



Minister for Education and Minister for Tourism and Major Events

19 MAY 2016

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

Level 22 Education House
30 Mary Street Brisbane 4000
PO Box 15033 City East
Queensland 4002 Australia
Telephone +61 7 3719 7530
Email education@ministerial.qld.gov.au

Dear Mr Laurie

I refer to Petition 2554–16 tabled in the Legislative Assembly on 19 April 2016 regarding the Safe Schools Coalition Australia (SSCA) program.

The safety and wellbeing of Queensland students is my number one priority.

It is deeply concerning that 75 per cent of same-sex attracted young people are bullied and are six times more likely to attempt suicide. Furthermore, the Australian Human Rights Commission's research shows that 80 per cent of homophobic bullying occurs in schools. This is simply unacceptable and the Palaszczuk Government is committed to ensuring Queensland schools are safe and inclusive environments where all students can reach their full potential.

Unfortunately, some of the commentary around SSCA has been deliberately divisive and incorrect, particularly those comments made by members of the Liberal National Party and the Turnbull Government.

During the 2015 state election, when principals said they needed more resources to help them to support students in their schools, Queensland Labor listened and committed to making the SSCA's materials available in Queensland schools.

The Palaszczuk Government delivered on this promise and appointed True Relationships and Open Doors as the Queensland providers of SSCA.

The Palaszczuk Government will not turn its back on Queensland principals, teachers, students and school communities. SSCA's resources will remain available in Queensland, as promised at the state election.

I am concerned that the release of the names of schools working with the SSCA could compromise safety for students and staff. I am aware of media reports that students at schools that have been publicly linked to the SSCA have been harassed by anti-Safe Schools protestors on their way to school. For this reason, I will not publically release the names of Queensland schools participating in the SSCA program.

The Palaszczuk Government will continue to work with SSCA, principals, teachers and school communities, including parents, to promote safe and inclusive schools and deliver on the promise we made to Queenslanders at the state election.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Kate Jones', written over the words 'Yours sincerely'.

KATE JONES MP
Minister for Education and
Minister for Tourism and Major Events

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