

Submission
No 32

**INQUIRY INTO THE BUILDING THE EDUCATION
REVOLUTION PROGRAM**

Name: Name Suppressed

Date received: 1/06/2010

Partially Confidential

The Director
General Purpose Standing Committee No.2
Parliament House
Macquarie St
Sydney. NSW.2000

1st June, 2010

To Whom it May Concern,

Tottenham Central School has recently had a new canteen built under the Building the Education Revolution (BER) scheme. It is 24 metres squared in size, which is 13 bricks wide and **ridiculously small**. According to the NSW Government BER website our canteen is not even listed as a Standard Design for a Canteen size to be built. The website states that schools were not to be discriminated against and that the buildings had to “meet the same high quality benchmark across the State regardless of size and location of school” The Design Plan of our BER canteen, that has been built, according to the website, is the “Standard Design for a **Storage Plan**” with a couple of amendments.(i.e-1 roller door moved to become a roller shutter, and 1 external door moved to become an internal door, 1 wall removed.)

In the Standard Design for a BER Canteen- according to the website, it even allows for future freezers, in its space allocation. It is also supposed to “complement existing buildings” .ie have an undercover area for students to purchase food. Our current BER canteen is so small that it doesn't even allow for adequate food preparation space, let alone existing fridges/freezers, and pie warmers. The contractors have had to build a covered sheltered area, as an additional structure to make it accessible for students in the wet weather. Our current BER canteen had shutters that didn't seal properly allowing dust and vermin access, and making it inappropriate for hygienic food handling.(This problem has now been rectified, due to public pressure).It also has no air conditioning, which is compulsory in our hot western climate. It has no toilet facilities for canteen staff, and no secure storage space. It is certainly **not a “quality project”**

In our existing canteen we have a covered shelter area for the children to eat and play in. It is approximately double the size of the BER canteen. It has toilets and a secure storage area. According to the BER website the BER building is supposed to “improve the quality of facilities in Australian Schools” which is impossible if the BER canteen is **unsuitable in meeting our needs**. It states on the BER website that “All P21 projects must meet school Facilities Standards” and this has certainly **NOT** happened in Tottenham. **It has NOT met the standard design, nor standard quality required to be a functioning suitable canteen.**

The BER website states that it is to “ support jobs in the construction industry” and yet there was no use of local builders or tradespeople in the Building of the BER canteen. According to the BER website- Project Budget Fact Sheet-“ On average 96% of the schools P21 allocation is spent at the school”. It is **fraudulent and not in line with industry standards** to build a BER “Storage Shed” in Tottenham for \$600,000. The average cost of building a 4 bedroom air conditioned house in Tottenham is ~\$300,000. The Shire is currently building Clubrooms for the Tennis Club, ~ 150m away from the BER canteen. This building contains fully equipped kitchen, shower, toilets, verandah, meeting room,etc and is ~ five times larger in size than the BER canteen, for ~\$404,000. On the P21 Project Costs for Tottenham- there has been a budget of \$80,000 for Preliminaries. Other than some scaffolding, orange tape security fence and personal protection equipment- there can be no justification for this amount of money to be spent. There has been a budget of \$116,148.40 for Site Services- and it does not cost that to connect a house in Tottenham to power, water and sewerage. Just two examples of price extortion.

The BER website states that the “costs are in line with similar projects in each region” and that they represent “ best value for money”. This is obviously incorrect in Tottenhams’ case and it is a **blatant rip off of the Government**.

If this BER scheme had been implemented by a publicly listed company they would now be being investigated for fraud.

The Government has ignored its responsibility to oversee the implementation of the BER scheme to ensure that the buildings were done to “ best value for money”. This is a complete waste of the taxpayers money.

Yours Sincerely,