



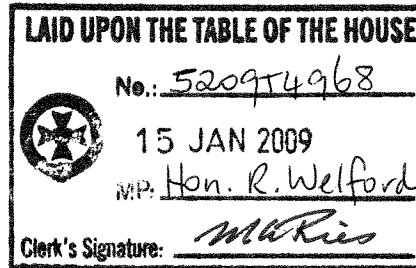
The Honourable Rod Welford MP



Queensland  
Government

13 JAN 2009

Mr Neil Laurie  
The Clerk of the Parliament  
Parliament House  
George Street  
BRISBANE QLD 4000



Minister for Education and Training  
Minister for the Arts

Dear Mr Laurie

Thank you for your letter dated 5 December 2008 regarding petition number 1182-08 received by the Queensland Legislative Assembly relating to the relocation of Xavier Special Education Unit to Mount Gravatt West Special School.

I acknowledge the interest of members of the Xavier Special Education Unit community in the decision to relocate the unit to the Mount Gravatt West Special School when the current lease of the Coorparoo site expires on 31 December 2009.

I can assure the community that the decision to relocate Xavier Special Education Unit to Mount Gravatt West Special School was not taken lightly. Although Whites Hill State College has enough room for the new building required by the Special Education Unit, other factors were also taken into account. These included ease of access, breadth of facilities and the best educational interests of students with multiple impairments.

It is noted that the student council has a high regard for the Xavier students within their school and this is to be commended. The current integration opportunities for students in mainstream schools are regarded as a valuable aspect of the child's education and this important feature of Xavier's curriculum will continue. The principals at Mount Gravatt West Special School and Whites Hill State College will continue to work together to ensure that this valuable partnership is maintained.

Our Government is committed to maintaining a program based on the principles of conductive education for students with multiple impairments. The relocation will extend the current program of the special school for students with multiple impairments and programs currently provided at Mount Gravatt West Special School will continue. It will make use of existing purpose-built facilities, such as the hydrotherapy centre, as well as providing additional facilities for those students participating in the conductive education program.

I understand there may be a level of concern regarding the relocation, however, my department has planned carefully to minimise the disruption to families.

A Transition Advisory Group, with parent and staff representatives from the Xavier school community and the Mount Gravatt West Special School community, led by the Executive Director (Schools), Brisbane South District is meeting regularly. The group is providing advice on the design and construction phases of new purpose-built facilities at Mount Gravatt West, professional development for staff, team-building and curriculum development.

I am confident that the facility at Mount Gravatt will allow the good work carried out at Xavier Special Education Unit, including Conductive Education, to continue in the new location from 2010.

Should you wish to discuss this matter further, you can contact Mr Peter Sellars, Acting Director, Infrastructure Planning on telephone (07) 3227 0224 or by email at Peter.Sellars@deta.qld.gov.au.

Thank you for bringing this important matter to my attention.

Yours sincerely

Rod Welford MP

Ref: 08/194848

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