

From: [Redacted]
Sent: Monday, June 10, 2019 8:48 PM
To: [Redacted]
Cc: [Redacted]
Subject: Intention to leave the college

Hi [Redacted]
I am writing to advise that [Redacted] and [Redacted] will not be returning to the college next term. My main reason for this is the Board 'consultive committee' took far to long to give the families answers as to the change of hours, this does not suit our family, therefore i had to find other options that were more suitable.

I also want to express my dissatisfaction with the way the Board are behaving and have behaved in previous years. I have been at the college for approximately [Redacted] years, I have never heard of such a disfunctional Board. The amount of bullying that I have heard of and personally seen while at the college is inconceivable. [Redacted] had to walk out of a P&F meeting in support of an executive staff member as [Redacted] was being attacked by a board member.

[Redacted] over the last few years, I have tried on numerous occasions to mend relationships between the Board, the Staff and the community, we finally got it to a place where it was comfortable, this has once again been destroyed through lack of consultation and bullying.

[Redacted]

[Redacted] I believe had you both been left to do your job satisfactorily, the college would not be in the state it is today.

[Redacted]

However, with everything that is going on in the college at the moment, all the good staff will start leaving and the college will find difficult retain staff - This is not [Redacted] fault, *time and time again* i have heard the reason teachers are leaving is the unreasonable expectations of the Board that is driving our beautiful teachers to leave.

[Redacted] - i wish you both all the best for the future.

Kind regards

[Redacted]

[Redacted]

From: [Redacted]
Sent: Monday, 10 June 2019 8:48 PM
To: [Redacted]
Cc: [Redacted]
Subject: Intention to leave the college

Hi [Redacted]
I am writing to advise that [Redacted] and [Redacted] will not be returning to the college next term. My main reason for this is the Board 'consultative committee' took far too long to give the families answers as to the change of hours, this does not suit our family, therefore I had to find other options that were more suitable.

I also want to express my dissatisfaction with the way the Board are behaving and have behaved in previous years. I have been at the college for approximately [Redacted] years, I have never heard of such a dysfunctional Board. The amount of bullying that I have heard of and personally seen while at the college is inconceivable. [Redacted] had to walk out of a P&F meeting in support of executive staff member as [Redacted] was being attacked by a board member.

[Redacted] over the last few years, I have tried on numerous occasions to mend relationships between the Board, the Staff and the community, we finally got it to a place where it was comfortable, this has once again been destroyed through lack of consultation and bullying.

[Redacted]
[Redacted]
[Redacted] I believe had you both been left to do your job satisfactorily, the college would not be in the state it is today.

However, with everything that is going on in the college at the moment, all the good staff will start leaving and the college will find it difficult to retain staff - This is not [Redacted] fault, time and time again I have heard the reason teachers are leaving is the unreasonable expectations of the Board that is driving our beautiful teachers to leave.

[Redacted] - I wish you both all the best for the future.

Kind regards
[Redacted]



From: BCC Finance
Sent: Tuesday, 11 June 2019 8:21 AM
To: [Redacted]
Subject: FW: Withdrawal of Students

FYI

From: [Redacted]
Sent: Monday, 10 June 2019 7:01 PM
To: [Redacted]
Cc: [Redacted]
Subject: Withdrawal of Students

To Whom It May Concern

Please accept this email as formal notification that my [Redacted] children [Redacted] will cease to attend Brindabella Christian College effective from Term [Redacted] 2019.

We have decided to withdraw our children due the proposed extension of school hours and the lack of consultation with parents. Given the proposed changes were to be implemented beginning Term 3 and the extended hours did not suit our family, we applied and verbally accepted places with another school in early June 2019. We are still awaiting written confirmation in line with their enrollment time frames.

Given the lack of time provided to us to make such a significant decision regarding our childrens education - notification at the end of Term 1 by the board of their intent to extend school hours with a decision still not made by Tuesday 4 June - we have provided as much notice as possible of our intent to withdraw our children from BCC.

We also believe we should not be required to pay one terms notice given the extremely short time frames provided by BCC (two weeks between Term 1 and Term 2) for us to make a decision about what was best for our family and find an alternative school.

Blessings



The change of hours will not work for our family, and so we have been forced to look at alternative schooling options. In light of the situation we find ourselves in, we have accepted positions at another school to begin in Term [REDACTED]

We trust as a result, that we will not be charged fees for Term 3, and request that our family account be provided for finalisation at the end of the term. For your information, [REDACTED]

In leaving we would like to provide some feedback.

While the aim of the College has been to make a Christian education accessible, over the past few years we have found that the college fees have made this less possible. [REDACTED]

We have loved the community at Brindabella over our time at the school. We have loved being connected to this Community. We have made great friends, and our children have grown up together. We have great respect for the teachers, and their dedication to supporting and educating our children. They have put so much of their heart into growing our little people. The administrative staff have provided great support through our years at the school. [REDACTED] you have been a wonderful Principal. You have shown great strength of character, integrity, and heart in leading our school. We were truly excited to have you leading our school.

However, in recent months we have been unable to reconcile our Christian values with the behaviour of the Board. Their unwillingness to respect the leadership of the school. Their unwillingness to listen to the voices of the families at the school, and bullying behaviour that has left various staff members under mental stress, does not reflect the ethical standards that we expect from a Christian organisation. They have overstepped the governance role required of a Board, and this is likely to be to the detriment of the school.

We pray that God will continue to keep His hand on the College, and even more so that He will surround you with His grace and peace. Thank you for your faithful service to our school.

Sincerely
[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Monday, 3 June 2019 10:17 PM
To: [REDACTED]
Cc: [REDACTED]
Subject: RE: [REDACTED] withdrawal from Brindabella Christian College

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Monday, 3 June 2019 1:02 PM
To: [REDACTED]
Subject: [REDACTED] withdrawal from [REDACTED]

Dear [REDACTED]

It is with deep sadness we write to inform you that after [REDACTED] years at Brindabella Christian College, we will be leaving the school at the end of Term [REDACTED] 2019.

We are aware that College policy requires a term's notice for withdrawal of students, however, in this circumstance we are unable to provide this notice. The notification of the intention by the Board to change school hours was provided to families after the end of term 1, and the Board has notified their intention (through the Consultative Committee) to begin the new school hours in Semester 2. This timing leaves us unable to provide the required notice.

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Friday, 3 May 2019 8:31 AM
To: BCC Enrolments
Cc: [REDACTED]
Subject: Fwd: [REDACTED] enrolment for Term 3 [REDACTED]

Follow Up Flag: Flag for follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

Hi Enrolment,

I just like to inform you that Term 2019 will be [REDACTED] last term at Brindabella Christian College as our family is relocating to [REDACTED] this [REDACTED]. I've already contacted the accounts team for a final statement before the end of term 2.

Please let me know if there are any procedures we need to follow before leaving the school.

Thanks

[REDACTED]

----- Forwarded message -----

From: [REDACTED]
Date: Fri, May 3, 2019 at 9:27 AM
Subject: [REDACTED]
To: [REDACTED]
Cc: [REDACTED]

Hi Business Services Team,

I just like to inform you that Term 2019 will be [REDACTED] last term at Brindabella Christian College as our family is relocating to [REDACTED] this [REDACTED].

Can you please issue a final statement including any outstanding fees that we might owe you before the end of this term?

Thanks very much for your attention.

Best regards

[REDACTED]

From: [redacted]
Sent: Friday, 24 May 2019 3:26 PM
To: [redacted]
Cc: [redacted]
Subject: RE: Intention to withdraw [redacted] from BCC

Dear [redacted]

Thank you for your email advising me that [redacted] will be leaving BCC this term. I am sorry that your reasons for leaving are matters that could have been addressed if I had known about them earlier. [redacted]

I regret that you indicate both your [redacted] experienced bullying. I was not aware of this, and do hope that should there be any more instances, you will let me, the class or pastoral teacher, of the Head of Pastoral Care- Middle School know straight away.

I hope the remainder of the term will go peacefully for your family.

[redacted]

From [redacted]
Sent: Wednesday, 22 May 2019 6:20 PM
To [redacted]
Cc [redacted]
Subject: Intention to withdraw [redacted] from BCC

Dear [redacted]

I am writing to withdraw [redacted] from Brindabella Christian College effective from the end of Term [redacted]

In [redacted] we had an interview for a place at BCC with the then Head Mistress. During that interview we were impressed by her and the school as it was on a small scale and they tried to ensure that children were all well-known and well loved. We were over the moon when [redacted] was offered a place at the school in [redacted] We acknowledge that no school is perfect but sadly over the years the ethos of the school has changed and we don't believe that BCC is the right school to meet our children's social and educational needs.

It is most unfortunate that both [REDACTED] have experienced bullying and a lack of educational support at the school over recent years.



With the strong undue influence that the Board has over the day-to-day operations of the school it has become an unpleasant place with parents constantly at odds with the Board and each other leading to rumours and innuendos of bickering and infighting between teachers and admin staff. Whilst there has been an attempt by the Board with The Consultative Committee, there continues to be a lack of transparency and communication as to the overall direction and management of the school. We are deeply saddened by how BCC has changed from that euphoric feeling we had in 2011.

A number of times in the past year we have considered withdrawing the [REDACTED] but have tried to have faith that the school would turn around, this just does not seem to be happening. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] we do not believe that it is in their best interests to remain at the school as we are worried about the long-term

impact this will have on them. Noting all of this and that they will only be leaving at the end of term we request that our term's notice be waived.

I wish BCC every success and hope that it returns to the community it once was.

Kind regards



Principal
Brindabella Christian College



CC: Business Services Manager



Re Withdrawal of [redacted]

I wish to advise that [redacted] currently a year [redacted] student at BCC will cease to be a student at the College from the end of Term [redacted] 2019.

Despite my view that BCC is a very dynamic, highly responsive and supportive educational College [redacted] has struggled to be [redacted] and flourish in this environment. [redacted]



[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Saturday, 13 April 2019 3:28 PM
To: BCC Principal; BCC Enrolments
Subject: [REDACTED]

Dear [REDACTED] - Principal,

I would like to inform you, unfortunately [REDACTED] will not be able to continue studies in your school after Term [REDACTED] 2019. My work location is changing, and we will be moving close to work in [REDACTED] area and will be enrolling [REDACTED] in a school in that area.

I am thankful for all the support that was provided to [REDACTED] and to us from your school and we been very happy with [REDACTED] studies and other curricular activities that was provided to [REDACTED]

Thank You.

yours sincerely
[REDACTED]

Deputy Chief Minister

Minister for Education and Early Childhood Development

Minister for Housing and Suburban Development

**Minister for the Prevention of Domestic and
Family Violence**

Minister for Sport and Recreation

Minister for Women

Member for Ginninderra

[REDACTED]

Thank you for your email of 2 August 2019 regarding Brindabella Christian College.

ACT non-government schools are subject to oversight by several government organisations including the Commonwealth Department of Education and the Australian Charities and Not for Profit Commission.

The ACT Education Directorate is responsible for the registration of ACT non-government schools under the *Education Act 2004* (the Act). As such the Directorate works closely with all non-government schools to support them in meeting their obligations under the Act.

There is provision under the Act where the Minister may direct the registrar of non-government schools to cancel the registration if satisfied on reasonable grounds that the school has contravened a condition of registration. For example, if it was identified that the proprietor was no longer a corporation or the teaching staff were not appropriately qualified to teach at the educational levels at which they are employed to teach, then there may be grounds for cancelling registration.

The Directorate takes the concerns raised by the school community seriously and are considering if there are any contraventions of the conditions of registration by the school or its proprietor under the Act.

[REDACTED]

Thank you for raising this matter with me.

Yours sincerely

Yvette Berry MLA
Minister for Education and Early Childhood Development

STUDENT I	SURNAME	GIVEN_NAME	BIRTH_DATE	DATE_DEPART	REASONLEAVING	STR entry as at 5/9/2019					
[REDACTED]											
[REDACTED]											

32%

18/57
no new
school
listed

Total 57 leaves T1, T2



Member for Ginninderra

Elizabeth Kikkert MLA

Shadow Minister for Families, Youth and Community Services
Shadow Minister for Multicultural Affairs

Legislative Assembly for the
Australian Capital Territory

Ms Yvette Berry

Minister for Education and Early Childhood Development

Legislative Assembly for the ACT

196 London Circuit

CANBERRA CITY, ACT 2601

Dear Minister,

I have been contacted by a constituent on behalf several other constituents who all have children attending Brindabella Christian College. As you are aware, there have been many concerns raised about the governance of this school with considerable media attention (please see Canberra Times article, titled: 'WorkSafe investigates Brindabella Christian College as staff speak out).

I understand that you will be meeting with some of these constituents next week, and would be grateful if you can advise on the following in the meantime:

- In what ways has the directorate engaged with Brindabella and what plans does the ACT Government have to address concerns raised by the community, including the following concerns:
 - Staff bullying and harassment allegations, including serious staff bullying complaints referred to self-paid mediation service but otherwise left non-investigated
 - Conduct by Board in regards to hiring teachers, changing timetables, decision to recount the student election for college captain in 2012 and lack of full community consultation, particularly with parents of students
 - Governance and financial viability of Brindabella
 - Alleged conflicts of interest in Board decisions, including the decision to use at least one government grant to purchase goods and services from a company owned by the Board Chair
 - The disbandment of the parents' association due to alleged threats of legal action
- Have there been any requests for an independent review of the Board? If so, what role does the ACT Government have in the decision to conduct such a review?
- Will the ACT Government conduct a formal investigation to establish whether Brindabella is meeting all conditions of its registration?

- 2 -

- What concerns were raised in the 2018 audit by the ACT Government as part of the re-registration process?
- As Minister for Education and Early Childhood Development, what ministerial intervention powers are in place that are relevant to addressing these community concerns?

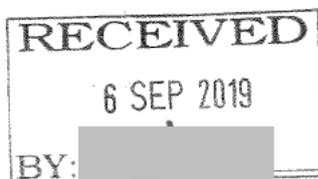
Many families in my electorate who send their children to Brindabella wish to see this school thrive and governed well for the safety and health of the community. It is my hope that the ACT Government can assist in ensuring that this school can sustainably operate in compliance to government requirements.

Thank you for your assistance on this matter, and I look forward to hearing from you.

Yours sincerely,



Elizabeth Kikkert MLA
Member for Ginninderra
5 September 2019



From: [Sloane, Brenton](#)
To: [Penglis, Katy](#); [EDUMCR](#)
Cc: [EDU Media](#); [Larkin, Lyn](#)
Subject: CMTKBK - 6 Sep
Date: Thursday, 5 September 2019 10:10:26 AM
Attachments: [CMTKBK 6 September 2019.doc](#)

Hi Katy,

As per our earlier discussion, here are the CMTKBK points for tomorrow.

[Redacted content]

CC Lyn as FYI.

Cheers,

Brenton Sloane | Assistant Director

Media and Communications | Education | ACT Government

P: (02) 6205 4196 | M: 0431 252 698 | E: brenton.sloane@act.gov.au

Level 6, 220 Northbourne Avenue | GPO Box 158 Canberra ACT 2601

www.education.act.gov.au | [Facebook](#) | [Twitter](#) | [Instagram](#) | [LinkedIn](#)



CHIEF MINISTER'S TALKBACK – HOT ISSUES





CHIEF MINISTER'S TALKBACK – HOT ISSUES

Complete and accurate as at:

5 Sep 2019

ISSUE: [REDACTED] **concerns around transparency**

Talking points/response

- Brindabella Christian College (BCC) is registered as an ACT non-government school until 31 December 2023.
- BCC's registration was renewed in 2018 at which time a financial viability assessment was undertaken and it was on that basis it was recommended by the panel to register the school for a period of five years.
- Concerns have been raised by a number of parents directly to the Education Directorate and the Minister regarding transparency of the School Board.
- The P&F of the school has written formally to the Board seeking mediation and a review of governance.

Background

BCC operates two campuses in the ACT and is registered under the Education Act to operate as a non government school.

In 2018 the school was re-registered and met the conditions of registration for a further five year period.

There have been concerns raised by parents over recent months about a range of matters, some of which go to the schools compliance under the Education Act.

The Education Directorate is about to commence an Authorised Person inquiry under the *Education Act 2004* in relation to the school's compliance with their obligations to report student transfers to the Education Directorate.

Non-government schools are required to report to the Education Directorate on their enrolments into and transfers from the school. Enrolment numbers are fundamental [REDACTED]

It should be noted that inquiries into student transfers are being conducted more broadly across the non-government school system to establish ongoing compliance.

Contact Officer: Brenton Sloane

Ext: 54196

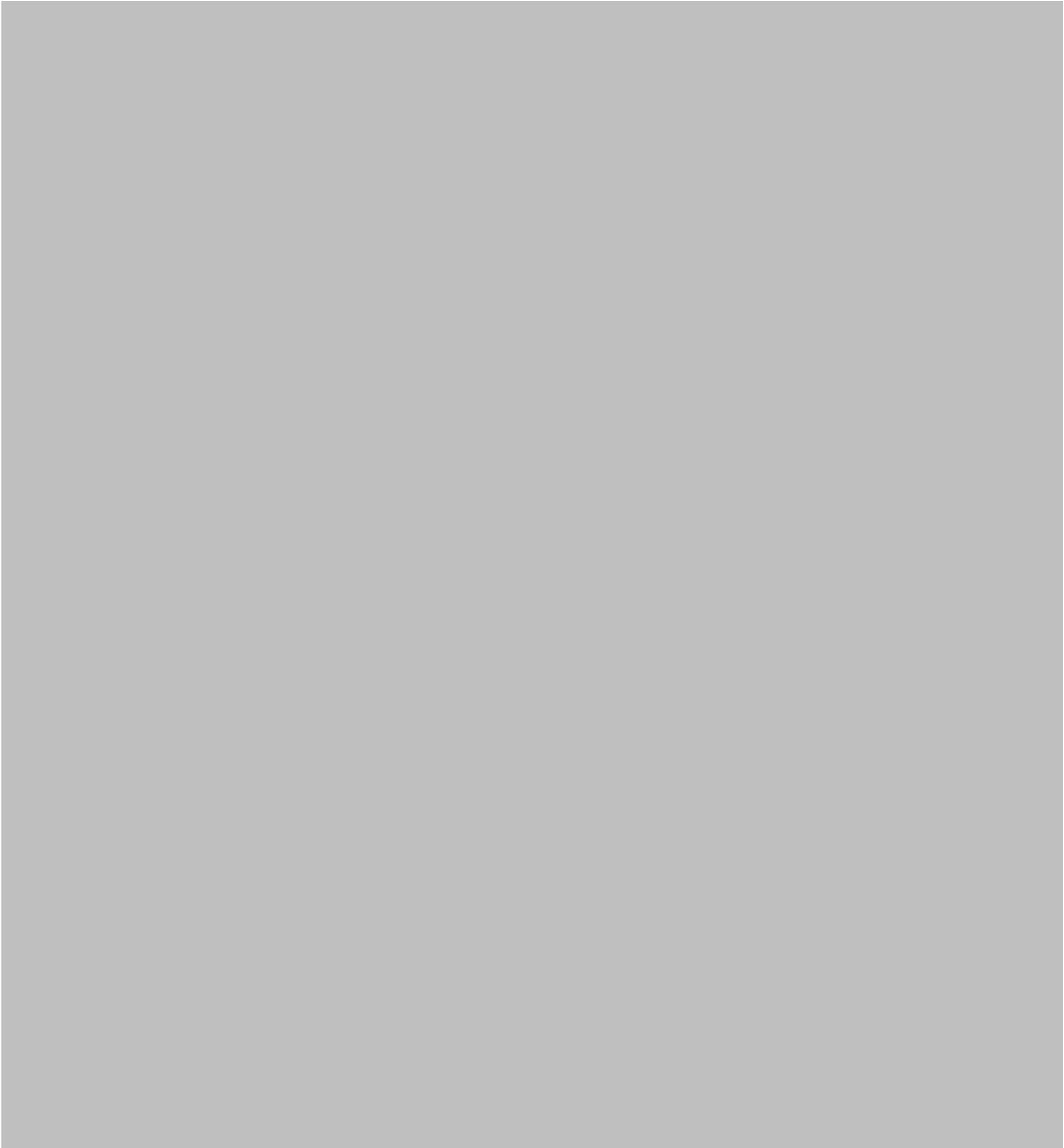


CHIEF MINISTER'S TALKBACK – HOT ISSUES





CHIEF MINISTER'S TALKBACK – HOT ISSUES





Forwarded By: Senior Director, Non-government Education Regulation -
lynda.tooth@act.gov.au

Incident Reference # [REDACTED]

Subject: [REDACTED] - concerns re BCC

Date Created: 02/08/2019 02.35 PM

Note By (Assistant Director, Families & Students, Complaints & Feedback Unit)
 (05/09/2019 02.52 PM)

5/9/19

TRIM notes:

"Thursday, 5 September 2019 at 10:08:20 AM (GMT-10:00) King, Ashley (Mr):"
 Response emailed, fiole to MCR 5/9/19

"Tuesday, 3 September 2019 at 10:25:10 AM (GMT-10:00) King, Ashley (Mr):"
 Confirmed with EGM BS EO ok to proceed. Printed by DLO and provided to COS 3/9/19.

"Monday, 2 September 2019 at 2:10:03 PM (GMT-10:00) Penglis, Katy (Ms):"
 Letter checked out to David Matthews. Catherine to confirm no changes were made before
 we force a check in.

Note By (Assistant Director, Families & Students, Complaints & Feedback Unit)
 (05/09/2019 11.21 AM)

5/9/19

Notification from Ashley King that a response letter has been sent:

From: King, Ashley <Ashley.King@act.gov.au>
Sent: Thursday, 5 September 2019 10:23 AM
To: Families and Students <familiesandstudents@act.gov.au>
Cc: Yen, Kaye <Kaye.Yen@act.gov.au>
Subject: Completed Ministerials

UNCLASSIFIED For-Official-Use-Only

FYI

Brindabella Christian College

Mr Ashley King | Director
 Education Directorate Liaison Officer
 Phone + 61 2 6205 0291 | Email: EduDLO@act.gov.au
 Office of Yvette Berry MLA
 Minister for Education and Early Childhood Development

Note By (Assistant Director, Families & Students, Complaints & Feedback Unit/Enquiries
 Ma) (30/08/2019 10.24 AM)
 TRIM notes

*"Tuesday, 27 August 2019 at 3:14:02 PM (GMT-10:00) TOOTH, Lynda:"Updated at request of
 COS and relayed by EBM_G&CL*

KA

Note By (Assistant Director, Families & Students, Complaints & Feedback Unit/Enquiries
 Ma) (22/08/2019 02.51 PM)
 TRIM notes:

*"Thursday, 22 August 2019 at 2:44:46 PM (GMT-10:00) KING, Ashley:"To COS
 22/8/19 "Thursday, 22 August 2019 at 12:08:17 PM (GMT-10:00) Exton, Lauren:" Unsure of
 correct last name for constituent [REDACTED] Drafted as [REDACTED] Sending to MO in
 PM bag "Thursday, 22 August 2019 at 11:43:54 AM (GMT-10:00) MARTINEZ, Catherine:"
 Cleared by EGM BS David Matthews, fwd'd MCR to progress to MO.*

KA

Note By (Assistant Director, Families & Students, Complaints & Feedback Unit/Enquiries
 Ma) (20/08/2019 02.35 PM)
 TRIM notes:

*Tuesday, 20 August 2019 at 11:22:38 AM (GMT-10:00) Nott, Georgia:"
 Cleared by EBM, GCL. Fwd'd to EGM, BSD for clearance.*

*"Tuesday, 20 August 2019 at 11:02:00 AM (GMT-10:00) TOOTH, Lynda:"
 Spoke with [REDACTED] regarding [REDACTED] concerns. Provided details regarding the agencies that
 have responsibility for census (Department of Education) privacy concerns (Information*

Commissioner) treatment of staff (Fair Work)

"Monday, 19 August 2019 at 5:15:14 PM (GMT-10:00) Exton, Lauren:"
Follow up email sent to Lynda Tooth in Non-Government Education

KA

Note By (Assistant Director, Families & Students, Complaints & Feedback Unit)
(12/08/2019 09.47 AM)
12/8/2019

Put on wrong file. Needs to be put on [REDACTED]
Note By (Assistant Director, Families & Students, Complaints & Feedback Unit)
(12/08/2019 08.59 AM)
12/8/19

UNCLASSIFIED

From: Moriarty, Megan <Megan.Moriarty@act.gov.au>
Sent: Friday, 9 August 2019 9:12 AM
To: Yen, Kaye <Kaye.Yen@act.gov.au>
Subject: RE: Hi

UNCLASSIFIED

No worries Kaye, I've put a call into [REDACTED] this morning and will try [REDACTED] throughout the day.
Kind regards
Megan

Note By (Assistant Director, Families & Students, Complaints & Feedback Unit/Enquiries Ma) (02/08/2019 02.36 PM)

MINISTERIAL REFERRAL - [REDACTED]

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Note By (Assistant Director, Families & Students, Complaints & Feedback Unit/Enquiries Ma) (02/08/2019 02.35 PM)
From: King, Ashley <Ashley.King@act.gov.au> On Behalf Of Education DLO
Sent: Friday, 2 August 2019 1:09 PM
To: Krajina, Danielle <Danielle.Krajina@act.gov.au>
Cc: Tooth, Lynda <Lynda.Tooth@act.gov.au>; EDUMCR <EDUMCR@act.gov.au>; EDU, EDBSD

<EDBSD.EDU@act.gov.au>; Families and Students <familiesandstudents@act.gov.au>
 Subject: [REDACTED] Concerns with Operation of Brindabella Christian College [REDACTED]

UNCLASSIFIED For-Official-Use-Only

Hello

Title/Question	Concerns with Operation of Brindabella Christian College [REDACTED]
Action	Ministerial Response please
Responsibility	G&CL
Response type	Letter
TRIM	[REDACTED]
Date due	MO 16/8/19
Clearance	EGM BS
Comment	Please contact Ashley King at EDUDLO@act.gov.au if you have questions.

Ashley
X50291

From: BERRY <BERRY@act.gov.au>
Sent: Friday, 2 August 2019 12:42 PM
To: Education DLO <EDUDLO@act.gov.au>
Cc: Ceramidas, Joshua <Joshua.Ceramidas@act.gov.au>; Moore, Nicole <Nicole.Moore@act.gov.au>
Subject: FW: August 2019 School Census

Please see below/attached correspondence related to EDU. For appropriate action/response.

Cheers

Abby

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Friday, 2 August 2019 12:33 PM
To: BERRY <BERRY@act.gov.au>
Cc: Tooth, Lynda <Lynda.Tooth@act.gov.au>; [REDACTED]
Subject: August 2019 School Census

Dear Minister Berry,

I am writing to you [REDACTED]
 [REDACTED]
 [REDACTED]
 [REDACTED]
 [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] The en masse exodus of teachers and staff from the school (29 to date this year) and high turnover of staff (some 50 staff have revolved through the Early Learning Centre of the school in the last 8 months), loss of our 5th principal in 6 years as well as the entire executive staff and inability for the school to replace these staff due to bad online reviews means that the school is in breach of its contract with us for our children's education. Issues with governance, relating to the catastrophic set up of the existing board, accusations of bullying and intimidation, threats of legal action against anyone who speaks out against the board, daily tears from staff who remain at the school, large numbers of staff on workers compensation and stress leave, the recent dissolution of the P & F by the board, refusal of the board to communicate with families and large scale departures from the school of more than

50 families, means the education the school promised us is no longer available to our children. Some children in years 11 and 12 at the school are only their 5th teachers for the one subject this year. The junior school alone is down 4 and half teachers for this term with more resignations occurring literally daily (4 since the start of this term alone). We are also aware of reports of late payments of staff and massive financial problems.

[Redacted]

If anyone in the education department is in a position to help BCC and their families, it would be greatly appreciated. The school is in crisis and in urgent need of assessment and intervention. An independent assessment was undertaken several years ago but the outcomes of the review have been squashed by the board.

With thanks,

[Redacted]

[Redacted]

[Redacted]

[Redacted]

[Redacted]

[Redacted]

[Redacted]

Additional Incident Details

Status: Resolved

Category: Liaison Unit

Type of Correspondence: Complaint

Street:

Suburb:

Postal Code:

If this is not for you/your area please forward this email to accessCBR@act.gov.au to advise that it is not the correct area. The correspondence can then be re-directed appropriately.

King, Ashley

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Monday, 9 September 2019 2:43 PM
To: King, Ashley
Cc: [REDACTED]
Subject: Min Berry meeting with Brindabella parents

Hi Ashley

Thank you for your time on the phone just now.

[REDACTED]

For the purposes of organising the visitor passes, at this stage, the attendees are likely to be:

[REDACTED]

I have cc'd in the best email address [REDACTED] to contact them should anything happen at the last minute and Minister Berry be unable to meet with them. My mobile is [REDACTED] if you need to call- [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

In case we don't speak again, thank you for your professional and helpful assistance throughout this matter.

Warm regards

From: [BERRY](#)
To: [REDACTED]
Subject: Letter from Minister Berry
Date: Thursday, 12 September 2019 4:10:11 PM
Attachments: [20190912155536203.pdf](#)
[image001.png](#)
[image002.png](#)

Dear [REDACTED],
Please see attached letter from Minister Yvette Berry.
Kind regards,
Brooke Hendry | Office Manager
Phone: +61 2 6205 0233

Office of Yvette Berry MLA | Member for Ginninderra
Deputy Chief Minister
Minister for Education and Early Childhood Development
Minister for Housing and Suburban Development
Minister for the Prevention of Domestic and Family Violence
Minister for Women
Minister for Sport and Recreation
Phone: +61 2 6205 0233 | Email: berry@act.gov.au
[Facebook](#) | [Twitter](#) | www.yvetteberry.com.au



Please consider the environment before printing this email. If printing is necessary, print double-sided and black and white.

Please note that from 1 January 2018 ACT Government ministerial diaries are subject to publication on the ACT Government's open access website under section 23 of the *Freedom of Information Act 2016*



Deputy Chief Minister
Minister for Education and Early Childhood Development
Minister for Housing and Suburban Development
Minister for the Prevention of Domestic and Family Violence
Minister for Sport and Recreation
Minister for Women
Member for Ginninderra

[Redacted]

[Redacted]

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The ACT Education Directorate is responsible for the registration of ACT non-government schools under the *Education Act 2004* (the Act). As such the Directorate works closely with all non-government schools to support them in meeting their obligations under the Act.

The Directorate takes the concerns raised by the school community seriously and are considering if there are any contraventions of the conditions of registration by the school or its proprietor under the Act.

Thank you for raising this matter with me.

Yours sincerely,

[Redacted signature]

Yvette Berry MLA
Minister for Education and Early Childhood Development

12 SEP 2019

This document is not released in accordance with Section 17 of the
Freedom of Information Act 2016, Schedule 2.2(a)(xvi).

I would like this letter tabled and minuted at the next meeting of the Board of Brindabella Christian College.

Dear Members of the Board,

I would like to share a story with you.

Recently over dinner my husband and I were having a glass of wine, when our children asked what we were drinking and if they could have some. I responded that it was alcohol and that it was only for adults. Our oldest child asked when he would be allowed to have some. My husband quickly replied "When you're 24!". "No, that's not true", I said. "The law says you're allowed to have some when you are 18. But you need to know that your brain has not finished growing until you are 24. Alcohol stops your brain from growing properly, and changes the way your brain works when it has finished growing. So, when you are 18 you may decide if you'd like some, but you'll need to make that decision knowing how it will affect your brain."

Now, lots of people will think it was completely unnecessary for me to explain all of that to a young child, but which answer will he likely buy in to? As parents we are not required to explain or justify ourselves to our children, but when we tell them to implicitly follow our direction, it sure helps if they know why.

For our children, what began as an alcohol issue, ended as a trust issue. Our children trust that we have their best interests at heart, because we have explained the truth and explained our hearts. They trust in our leadership.

The same applies in the situation you now find yourselves in. For many families, what began as a timetable issue, is now an issue of trust and leadership. If you had included the parents and teachers from the start, if you had explained the decisions you were facing, if you had given options or asked for input, you would have had buy in from the beginning. We would have come along for the ride. Instead, the situation you find yourselves in is one of distrust, of angst, of deep hurt.

You have lost many valuable teachers, and you will lose more if you don't start treating the school community with love and respect. You have lost many valuable families, and you will lose more if you don't start treating the school community with love and respect. Those in positions of leadership are called to love with a Christ-like love. They are called to a higher account. You are not just leading young children wherever you want, you are leading an adult community capable of making their own decisions.

The only reason our family has stayed at Brindabella this long is because of [REDACTED] and our teachers. They love our children and we love them. But, it's not enough. The way you have treated [REDACTED], the executive staff and teachers, [REDACTED] and other parents willing to stand up and be counted, is too much for us to bear and witness any more. We have had enough. Your actions have distressed our family. We will not be complicit in your treatment of the teachers and staff.

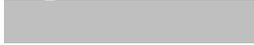
So, we will go elsewhere, and so will many others. Do not be fooled into thinking that simply "giving in" to the timetable issue will pacify and placate us. We have now seen a mass

exodus of those who worked closest with you in the consultative committee, and that speaks much louder than your words.

I recommend that you change tact. I recommend that you spend time in God's Word and pray for His guidance at every meeting. I recommend that you listen to the voices of the many wise people He has placed around you. And I wish you luck in bringing Brindabella back to the loving and cohesive community it once was.

My family and I will continue to pray for you, and for Brindabella.

Regards,

A grey rectangular box redacting the signature of the sender.

This document is not released in accordance with Section 17 of the
Freedom of Information Act 2016, Schedule 2.2(a)(xvi).



Forwarded By: Senior Director, Non-government Education Regulation -
lynda.tooth@act.gov.au

Incident Reference # [REDACTED]

Subject: Letter to Brindabella Christian College Board

Date Created: 18/09/2019 04.21 PM

Response By Email (Assistant Director, Non-government Education Regulation)
(19/09/2019 09.10 AM)

Dear [REDACTED]

Thank you for providing the Education Directorate with the letter you sent to the Brindabella Christian College Board.

Your correspondence has been logged in our system.

The Education Directorate continues to work with the school to ensure its compliance with the Education Act.

Regards

Lynda Tooth
Senior Director
Non-government Education Regulation

Note By (Assistant Director, Non-government Education Regulation) (19/09/2019 09.10 AM)

19/09/2019 - Letter to BCC board is a letter of notification rather than a complaint.

HB

Customer By CSS Web [REDACTED] (18/09/2019 04.21 PM)

Hi

Thank you for the phone call. As requested, attached is the letter we sent to the Brindabella Christian College Board. We sent this letter [REDACTED]. We are yet to receive a response from the board.

As you would be aware, recent [REDACTED] articles have aired more concerns about the school. In particular, I draw your attention to the financial stability and the large number of workers compensation bullying claims. If the school is unable to meet its financial commitments, and is unable to operate, some 700-800 students may be seeking education through the public system. I am concerned that Government funding (grant and recurrent), similar to the fees the parents pay, is being used to pay legal expenses and workers compensation payouts for bullying claims.

Additional Incident Details

Status: Resolved

Category: Liaison Unit

Type of Correspondence: Notification

Street:

Suburb:

Postal Code:

If this is not for you/your area please forward this email to accessCBR@act.gov.au to advise that it is not the correct area. The correspondence can then be re-directed appropriately.

From: [Sloane, Brenton](#)
To: [EDUMCR](#)
Cc: [King, Ashley](#); [EDU Media](#); [Larkin, Lyn](#)
Subject: CMTKKB Talking Points
Date: Thursday, 19 September 2019 9:13:41 AM
Attachments: [CMTKKB 20 September 2019.doc](#)

Hello all,

Apologies for the delay on this one – there were some late changes on some of these issues that required amendments to TPs before submission.

That being said, please see attached the CMTKKB TPs for tomorrow’s session.

Cheers,

Brenton Sloane | Assistant Director

Media and Communications | Education | ACT Government

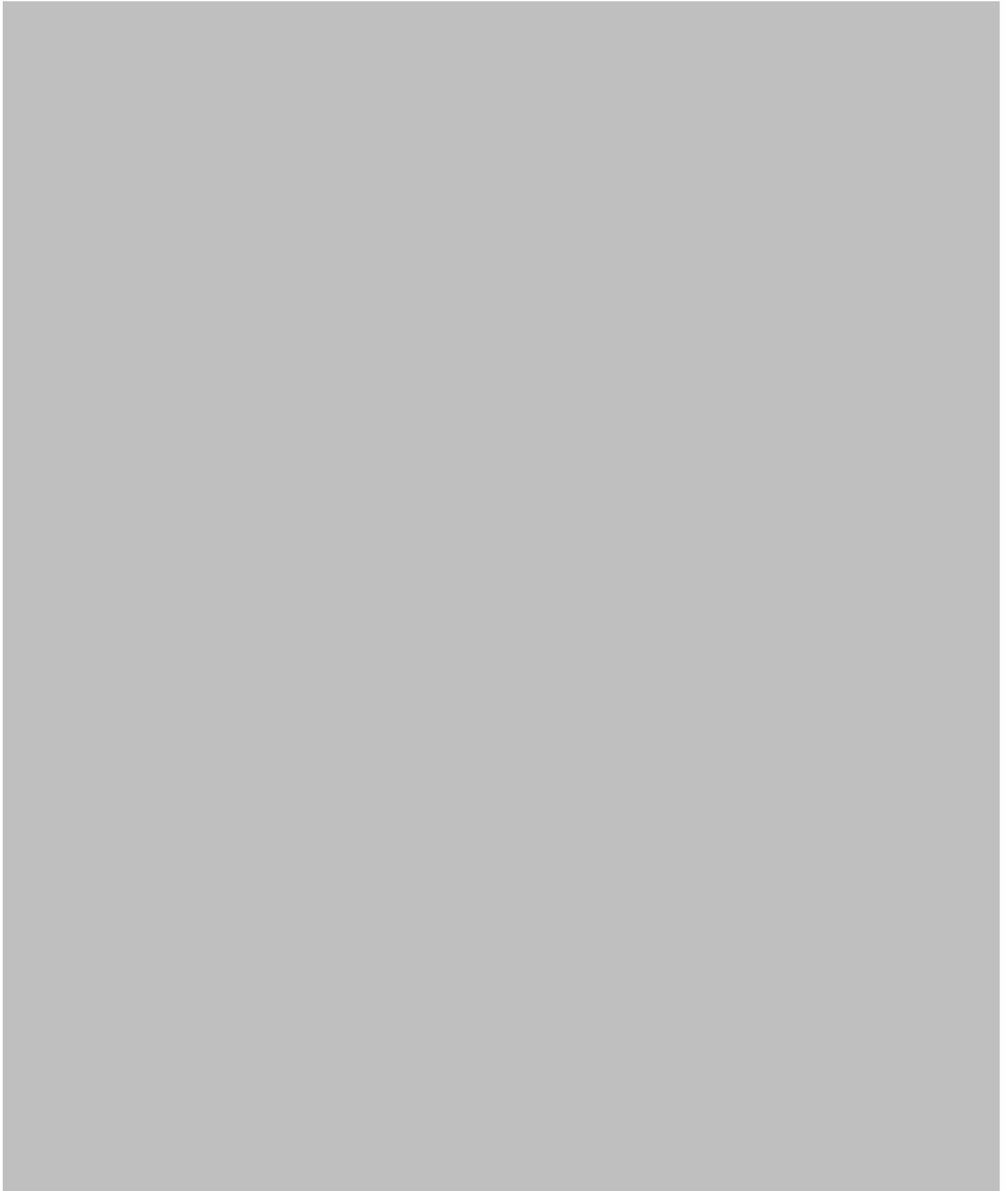
P: (02) 6205 4196 | M: 0431 252 698 | E: brenton.sloane@act.gov.au

Level 6, 220 Northbourne Avenue | GPO Box 158 Canberra ACT 2601

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CHIEF MINISTER'S TALKBACK – HOT ISSUES





CHIEF MINISTER'S TALKBACK – HOT ISSUES

Complete and accurate as at:

19 Sep 2019

ISSUE: **Brindabella Christian College – Parental concerns around transparency**

Talking points/response

- Brindabella Christian College (BCC) is registered as an ACT non-government school until 31 December 2023.
- BCC's registration was renewed in 2018 at which time a financial viability assessment was undertaken and it was on that basis it was recommended by the panel to register the school for a period of five years.
- Concerns have been raised by a number of parents directly to the Education Directorate and the Minister regarding transparency and conduct of the School Board.
- The P&F of the school has written formally to the Board seeking mediation and a review of governance.
- Parents from the P&F of the school has also met with the Minister for Education and Early Childhood Development.
- The Minister is taking the concerns seriously and the Directorate is currently working with the school to ensure their compliance with their conditions of registration.

Background

BCC operates two campuses in the ACT and is registered under the Education Act to operate as a non government school. In 2018 the school was re-registered and met the conditions of registration for a further five year period.

There have been concerns raised by parents over recent months about a range of matters, some of which go to the schools' compliance under the Education Act.

The Education Directorate has commenced an Authorised Person inquiry under the *Education Act 2004* in relation to the school's compliance with their obligations to report student transfers to the Education Directorate.

Non-government schools are required to report to the Education Directorate on their enrolments into and transfers from the school. Enrolment numbers are fundamental

Further inquiries may be conducted if there is evidence that the school may be non compliant with other conditions of registration.

Contact Officer: Brenton Sloane

Ext: 54196

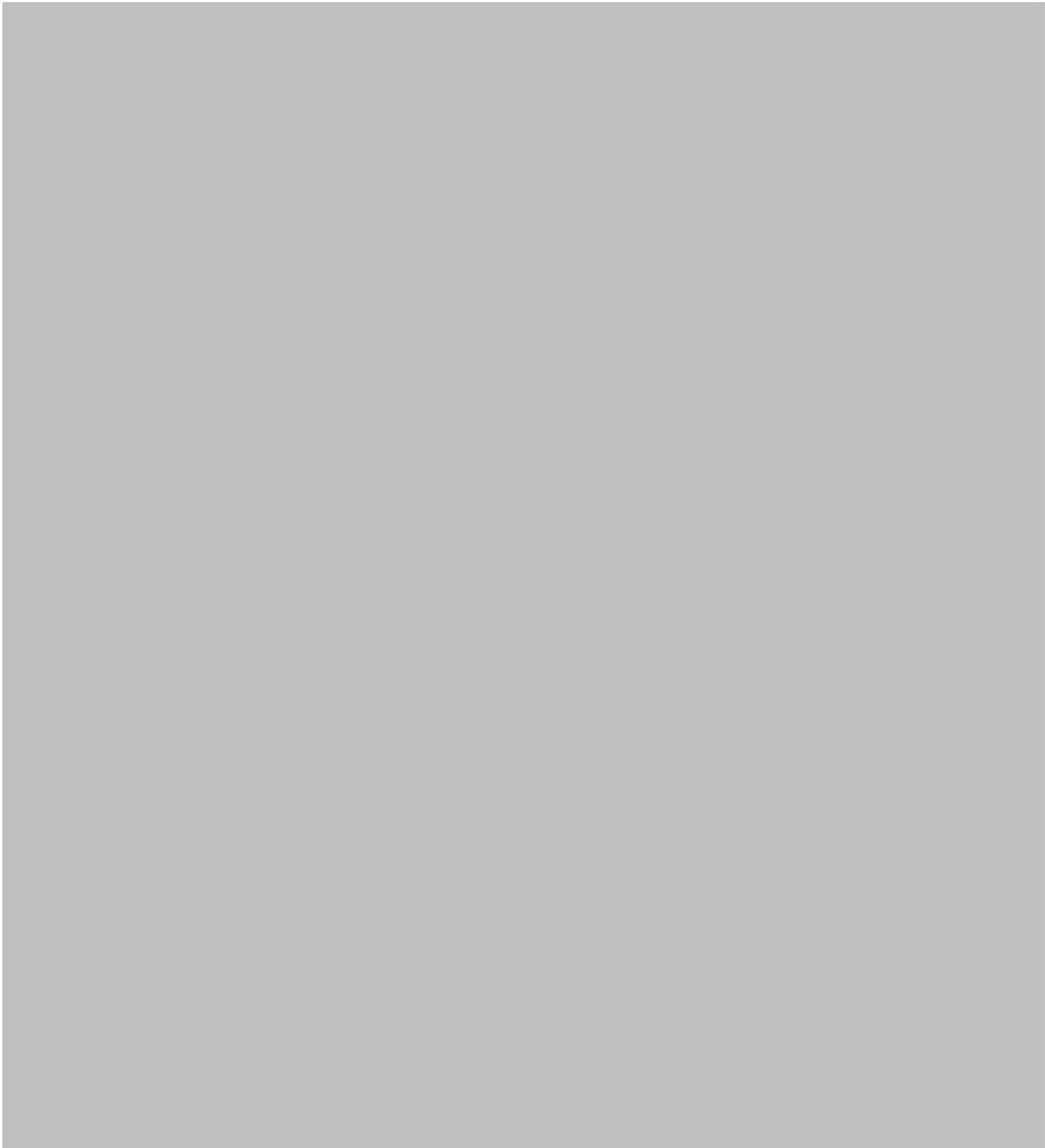


CHIEF MINISTER'S TALKBACK – HOT ISSUES





CHIEF MINISTER'S TALKBACK – HOT ISSUES



Bowden, Julia

From: King, Ashley on behalf of Education DLO
Sent: Friday, 20 September 2019 9:45 AM
To: Krajina, Danielle
Cc: Tooth, Lynda; EDUMCR; EDU, EBSD
Subject: [REDACTED] Letter Further Concerns [REDACTED] [REDACTED]
Attachments: Dear Minister Berry.docx

UNCLASSIFIED For-Official-Use-Only

Hello

Title/Question	Further Concerns Brindabella Christian College [REDACTED]
Action	Ministerial Response please
Responsibility	G and CL
Response type	Letter
TRIM	[REDACTED]
Date due	MO 04/10/19
Clearance	EGM, BS
Comment	Please contact Ashley King at EDUDLO@act.gov.au if you have questions.

Ashley

From: BERRY <BERRY@act.gov.au>
Sent: Friday, 20 September 2019 8:56 AM
To: Education DLO <EDUDLO@act.gov.au>
Cc: Ceramidas, Joshua <Joshua.Ceramidas@act.gov.au>; Hobbs, Rebecca <Rebecca.Hobbs@act.gov.au>
Subject: FW: Update from BCC

Hi Ashley,

Please see below/ attached correspondence related to Education. For appropriate action/response.

Thanks,

Brooke

Brooke Hendry | Office Manager
 Phone: +61 2 6205 0233

Office of Yvette Berry MLA | Member for Ginninderra
 Deputy Chief Minister
 Minister for Education and Early Childhood Development
 Minister for Housing and Suburban Development
 Minister for the Prevention of Domestic and Family Violence
 Minister for Women
 Minister for Sport and Recreation
 Phone: +61 2 6205 0233 | Email: berry@act.gov.au
[Facebook](#) | [Twitter](#) | www.yvetteberry.com.au



Please consider the environment before printing this email. If printing is necessary, print double-sided and black and white.

Please note that from 1 January 2018 ACT Government ministerial diaries are subject to publication on the ACT Government's open access website under section 23 of the *Freedom of Information Act 2016*

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Thursday, 19 September 2019 9:19 PM
To: BERRY <BERRY@act.gov.au>
Subject: Fwd: Update from BCC

With correct email address.

----- Forwarded message -----

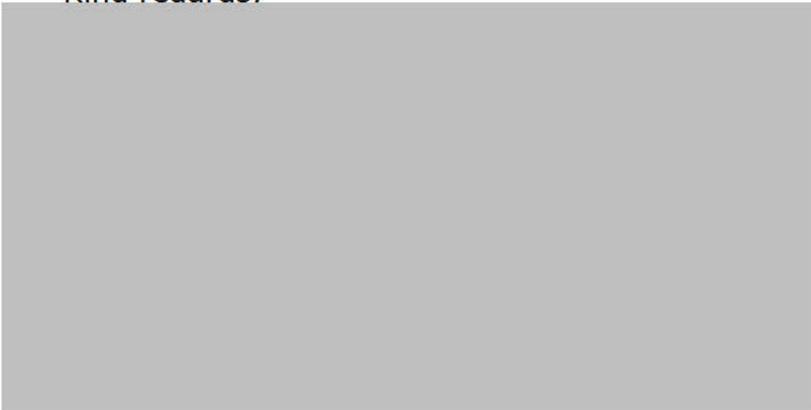
From: [REDACTED]
Date: Thu, Sep 19, 2019 at 9:01 PM
Subject: Update from BCC
To: <berry@gov.act.au>, <david.matthews@act.gov.au>, <Danielle.Krajina@act.gov.au>
Cc: <EDBSD.EDU@act.gov.au>, Tooth, Lynda <lynda.tooth@act.gov.au>, [REDACTED]

Dear Minister Berry

Again, sincere thanks for your time last week.
Attached is some information about BCC - an update on recent developments, which may be of use in your continued deliberation about the school.

Please note I have not referenced the name of the school in the letter, for obvious reasons around disclosure in the future.

Kind regards,



17 Sept 2019

Dear Minister Berry

Thank-you for your time last week. It was clear to me that you were interested in the issues we presented to you about our school. It was obvious you are concerned about the welfare of your constituents and are concerned about the future financial viability of the school, and about academic achievement being maintained.

In this school of around 600 families, there are 330 members of an unofficial P&F page, Parents for BCC. Earlier in the year, over 160 people signed a petition asking for questions to be answered by the Board. There have been several people reach out to you, to their local ACT member in the Liberal and Greens parties, to the federal Minister for Education, Mr Tehan, as well as to the media. The Directorate of Education has been contacted by multiple individuals for advice and information. This year, and in previous years, the Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission has been contacted and provided with large amounts of information and a request for investigation. Christian Schools Australia, the association to which the school is aligned, has been lobbied by several parents.

In all, every agency we have reached out to has declined to take responsibility or action. We are watching our school implode, and it is not pretty. We have farewelled many staff, and watched the children cope as other teachers do their best to cover holes. The school is struggling in day to day functioning. The children have an endless parade of new teachers, fill-in teachers, and other teachers when their classes are split. All this is disruptive and difficult and disappointing. Many parents are troubled at the prospect of needing to leave in coming months.

We have observed more troubling incidents since we met last week, and they concern the welfare of the children at the school. I want to inform you of them, as you are the single responsible person in the ACT who can intervene to investigate the nature and extent of the concerns raised. David Matthews noted that the Directorate's capacity to act is limited and that there are concerns of legal repercussions against the Directorate. You know that the Attorney-General will back your action if you were to use your ministerial powers to take extra-ordinary action.

The first incident relates the continued employment of someone who was previously removed after evidence of [REDACTED].

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED] I ask you to investigate this incident as a signal of a deeper problem. This attitude demonstrates disregard for teacher wellbeing and welfare, and also a lack of commitment to a culture of child safety [REDACTED] to

I will continue to write to you until you act on our behalf because the concerned parents of the school have no-where else to turn. I will continue to act on behalf of families, teachers and children who are not in a position to advocate for themselves. This is at significant personal risk to me and my own family.

I hope you will share in my passion for a thriving independent schools sector in the ACT, and act to save our school.

Kind regards,

A solid grey rectangular box used to redact the signature of the sender.

From: [Sloane, Brenton](#)
To: [Penglis, Katy](#)
Cc: [EDU Media](#); [Larkin, Lyn](#)
Subject: CMTKKB
Date: Tuesday, 24 September 2019 2:56:08 PM
Attachments: [CMTKKB 27 September 2019.doc](#)

Hi Katy,

Please find attached the final TPs for CMTKKB on 27 Sep, approved by Deb Efthymiades.

Please contact me if there are any concerns.

Cheers,

Brenton Sloane | Assistant Director

Media and Communications | Education | ACT Government

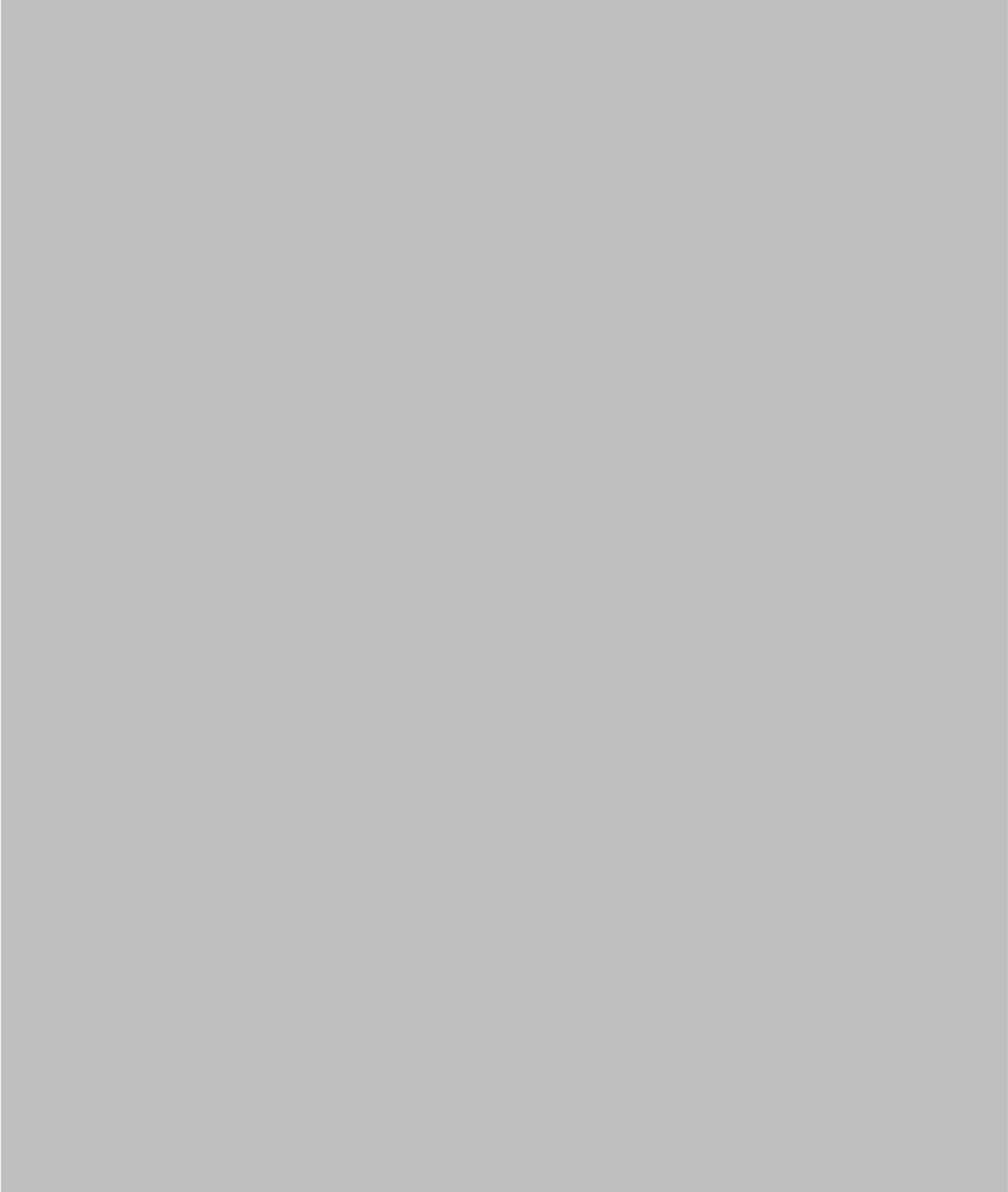
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CHIEF MINISTER'S TALKBACK – HOT ISSUES





CHIEF MINISTER'S TALKBACK – HOT ISSUES

Complete and accurate as at:

24 Sep 2019

ISSUE: **Brindabella Christian College – Parental concerns around transparency**

Talking points/response

- Brindabella Christian College (BCC) is registered as an ACT non-government school until 31 December 2023.
- BCC's registration was renewed in 2018 at which time a financial viability assessment was undertaken and it was on that basis it was recommended by the panel to register the school for a period of five years.
- Concerns have been raised by a number of parents directly to the Education Directorate and the Minister regarding transparency and conduct of the School Board.
- The P&F of the school has written formally to the Board seeking mediation and a review of governance.
- Parents from the P&F of the school has also met with the Minister for Education and Early Childhood Development.
- The Minister is taking the concerns seriously and the Directorate is currently working with the school to ensure their compliance with their conditions of registration.

Background

BCC operates two campuses in the ACT and is registered under the Education Act to operate as a non government school. In 2018 the school was re-registered and met the conditions of registration for a further five year period.

There have been concerns raised by parents over recent months about a range of matters, some of which go to the schools' compliance under the Education Act.

The Education Directorate has commenced an Authorised Person inquiry under the *Education Act 2004* in relation to the school's compliance with their obligations to report student transfers to the Education Directorate.

Non-government schools are required to report to the Education Directorate on their enrolments into and transfers from the school. Enrolment numbers are fundamental [REDACTED]

Further inquiries may be conducted if there is evidence that the school may be non compliant with other conditions of registration. This process is ongoing.

Contact Officer: Brenton Sloane

Ext: 54196



CHIEF MINISTER'S TALKBACK – HOT ISSUES





CHIEF MINISTER'S TALKBACK – HOT ISSUES



Tooth, Lynda

From: Tooth, Lynda
 Sent: Wednesday, 25 September 2019 3:25 PM
 To: [REDACTED]
 Subject: Policies - BCC - request for additional information

Importance: High

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
 Flag Status: Flagged

Good afternoon [REDACTED]

Thank you for your assistance to date in my Authorised Person inspection of BCC's compliance with matters pertaining to the *Education Act 2004*.

As I continue to prepare my report for the Registrar of Non-government Schools I have identified that I cannot locate the policies I requested pertaining to your use of the *Student Transfer Register* and your recording of student attendance. (Please note that I have been able to locate a copy of the requested *BCC Enrolment Policy*).

Could you please:

1. resend your *Student Transfer Register* policy;
2. resend your policy pertaining to the school's recording of *Student Attendance*;
3. send a copy of the school's *Complaints policy*; and
4. send a copy of the *board's Complaints handling policy* if it is additional to the school's complaints policy?

Could you also provide an update of student departures from the school for the 2019 school year as at today 25 September 2019. For clarity, please provide a full list of all students (first name, surname, year group and date of birth) who **have left BCC or will be leaving BCC at any time in 2019** – in the form of an Excel spreadsheet.

I would appreciate receiving these documents by 11 am tomorrow i.e. by 11 am Thursday 26/9/2019. Please send these documents and the requested student data directly to me at lynda.tooth@act.gov.au.

regards
 Lynda

Lynda Tooth | Senior Director Non-government Education Regulation

Phone: +61 2 6205 8321 | lynda.tooth@act.gov.au

Governance and Community Liaison Branch | Education | ACT Government
 GPO Box 158 CANBERRA ACT 2601
www.education.act.gov.au

Return phone call from
 principal:

- stated no STR or attendance policy
- I asked for this information in writing.
- I questioned asking for complaints policy - I indicated we had received many complaints about the school & wanted to check their process but was happy to run a further AP inspection if needed
- I questioned asked about the reason for the # update I indicated we were wanting to monitor their use of STR given the prior previous findings.
- advised BCC was withdrawing its IPA appln for Ch...



Education Directorate

UNCLASSIFIED

To: Minister for Education and Early Childhood Development

Tracking No.: MIN19/1224

Date: 20/09/2019

CC: Director-General

From: Executive Group Manager, Business Services

Subject: Non-Government School - Conditions of Registration – Proposed Action

Critical Date: Click here to enter text.

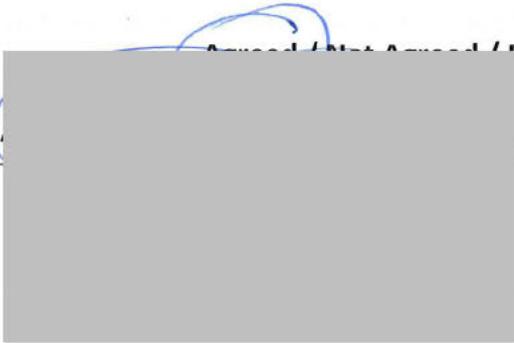
Critical Reason: To enable the Directorate to undertake all reasonable steps to ensure compliance of a Non-Government School with the Education Act 2004

Recommendation

That you:

- 1. Support the proposal for the Directorate to request that Brindabella Christian College demonstrate their compliance with relevant sections of the Education Act 2004 (the Act).

Yvette Berry ML



Approved / Not Approved / Please Discuss

25/09/19

Minister's Office Feedback

Empty box for Minister's Office Feedback

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Background

1. A number of written concerns and a recent meeting with parents from Brindabella Christian College (BCC) has continued to raise concerns around:
 - the Board and their conduct
 - transparency of decision making
 - financial viability
 - student and staff safety and wellbeing
2. The legal framework under which Non-Government Schools operate is complex and compliance with legislation at both the ACT and Commonwealth, administered by a range of government departments is required. For example:
 - ACT Education Directorate – registers the school and may undertake inspections of the school to confirm compliance with the conditions of registration and compliance with the *Education Act 2004* (the Act)
 - Australian Government Department of Education – approves non-government school proprietors as Approved Authorities to receive per capita funding which is attached to the school's compliance with matters such as implementation of the Australian Curriculum, participation in national testing, and reporting requirement
 - Australian Charities and Not for Profits Commission (ACNC) – registers non-government schools and confirms their not-for-profit status
 - Australian Securities and Investments Commission (ASIC) - registers corporations
 - Worksafe ACT – oversees compliance with the *Work Health and Safety Act 2011*
 - ACT Ombudsman – investigates matters that may be reportable conduct
 - ACT Teacher Quality Institute – registers teachers in ACT non-government schools
3. It is understood that the parents have made attempts to contact many of these organisations.
4. The Directorate is also engaging where appropriate with these regulatory bodies.
5. As each piece of legislation focuses on different aspects of an organisation's legal obligations, combined with what thresholds need to be met to indicate non-compliance before an organisation can take regulatory action, it is likely to be difficult to establish a model of response by one or more of these regulatory bodies as suggested by the parents.
6. In response to recent claims about student enrolments, the Directorate has undertaken an Authorised Person Inquiry regarding the school's compliance with their obligations under the Education Act in relation to the Student Transfer Register (STR). Non-Government Schools are required to ensure that enrolment information is

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maintained. The school has provided the data and documentation and that information has been examined. The Authorised Person found three areas of concern relating to enrolment of students at the school:

- a. The school's enrolment policy provides for students being excluded should the student's parents 'bring Brindabella Christian College, its Board members, Executive Staff, teachers or staff (individually or collectively) into disrepute'. This policy position is contrary to s.105 of the Act which outlines the reasons why a student may be excluded from an ACT NGS; and is potentially contrary to the student's human rights.
 - b. The school's use of the STR to record student movement to and from the school was erroneously completed on at least 14 occasions in 2019 and 34 occasions in 2018. These failures to appropriately follow the established guidelines for the use of the STR contravenes s.146A of the Act.
 - c. The school advised that it is aware that 116 students (excluding the year 12 graduating class) have left or will leave the school during 2019. This number of student departures equates to 11% of the student population. In comparison, during the whole of 2018 35 students (excluding the year 12 graduating class) representing 4% of the then student population left the school. The degree of student leavers in 2019 is likely to impact the school's income [REDACTED]
7. In relation to these matters it is not proposed to issue a 'show cause' notice under s.95 of the Act in which you would ask the school's proprietor a written notice stating that you propose to cancel the registration.
 8. Instead issues of non-compliance will be addressed by the Directorate by working with a school to improve their processes; with regular assessments undertaken until the Directorate felt the matter had been appropriately addressed.
 9. In the event of further non-compliance, the issuing of a section 95 notice may be recommended to you in future.

Issues

10. Chapter 4 of the *Education Act 2004* (the Act) outlines the arrangements for the registration of non-government schools. In relation to the issues that have been raised at BCC the relevant parts include: s.75 (Principles); s.80 (Availability of information about operation of non-government schools and their educational programs); s.88 (Registration); s.91 (Conditions of provisional registration or registration); s.94 (investigation of complaints – non-government schools); and s.95 (Cancellation of provisional registration or registration).

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