

Mr Neil Laurie  
The Clerk of the Parliament  
Queensland Parliamentary Service  
Parliament House  
Corner Alice and George Streets  
BRISBANE QLD 4000

Dear Mr Laurie

Thank you for your letter received on 16 May 2005 concerning the petition lodged with the Queensland Legislative Assembly on 11 May 2005 numbered 469-05. I note that Ms Rebekah Northam of 21 Hoffman Street, Roma is the principal petitioner. I sincerely apologise for the delay in replying to you.

I will be writing individually to petitioners providing them with the following response:

'I wish to confirm that the Queensland Government is currently looking at options for the establishment of a P-12 state school in Roma in 2006. This proposal is currently the subject of community consultation.

The proposed school would incorporate the Roma Junior State School (P-3), Roma Middle State School (4-10) and provide Year 11 and 12 school programs currently delivered by the Southern Queensland Institute of TAFE in Roma.

A key component of the Queensland State Government's *Education and Training Reforms for the Future* initiative is to expand the availability of Years 11 and 12 in areas where there is currently no senior school.

Currently, for students who want to progress from Year 10 into senior studies within a structured, formal high school environment, there are limited choices in Roma. The new proposed P-12 state school could ensure a state senior schooling option is available to local families.

This is an opportunity to consider reconfiguring options for both schooling and vocational education and training provision in Roma. The Roma community would continue to have access to quality vocational education and training to meet the needs of industry and local business as well as students in Years 11 and 12 who wish to access such programs.

The funding to both Education Queensland and the Department of Employment and Training in Roma will remain at a level to allow the current Year 11 and 12 students to finish their programs and to provide for the ongoing delivery of subject choices to the students of Roma based on student demand and available resources.

Education Queensland and the Department of Employment and Training have a coordinated focus in obtaining broad input from key stakeholder groups to ensure the provision of quality advice to the Ministers.

Consultations are being undertaken with a range of stakeholder groups including unions, local government and business people, parents, students, teaching and support staff from the schools and TAFE in Roma.

The results of the community consultations will be provided to me and the Honourable Tom Barton MP, Minister for Employment, Training and Industrial Relations to inform our final decision.

I invite you to contact Mr Jim O'Leary, Executive Director (Schools), Roma District on telephone (07) 4622 9711, should you wish to obtain further details in relation to this matter.

I appreciate your interest in the proposed changes to schooling opportunities in Roma and am pleased to take this opportunity to explain departmental approaches to you. The establishment of a P-12 school in Roma could potentially improve the learning outcomes for young Queenslanders in the Roma community and provide a foundation for their future success.'

Thank you for providing me with an opportunity to respond to this petition.

Yours sincerely

**Anna Bligh MP**  
**Minister for Education and**  
**Minister for the Arts**

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