The Palaszczuk Government takes the issue of bullying in schools very seriously and is committed to promoting safe and respectful interactions among our students and school communities. This is why, on 29 January 2018, the Honourable Anastacia Palaszczuk MP, Premier and Minister for Trade, hosted a stakeholder roundtable to discuss bullying and to commence the important work needed to further raise awareness and identify solutions for this issue.

Following that roundtable, the Premier announced that a Queensland Anti-Cyberbullying Taskforce would be established to inform the development of a new anti-bullying framework for Queensland. This Taskforce commenced work on 19 February 2018 and recently submitted its report and recommendations to government.

The Taskforce report, *Adjust our Settings: A community approach to address cyberbullying among children and young people in Queensland* was provided to the Queensland Government on 14 September 2018. The report makes 29 recommendations to address cyberbullying through a community-wide approach, with actions focused on parents and carers, the community, schools and government. At the centre of the Taskforce's report and recommendations are children and young people.

The Queensland Government response to the Taskforce report was released on 15 October 2018, accepting all recommendations and pledging \$3.5 million to facilitate implementation including:

- \$2 million over two years to develop and roll out awareness and education campaigns to assist the community, parents and carers, and young people to understand what cyberbullying is, the harm it can cause, and how we need to address it;
- \$1 million for schools including \$450,000 in funding to the Dolly's Dream Foundation in partnership with the Alannah and Madeline Foundation to implement the eSmart Schools Program in Queensland schools. Dolly's Dream Foundation will match this funding with a further \$300,000; and
- \$500,000 to provide grants to young people and to youth and community organisations who want to undertake their own initiatives to address cyberbullying.

The Taskforce report and Queensland Government response are available at www.campaigns.premiers.qld.gov.au/antibullying/taskforce/.

Queensland is also the lead jurisdiction in the Safe and Supportive School Communities Working Group, which provides evidence-based information and advice on bullying, harassment and violence for Australian teachers, parents and students. Schools also have access to the national *Bullying. No Way!* website to source information and resources to counter bullying, harassment and violence in Australian schools. Further information is available at www.bullyingnoway.gov.au.

All Queensland state schools are registered participants in the National Day of Action against Bullying and Violence, which is held annually each March. The Department of Education has also recently revised the *Student Learning and Wellbeing Framework*, which emphasises the importance of wellbeing for learning. This Framework ensures schools are equipped with current strategies and resources to implement a whole-school approach to enhancing learning and wellbeing for all students. The Framework is available on the department's website at www.education.qld.gov.au/initiatives-and-strategies/health-and-wellbeing/student-health-wellbeing.

The department also has a nation-leading Cybersafety and Reputation Management team providing support to assist schools in tackling cyberbullying and staying safe online. The Cybersafety and Reputation Management team supports schools with advice, online investigations and in responding to instances of inappropriate online behaviour. The team has provided proactive presentations to students in relation to online safety and positive digital footprints. Since July 2013, more than 700 information sessions have been delivered to over 91,500 students in 273 unique schools. The team also offers support through a 1300 number and Cybersafety Advice Facebook page.

The Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse commended the department's Cybersafety and Reputation Management team for its proactive and effective strategies to respond to and prevent online issues for students; and it applauded the team as an exemplar and model for other education jurisdictions.

Queensland state schools are required to provide health and wellbeing education either as part of the delivery of the Australian Curriculum or as part of each school's pastoral care program.

The department's Curriculum into the Classroom (C2C) Health and Physical Education materials support the teaching and learning of Health and Physical Education. The C2C materials provide opportunities for primary and secondary students to recognise bullying and inappropriate behaviour and to explore coping and reporting strategies.

C2C materials incorporate resources and information from the Daniel Morcombe Child Safety Curriculum and the *Bullying. No Way!* website, and align to the department's *Respectful relationships education program* (RREP).

RREP was developed in response to the Queensland Government's domestic and family violence prevention policy. RREP is aligned to the Australian Curriculum and includes a range of activities encouraging students to interact positively with others, to respect similarities and differences and to stay safe. It encourages students to value diversity and to develop empathy and sensitivity in dealings with others; and also emphasises equality, the building of ethical relationships, personal resilience, supporting others and seeking help in relation to aggressive behaviour including bullying.

I look forward to ongoing collaboration with stakeholders and championing this important work in the schooling sector. The department will also continue to work closely with key stakeholders to provide schools with the best advice about how to respond to and prevent concerning online behaviours, such as cyberbullying, affecting student wellbeing and safety or impacting the good order and management of Queensland state schools.

If you require further information or assistance, please contact Ms Hayley Stevenson, Acting Assistant Director-General, State Schools – Operations, on (07) 3513 5836 or by email at hayley.stevenson@qed.qld.gov.au.

I would like to thank your petitioners for raising this matter and I trust this information is of assistance.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Grace', with a long, sweeping underline that extends to the right.

GRACE GRACE MP
Minister for Education and
Minister for Industrial Relations

Ref: 18/574409