

INQUIRY INTO CLOSURE OF PUBLIC SCHOOLS IN NEW SOUTH WALES

Name: Mr Greg Piper MP

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PARLIAMENT OF NEW SOUTH WALES
LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

GREG PIPER, MP
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The Director
Select Committee on the Closure of Public Schools
Parliament House
Macquarie St
Sydney NSW 2000

SUBMISSION: GREG PIPER, MEMBER FOR LAKE MACQUARIE

Dear committee members,

I would like to make a brief submission to the Select Committee on the Closure of Public Schools in regard to Eraring Public School, which is in my electorate of Lake Macquarie.

The school closed at the end of 2014 after enrolments had dropped to four students. The possibility of the school closing was raised with me about a year earlier by the Area Director, who alerted me to the likelihood that it would not be viable for the school to remain open if enrolments continued to fall. I understand consultation between the department and the school community also took place in the year preceding the closure.

I was informed by Public Schools NSW that of the four students who remained at the school at the end of last year, one went to high school and the other three were accommodated in nearby government primary schools of their choice.

I attended a community gathering to mark the closing of the school on January 17 this year. While there was some sadness about the closure of a local school that had operated since 1924, there was also a general acceptance of the inevitability of the closure, given changing demographic and residential patterns. I did not receive any representations, personally or to my office, objecting to the closure.

I did receive inquiries from constituents regarding the school's collection of artefacts and memorabilia, and have since been advised the collection has been placed with Morisset High School. I have also had inquiries about the future of the school site and its possible use by community groups, but these are matters on which there has to date been no determination.

I trust this information will assist with your inquiry. If I can be of further assistance, please contact my office on 4959 3200 or at lakemacquarie@parliament.nsw.gov.au.

Yours sincerely,

Greg Piper, MP
Member for Lake Macquarie