

**Submission
No 22**

INQUIRY INTO CLOSURE OF PUBLIC SCHOOLS IN NEW SOUTH WALES

Organisation: Griffith Business Chamber

Date received: 8/08/2015

As President of Griffith Business Chamber I am pleased to make this submission on behalf of our region.

Griffith is the Regional Capital to Western Riverina region and serves all the communities for around 180km around Griffith city location.

It is the fundamental right of all Australians everywhere in Australia to have access to face to face highest quality education. There should be no disparity between City or Country in the quality & availability of education.

Travelling time for students to get to and from school on safe accessible routes means that it is the obligation of Government to provide facilities in our view no more than 40 minutes each way from the students home.

We understand the need for time to time review with population shifts etc. but do not believe that these decisions can be made on a purely black & white commercial basis as the ramifications to community breakdown are difficult to measure & can have dier consequences to our region. It is therefore essential that subsidization apply in many cases.

We would recommend that you call to this Inquiry - Professor Stephen Dinham Chair of Teacher Education and Director of Learning and Teaching, University of Melbourne, Australia Commonwealth Education Trust, <https://www.coursera.org/instructor/stephendinham>

His expert knowledge on all issues with Australian Education would be invaluable.

In the Riverina we have recently seen the closures of Mangoplah, Crestview, Gumly Gumly and Griffith Region - Grong Grong, Bilbul, Murrami schools and we are concerned that true community consultation & a whole of community consideration was not applied when these closure decisions were made. We ask that a better approach be implemented before making further decisions that may impact our communities.

Please see newspaper article by ex Teacher Helen Dalton 6/07/2015

<http://www.irrigator.com.au/story/3188472/calls-for-small-schools-closure-to-be-reviewed/>

We must ensure that rural and remote students have access to quality education delivery that is equitable with students from major cities and non low social economic status background. This needs to be accessible and face to face. Prof Dinhams research states that face to face quality teaching ensures quality outcomes. Recent data shows that isolated rural communities are becoming more disadvantaged due to low SES demographics

NOTE: Isolated rural and remote community demographics are becoming more empoverished ie: very low social economic status (low SES)

Attach as reference is PDF - Rural and Remote Education A blueprint for action Doc & Rural and Remote Education Quality learning for every community Doc.

Thank you again for the opportunity to voice our concerns & feel free to contact me if you see the need.

Yours sincerely,

Paul Pierotti

President Griffith Business Chamber

Griffith Business Chamber Inc.

PO Box 93

GRIFFITH NSW 2680