

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

Dear Mr Laurie

I refer to the petition lodged on 4 September and 23 October 2002 with the Queensland Legislative Assembly by Mrs Christine Scott MP, Member for Charters Towers, on behalf of Mrs Julie Vallis concerning Years 11 and 12 being included in the Charters Towers School of Distance Education curriculum. I sincerely apologise for the delay in replying to you.

Outlined below is the text of my response, posted to all petitioners on 13 November 2002. I apologise for omitting to table my response to this petition earlier.

The State Government is committed to delivering quality education to all Queensland students, regardless of where they live, including those who live in rural and remote areas undertaking their schooling by distance at home. Education Queensland caters for 3,795 students through the schools of distance education. Many of Education Queensland's schools of distance education have engaged in the innovative use of Information Communication Technology (ICT) through the initiative of their local communities. Indeed, the Charters Towers School of Distance Education has created online resources for students as a part of its involvement in the trial of the world-leading New Basics program. From the beginning of 2003, all primary distance education students from across the state will experience the benefits of ICT, while digitisation for secondary distance education students will progress through the year. In excess of \$1 million will be committed to this venture.

I recognise that there is an issue of students studying through distance education continuing past Year 10. The provision of options and pathways for students in Years 11 and 12, including those accessing distance education, and the improvement of information and communication technologies for schools is being considered in the context of the *Education and Training Reforms for the Future* initiative.

Whilst the provision of the *Education and Training Reforms for the Future* is being considered it is important that the delivery of Year 11 and 12 be consolidated in one centre. Consolidation, at this stage, allows the Brisbane School of Distance Education to provide a full range of senior subjects to distance education students.

I thank you for bringing this matter to my attention and your continuing interest in distance education.

Yours sincerely

**Anna Bligh MP**  
**Minister for Education**

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