



**Hon Geoff Wilson MP**  
Member for Ferny Grove



**Queensland  
Government**

**Minister for Education and Training**

**9 OCT 2009**

Mr Neil Laurie  
The Clerk of the Parliament  
Parliament House  
Email: [TableOffice@parliament.qld.gov.au](mailto:TableOffice@parliament.qld.gov.au)

Dear Mr Laurie

Thank you for your letter dated 28 April 2009 regarding Petition No 1109–08 received by the Queensland Legislative Assembly concerning the educational standards and assessment systems in Queensland schools.

The Queensland Government strives to provide both quality and choice in education for all Queensland students and supports a wide range of schools in both the state and non-state education sectors.

The Queensland Government acknowledges the importance of ensuring that all students in Queensland schools are appropriately challenged. Accordingly, the Queensland Studies Authority has developed flexible and rigorous syllabus documents underpinned by high standards. Additionally, many statewide initiatives and school-based strategies have been implemented to build on the abilities and talents of students, and deliver curriculum offerings that best meet their unique needs.

The Queensland Government recognises the particular needs of gifted and talented students. For example, the Department of Education and Training supports the establishment of processes in all state schools to identify gifted students, engage them in learning and enable them to develop their abilities. The department's *Framework for Gifted Education* describes the responsibilities of state schools in addressing the needs of students who are gifted. It details tools that support the identification of gifted students and assists in ensuring that these students are provided with appropriate opportunities to realise their potential outstanding achievement.

Many strategies have been introduced into the Queensland system to specifically assist lower-performing students. For example, the department's *Inclusive Education* policy encourages schools to provide personnel with professional development to enhance their understanding of how social, cultural, economic and geographic factors influence educational outcomes for individuals and groups of students.

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I note the petitioners' request for a review of Queensland Studies Authority syllabi and their assessment systems. I am advised that the matters raised have been included in reviews undertaken and strategies implemented in recent years. These include:

- The 2009 review by Professor Geoff Masters, *A Shared Challenge: Improving Literacy, Numeracy and Science Learning in Queensland Primary Schools* whose recommendations have been endorsed and are being implemented by the Government.
- *Education and Training Reforms for the Future*, and in particular, the implementation in 2008–09 of the Queensland Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Framework which has:
  - set standards to assist parents in understanding what their children know and can do, and how well they can do it
  - defined essential learnings to be taught from the Preparatory Year to Year 10
  - introduced statewide assessments in the middle years
  - provided assessment support for teachers for the middle years of schooling
  - included the development of Year 10 Guidelines to guide teachers in preparing students for the assessment demands of Years 11 and 12.

In addition, the Government is working with the Australian Government to improve the education Queensland students receive. The *Smarter Schools National Partnership Agreements* announced recently are driving major education reforms and reflect an investment of more than \$900 million by the Queensland Government, non-state schools sector and the Federal Government. This investment will deliver a range of innovative programs to transform teaching and learning in Queensland.

These partnerships will be rolled out in Queensland schools from now until 2015 and will deliver positive opportunities to our schools, our students and their learning.

Further change to Queensland's curriculum, assessment and reporting is anticipated, with the implementation from 2011 of a new Australian national framework for schooling.

Should you wish to discuss this matter further, I invite you or your officers to contact my Principal Advisor, Mr Murray Daniel on telephone (07) 3237 1000.

Yours sincerely



**GEOFF WILSON MP**  
Minister for Education and Training

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