



Minister for Education and Minister for Industrial Relations

19 SEP 2018

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Mr Neil Laurie
Clerk of the Parliament
Parliament House
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Dear Mr Laurie *Neil,*

I refer to Petition 2910–18 tabled in the Legislative Assembly on 21 August 2018 regarding a public inquiry into bullying in our schools.

The Palaszczuk Government takes the issue of bullying very seriously and is committed to promoting safe and respectful interactions among our students and school communities. As such, the Department of Education has a range of resources and supports in place to assist Queensland state schools to create safe, supportive and disciplined environments, where all students can learn and achieve.

On 29 January 2018, the Honourable Annastacia Palaszczuk MP, Premier and Minister for Trade, hosted a stakeholder roundtable to discuss bullying and to commence the important work that is needed to further raise awareness and identify solutions for this issue. Following the 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. The Taskforce will deliver a report to the Premier in mid-September 2018 in which the Government will then carefully consider the recommendations and provide a response.

Cyberbullying was also on the agenda at the Council of Australian Governments' meeting on 9 February 2018 where the Premier asked the then Prime Minister, State Premiers and Chief Ministers to be part of a national response to combat bullying, particularly cyberbullying. At the meeting the Bullying and Cyberbullying Senior Officials Working Group was established and has since met three times to consider existing strategies and potential initiatives to help reduce bullying and cyberbullying, and keep Australian children safe.

I have established a Student Advisory Council to give young Queenslanders an opportunity to provide feedback and advice to me about a range of education matters. At the inaugural meeting of the Council on 7 June 2018, I heard from 16 students about their views and ideas around ways to address bullying, including cyberbullying.

Queensland is 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.

As Petition 2910–18 also relates to a public enquiry into bullying in Australian schools, and the subsequent development of a national anti-bullying framework, the petitioners may wish to consider submitting the petition to the Australian Government as well.

Should you wish to discuss this matter further, I invite you to contact Ms Hayley Stevenson, Acting Assistant Director-General, State Schools – Operations, on (07) 3513 5838 or by email at hayley.stevenson@ged.qld.gov.au.

Pursuant to Standing Order 32, it would be appreciated if you could table this response to the petition on the next sitting day.

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

Yours sincerely



GRACE GRACE MP
Minister for Education and
Minister for Industrial Relations

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