

**Submission
No 130**

INQUIRY INTO THE BUILDING THE EDUCATION REVOLUTION PROGRAM

Organisation: Orchard Hills Public School
Name: Mr Tony McEriain
Position: Principal
Date received: 7/06/2010



Orchard Hills Public School

Ph:

Fax:

Email:

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Parliamentary Inquiry into BER Program
Director
General Purpose Standing Committee No.2
Parliament House
Macquarie St
SYDNEY NSW 2000

Dear Director

RE: PRIMARY SCHOOLS FOR 21ST CENTURY – P21

The parents and teachers of Orchard Hills Public School wish to lodge a complaint and concern in relation to "value for money" aspects of the P21 project allocated to Orchard Hills Public School and the intended outcomes of the project.

1. Orchard Hills Public School was initially allocated \$850 000 to construct a new classroom (\$750 000) and a new COLA (\$100 000). The final costs outlined in the BER website are \$838 045 for the classroom and \$124,756 for the COLA plus \$53 550 for IPO Project Management Costs and Contingency. No explanation, verbal or written, has been given to the principal to explain the increased costs of the new classroom. The site was a simple site with no complications or need for added costs. The builder of the COLA explained to the school principal that the COLA only cost \$30 000 to build. Multiplex verbally explained to the principal close to handover of the building that spending on the COLA had to be transferred to the cost of the new classroom.
2. The school principal initially was only shown a top view plan of the COLA and complained to Multiplex Project Manager, Yves Goarin, that the COLA was too small (18sq.metres) for the needs of the school. The principal refused to sign off on the plan. Mr Goarin came back in January of 2010 and offered an extra 6 sq.metres into the plan as well as consideration to expand the COLA over some ramps in the front playground. Construction commenced in April 2010 and when completed was only a rectangular, very aesthetically

displeasing but very strong, high COLA that functions inefficiently to keep out the sun and rain.

3. During the preconstruction phase of the COLA the principal also showed Mr Goarin a copy of the planned design that would be suitable for the school's needs. This design had been in a quote from a local COLA builder. Mr Goarin indicated that the architects would consider these designs. However, no plans outlining the final design arrived on the principal's desk until the day construction started nor was the principal requested to agree to the final design.

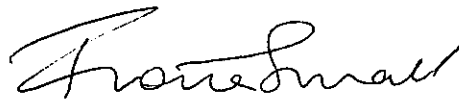
Our school seeks answers to the following questions:

- Money transferred from spending on the COLA to the new classroom: what was this money spent on? Why don't these transferred amounts appear in the accounts attached? (*"the level and appropriateness of fees and charges imposed by various NSW Government agencies"*)
- Over \$1m for a basic classroom without air conditioning and a small, ugly COLA. Is our school getting value for money? (*"whether outcomes were of an acceptable quality and suitable to the needs of each individual school"*)
- The principal's input into design was not considered in the final plan. Why weren't these considered? (*"the use of local builders and tradespeople"*)

Thank you for your assistance. We look forward to your responses.



Mr Tony McErlain
Principal



Mrs Fiona Small
P & C President