

RESPONSE TO CONSTITUENT

ASKED BY: Dr Rosalie Woodruff MP

ANSWERED BY: Minister for Education

QUESTION:

My question is on behalf of a constituent, Brian, in Huonville, who raises attention to the serious health and safety risks identified in the MDT dust assessment conducted at Huonville High School in August this year.

It reveals unsafe levels of exposure to hazardous airborne contaminants in the woodwork and metalwork areas, including wood dust, welding fumes, poor ventilation and extraction. Some of the wood dust and welding fumes are classified as group 1 carcinogens and points to the minister's legal obligations under the *Workplace Health and Safety Act 2012* and *Regulations 2002*.

Brian asks for immediate actions that are needed to install a negatively pressured ventilated welding and grinding room, upgrades and verification about the performance of all LEV systems, and points to the staff and students who are being exposed to carcinogens and asks for action now, please.

ANSWER:

Thank you for sharing your constituent question in Parliament on 3 December 2025 regarding Huonville High School. I note your Greens Party colleague, the Honourable Cassy O'Connor MLC has recently asked a similar question of me in the Legislative Council.

There is nothing more important than the safety of our children and young people and our workers. I would like to acknowledge the work undertaken by Huonville High School to understand and address potential safety issues in its Materials, Design and Technology (MDT) Workshop.

I understand that the school engaged a consultant to undertake a Dust Assessment of its MDT Workshop and that the school received the consultant's report in mid-September 2025.

I am advised a copy of this report was provided to the Department for Education, Children and Young People's Work Health and Safety (WHS) Team in mid-October and the WHS team responded to the school and engaged with the Facility Services team the day after its receipt.

I note the report included recommendations to change or enhance work practices at the school to reduce the amount of dust generated or mitigate risks. The report also included recommendations to investigate options to further improve dust extraction through improved dust extraction infrastructure.

I am advised that Departmental WHS consultants have visited the school to provide advice and support on addressing the work practice related recommendations in the report. I understand a follow up visit is scheduled to occur before the end of the 2025 school year to discuss work practices and ensure changes are being implemented successfully on the ground.

In relation to the infrastructure related recommendations, I understand the school will be engaging a mechanical engineer to provide further advice. I will be following up on the outcome of the mechanical engineer's report and will ensure appropriate action is taken.

Thank you again for your query and advocacy for staff and students at Huonville High School.

Yours sincerely



APPROVED/NOT APPROVED

Hon Jo Palmer MLC
Minister for Education

Date 11/12/25