



LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL

SELECT COMMITTEE ON THE CLOSURE OF PUBLIC SCHOOLS

MEDIA RELEASE

CLOSURE OF PUBLIC SCHOOLS - ARE THE RIGHT DECISIONS BEING MADE?

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

8 July 2015

The New South Wales Upper House has established a new parliamentary committee to conduct an inquiry into the closure of public schools.

The Committee Chair, the Hon Paul Green MLC, said, ‘The inquiry will examine the actual and potential closure of small public schools at Martins Creek, Wollombi, Rouchel and Eraring in the Hunter area, as well as in a number of other rural communities around the state.’

‘The committee will consider the Department of Education and Communities’ processes, policies, procedures and decision-making about the closure of schools, and what factors the department considers when it determines the suitability of alternative schools. We will examine the transparency of the consultation process, and what cost-benefit analysis takes place. Finally, we really want to understand the impact of these decisions on local school communities.’

Mr Green stated, ‘This inquiry will examine the concerns that community members have raised with members of the committee about the circumstances surrounding the actual or potential closure of schools. Community members are telling us that there seems to be a lack of transparency about the process, and of genuine willingness to engage with communities about their concerns. There also seems to be a lack of understanding that these matters can’t be dealt with by a one-size-fits-all approach.’

‘The committee encourages all interested individuals, groups and organisations to take part in the inquiry. In particular, we really want to hear from the community members affected by these decisions,’ Mr Green said.

The committee welcomes submissions by the closing date of Sunday 9 August 2015. It anticipates holding public hearings in Sydney and the Hunter area in August.

For further information about the inquiry, including its terms of reference and how to make a submission, please go to the committee’s website at www.parliament.nsw.gov.au/schoolclosures, or telephone the committee secretariat on 9230 2431.

-ENDS-

For further information please contact Committee Chair, Hon Paul Green MLC, on 9230 3484.