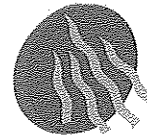


17 DEC 2010



Hon Geoff Wilson MP
Member for Ferny Grove



**Queensland
Government**

Minister for Education and Training

Mr Neil Laurie
Clerk of Parliament
Email: TableOffice@parliament.qld.gov.au

Dear Mr Laurie

I refer to Petition 1574-10 tabled in the Queensland Legislative Assembly on 23 November 2010, in relation to the opportunity to purchase the Slade School in its entirety for future educational purposes in Warwick.

Department of Education and Training records show that Warwick State High School opened in 1912. The school has a proud history of service.

A site with such a long history of service, however, also carries with it the fact that some of the original classrooms and other school buildings would be older than others.

Warwick State High School is located on 20.4 hectares across four blocks of land. Three of these blocks are located adjacent to each other, comprising of the main campus located on 2.6 hectares, sporting fields and associated buildings on 10.2 hectares, and 2.5 hectares of unutilised land. The agricultural farm, on 5.1 hectares, is located 5 kilometres from the school.

This amount of land is significantly larger than the current optimum sizing for secondary schools of 1300 students on at least 12 hectares. The Department of Education and Training advises that there is sufficient space and capacity for Warwick State High School to meet student numbers now and into the future, including any potential increase in student numbers should the Year 7 transition to high schools be implemented.

Warwick State High School has capacity for approximately 1,170 students, including the four new science/language classrooms. February 2010 enrolments were 1,025.

Replacing classrooms with those better suited to modern teaching conditions and modern subject structures, over time, is an ongoing need in schools. This has been undertaken systematically over the years at Warwick State High School. There is also a significant investment in this school.

If the Department purchased the Slade property in order to relocate the whole school, the Slade site and its buildings would require extensive updating and refitting across the whole site, to bring them up to the standard that this Department requires for teaching purposes.

If the Department purchased and used the Slade site as, for example, a junior campus - a split campus would also require some expensive duplication of buildings that need to be customised for a particular purpose, for example science. Furthermore, a split campus is not the most convenient way to manage the day-to-day running of the school.

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The Department is not looking at acquiring the Slade school campus.

The Department has committed to a master planning exercise of the existing site which will focus on some of the key issues such as future building platforms, green space and outdoor learning.

Thank you for providing me with the opportunity to respond to this matter.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Geoff Wilson', written in a cursive style.

GEOFF WILSON MP
Minister for Education and Training

Ref: 10/321284