

**THE PARLIAMENTARY STANDING COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC WORKS MET AT THE COMMUNITY FACILITY, RECREATION ROAD, WINNALEAH, ON TUESDAY, MAY 12 2009.**

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**WINNALEAH DISTRICT HIGH SCHOOL, MAIN RD, WINNALEAH**

**Mr KELVIN GRIFFITHS**, SENIOR PROJECT OFFICER, DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION, **Ms JANE PICKETT**, ACTING PRINCIPAL, WINNALEAH DISTRICT HIGH SCHOOL, **Ms MICHELLE SHAW**, ADVANCED SKILLS TEACHER, BRANXHOLM PRIMARY SCHOOL, **Mr LESTER RAINBOW**, CHAIRPERSON, SCHOOL ASSOCIATION, AND **Mr MICHAEL WILKINSON**, ARTAS ARCHITECTS AND PLANNERS, WERE CALLED, MADE THE STATUTORY DECLARATION AND WERE EXAMINED.

**CHAIR** (Mr Harriss) - Ladies and gentlemen, thank you very much for appearing before us today. I officially declare open this part of our deliberations today. Before we start I indicate to the committee that we have apologies from both Mr Hall and Mr Best. We would like to acknowledge the site visit, which has been facilitated for us this morning. That was most informative in terms on what is proposed for the new building and the refurbishment of the existing building. Given that we have had such an outstanding lunch, we have created a new seat in the Parliament that we will call Tania Rattray-Wagner, Member for Winnaleah.

*Laughter.*

**CHAIR** - We would like to acknowledge Tania's presence here today and thank her for attending. Likewise, the hospitality shown at the school this morning was most appreciated.

I welcome all this witnesses. This committee always proceeds in a reasonably relaxed and informal manner. I understand that you, Kelvin, will make the opening remarks and then we will proceed to anybody else who wants to make a contribution. We will probably take questions after the presentations.

**Mr GRIFFITHS** - I am the senior project officer from the capital planning and development section responsible for coordinating the progress of this project. Last year our Learning Services North commissioned a review of educational services being provided both at Winnaleah District High School and Branxholm Primary School. As a consequence, an extensive school and community consultation process has been undertaken to explore various options for the provision of educational services by these schools. The consultation process resulted in agreement for both schools to merge at the beginning of this year and for Branxholm Primary School to cease operating as a primary school site at the end of 2009.

The proposed redevelopment of Winnaleah District High School will ensure the availability of contemporary specialist and general learning facilities for existing Winnaleah District High School students, as well as those from the Branxholm



community. School and local community members will also benefit from having safe car parking and thus drop-off areas and access to a new multi-use complex.

Other features of the project will include greatly improved access to ICT, more work areas and conversion of the existing multi-use area to more functional visual arts and library spaces. Conducted front-of-school services will be significantly enhanced with provision of wheelchair access, as well as the refurbished school administration and entry areas. A range of appropriate environmental sustainability design features have been considered during planning and will be incorporated into the works.

Initial funding of around \$2 050 000 has been made available by the Tasmanian Government for the project. This sum has been further enhanced by the amount of \$1 225 000 from the Australian Government Building and Educational Revolution stimulus package. Total project funding is now \$3 275 000, which should ensure that the substantial improvement of the facilities of Winnaleah District High School can be achieved.

Construction is scheduled to commence in June 2009 with completion expected by the start of the 2010 school year.

I will be happy to take any questions.

**CHAIR** - Thank you, Kelvin. For the purposes of our further deliberations on the matter, there might be other issues we wish to get on to the public record. When we consider the project and consider our report, there might well be matters there that we will take account of. If there is anything in particular to which you, Mike, would like to draw the committee's attention that we have already discussed on site, I would appreciate that being on the record.

**Mr WILKINSON** - I will just mention the environmental aspects of the project, as these are fairly important. We talked about several benefits of the project. One is by way of solar panels to be provided on the roof of the new multipurpose hall - a 4kW power supply, which will be fed back into the grid. Another benefit is the water tanks for rainwater collection on the north-west side of the hall, which are to be installed to provide potable water for flushing toilets and also for irrigation around the school grounds. Further, there is the sewage disposal system, which is being upgraded to a new biocycle system, which will take the sewage from the site and feed it through a number of filtration tanks, treat it and then sprinkle it on some of the open areas beyond the school fence. I would also just like to mention that we are putting in energy-efficient light fittings and controlled switching of lighting using plantation pine wall-framing as well and using low-emission building boards, adhesive ceilings and paints. I also mention that an aspect of the new hall is that we are providing thermal mass in the concrete slab and foundations and the base pre-cast walls, which tend to act as heat sinks. They will have the effect of moderating fluctuations in temperature inside the building during the hot and cold months.

**Mrs NAPIER** - Did you say heat sinks?

**Mr WILKINSON** - Yes.



**Mrs NAPIER** - I just thought that was a really interesting concept.

**Mr WILKINSON** - That is probably one of the most salient features of the design. We have explained the building materials and what have you for the new hall and the connecting covered ways. We are providing disability access to the hall and also to the front entry. We are providing a new extension on the front of the building for administration facilities, which are fairly crowded at the moment. We are renovating the upstairs and downstairs classrooms as well and providing a new project room, art area and library in the existing hall.

**CHAIR** - And in addition to that, significantly some outdoor learning areas.

**Mr WILKINSON** - Yes. Off the downstairs classrooms - breaking out through the external walls to the north and providing some sheltered decks there.

**Mrs NAPIER** - Just an issue that we discussed as we went around the site: would it be expensive or possible to build in some enviro-reading system so that, whether it is relation to water, energy usage or otherwise, it can be built in as part of the curriculum - and maybe for demonstrations to the local community?

**Mr WILKINSON** - We are doing that on other projects at the moment, so we can provide some little statements, which can be mounted in various public areas of the building to tell the story about some of the environmental aspects of the design.

**Mrs NAPIER** - In the Kingston High School design, they actually had built in some read-out systems -

**Ms PICKETT** - Monitoring systems.

**Mrs NAPIER** - Yes, monitoring systems. It could be part of a maths or science project or something like that, with built-in read-out systems. I think Huonville High are going to look at using that kind of read-out system.

**Mr WILKINSON** - I could have a look at that, certainly.

**CHAIR** - Given that we generally go down this track with all the projects we consider, and given there is a \$100 000 contingency - and it would seem there are not likely to be too many difficulties with the building site - perhaps the budget could facilitate exactly what Sue is talking about, just as a minor addition.

**Mr WILKINSON** - Yes, certainly. I have no argument with that.

**Mrs NAPIER** - As part of that, I notice that the tanks will be on the north-west side and you indicated that the water would be part of the flushing system. I was interested to see that you had put them on the north-west side, presumably so it would not take up the internal playground space, but they did not seem to be near any flushing toilets. Is there any particular reason for putting them away there?



**Mr WILKINSON** - Not really. They could be more prominently located, I guess, but we were of the view that they would not want to be in the way. On the courtyard side to the north they would be conspicuous and probably get in the way -

**Mrs NAPIER** - It is not really a big issue.

**Mr WILKINSON** - No, I don't think so. You have a road along the back of the hall which needs to be kept clear and a car park down the other end, so it really only leaves the spot where we have put them.

**Mrs NAPIER** - I accept that. In relation to the hall itself, it would appear that the diagrams allow for - is it a full-size netball court and run-off?

**Mr WILKINSON** - Yes, it is. It has a slightly reduced run-off - it is 2 metres. We really didn't want to make it any bigger. We have checked also with the Tasmanian Netball Association and the sizes we have proposed for both basketball and netball are acceptable to them.

**Mrs NAPIER** - You indicated that the floor surface would be cement base. What kind of surface are you considering using?

**Mr WILKINSON** - The topping on it is an Aura system - that is a vinyl sports floor system that is poured out and has a base coat with several topcoats. It will provide a very good sports floor system that is, in effect, cushioned.

**Mrs NAPIER** - So what kind of resilience are we getting?

**Mr WILKINSON** - Aura produce several different types and the one we have selected is for general use for sports but also if you want to put chairs or heavier objects on the floor, it will not have an impact on the floor itself.

**Mrs NAPIER** - What would be an equivalent hall that has been built with that kind of surface?

**Mr WILKINSON** - I am not sure whether this system has been used in the State, but there is a rubber sports floor in St Mary's school in Hobart - that is a similar sort of floor finish. That is slightly different in that it is two layers of rubber, but this is several layers of poured-on vinyl product. I am not exactly sure of the technical term for the floor, but it is a good system.

**Mrs NAPIER** - So it can accommodate leaping and landing?

**Mr WILKINSON** - Oh yes - absolutely.

**Mrs NAPIER** - I am not familiar with that floor system - that is why I asked.

**CHAIR** - Jane, did you want to make a presentation?

**Ms PICKETT** - I think that my role is to talk about the impact of the redevelopment on the educational outcomes for the students and for the community and the broader region.

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There is no doubt that very small schools, even with the best teaching, are unable to offer the breadth of curriculum experiences that a bigger school can have, so there are huge benefits for the primary school students coming from Branhholm, where the student numbers are, I think, 19 -

**Ms SHAW** - No, 23.

**Ms PICKETT** - Oh, 23 - I have had that number wrong all way through. There are only two teachers there. They do a fantastic job, but there are only so many ways you can group students of all the different age groups that they have - from kinder through to grade 6 - to accommodate all the aspects of the curriculum. So automatically those students coming across will have access to more flexible groupings and learning areas, and greater social opportunities for the older kids. There are three grade 5 boys and that is not enough to even kick a football end to end. Those sorts of things will be good for those young people coming across.

Winnaleah is a very important centre for the remote north-east. One of the biggest factors influencing education and other cultural activities out here is the fact that the communities that we draw from are increasingly remote - I think it is 40km from here to Scottsdale - and our students travel very long distances from the other direction. A couple of them actually have two bus changes in a day, so it is really important that those students aren't disadvantaged by living in a remote area. They need to have access to the same opportunities that students everywhere in Tasmania would have.

Even though our school is very well maintained, it is old-fashioned and the facilities are not of sufficient standard for the twenty-first century and forward and it is time that something was done about that. There are opportunities to build partnerships with the community in terms of using the sports facility, the library and computer access. All those things will be important, not just for the primary schools that are amalgamating but also for the secondary students in the whole school and for the broader community. The amalgamation of the primary school also allows for a much brighter future for secondary students in the area because improved facilities will allow them to have greater continuity. We have already had an improvement in our retention from primary to secondary. This year is the first in which no grade 6s left Winnaleah. They all opted to stay and go into the secondary school. We consider that a sign of community optimism and confidence in the way the school is developing. Also, a number of students, one of whom you met today, have returned to Winnaleah High School from Scottsdale High. She felt it was more comfortable and suited her learning and social opportunities. She is school captain here. It is unlikely she would have been school captain in a bigger school, so it is a good idea to have another option for parents. Not many country parents have the choice, unlike city parents. We are very pleased with that.

Michelle has done research on our projected enrolments and can give you the figures. We have a big kinder this year, with 19 kids, and a similar number next year. That is a bit of an aberration, but after that we go back to 12 or 13 kinder enrolments for the next four or five years, which is an average projection. It is hopeful for good enrolments in our school, especially if we continue to retain our grade 6s into the secondary school. It is not just about amalgamating primary schools, although that was our initial impetus. It is about growing our school so that it caters for the needs of students in the remote north-east on the journey of life-long learning.



**Mrs NAPIER** - Could you explain how the library and visual arts areas are to be reconfigured?

**Ms PICKETT** - On the current plans the hall is to be changed into a library and art room. We have since had more input from staff members and a conversation with Mike and there was a suggestion that having the art room in the current library would be a better idea because it would have the MDT area, the art area and the science area - all those hands-on, active areas where kids are likely to be moving around the room and making noise. We thought it a better idea to put them all together. We also had the opportunity with the breakout areas for art to be able to move outside. The other reason is that art is a more 'get in and get dirty' subject. It can be noisy, and could be so down in the administrative end of the school. After talking with Mike about it we think the flexibility of the flooring and wet areas in either room is not going to make any difference, so we have the flexibility to change it as required.

There was comment that this is all well while we have a visual arts teacher but what if we don't have one for a while. However, the rooms have been designed with that flexibility in mind. Being a remote school, it is often difficult to attract and retain highly skilled teachers. The recruitment in this school recently, which I cannot take any credit for because I am only acting, has been outstanding. We now have a highly qualified maths and science teacher, when for years we had no science specialists at all. We have a young teacher who is able to take visual arts, one who can take MDT, we have our own physical ed specialist. That is partly due to a supportive school environment. We are able to offer good hostel facilities so it is comfortable to live out here in the community, which is important. We hope they will be encouraged to stay longer by our providing better facilities for them to work in. That all contributes to improving student outcomes; there is no doubt about that. It is difficult to hold good teachers in remote areas. All our teachers are good and I have named a couple only because we struggle to retain specialists in the secondary area. We have a fantastic mix of experience and youth on our staff, so we are skilling up young people, who bring enthusiasm and energy when we are flagging a bit at the top.

**CHAIR** - It might be appropriate to hear from Michelle about the social issues attached to the amalgamation, projections for future enrolments and so on.

**Ms SHAW** - My association with Winnaleah has spanned two-and-a-half decades. I first moved up here in 1986. Whilst I have predominately been working in Winnaleah I have also worked in other schools on the north-east, including Gladstone prior to its closure, and more recently as acting principal of Branxholm. I am still working there as an AST. I have an interest in the history of the Winnaleah school. While my research is not as accurate as an historian's might be, I have a fairly good grasp of what has been happening over the last few decades. While living in the Winnaleah area I have witnessed significant changes to education, including the closure of Gladstone and the amalgamation of Branxholm schools, and also the emergence of the years 11 and 12 program, the VET courses, introduced in Winnaleah in about 1998. They have continued to maintain a really strong number of students, including mature-age students. The emergence of the program allowed adult ed to take place for the first time in the north-east. Previously it did not happen or happened via TAFE or by travelling to



and from Launceston. Since then, Scottsdale High School have also introduced a VET program that is going great guns.

**Ms PICKETT** - They have about 40 and we have 19.

**Ms SHAW** - Yes. The change in student numbers in Winnaleah, as well as the VET program, mean that the school is bursting at the seams. As recently as last year the VET students were sharing a room with music and drama. When they had their days at school all the musical instruments had to be packed away and it clearly was not working. During consultation about the amalgamation of Branxholm and Winnaleah schools it was decided to place the VET students at Branxholm. They attend there two days per week - Monday and Tuesday. Attendance on average is over 10 students, which might seem low at a State level but for this area it is high. The enrolment in the VET section is about 19.

While numbers were decreasing in the primary schools they were growing in other areas of education. My research suggests that for the next five years, which is as far as the numbers from Hobart are projected, enrolment at Winnaleah is predicted to be more than 150 students. That is kinder to grade 10; it does not include grades 11 and 12 or equivalent. Projected enrolment for Branxholm, should it remain open, remains in the low 20s if not lower. A combined student population from both schools is predicted to be 164.5 in 2010, and hovering around 167 in 2014.

I was asked to speak about the social impact of working in a small school. It is quite significant, challenging for the teachers and limiting for the students. We have four students in grade 6 and a wish of the community was for the school to remain open this year so those students could complete their primary school education in the school at which they began kinder. That wish was granted but at the end of this year the school will be closed and converted into a campus of Winnaleah, offering facilities for years 11 and 12, mature-age learners and birth to four. It is also anticipated that the community will have greater use of the school for meeting and gatherings.

It would be fair to say that imminent closure of Branxholm caused stress in the community. Those who worked in the school or have been associated with it saw the writing on the wall a number of years ago. In about 2000 there were 60-odd students at the school and that has decreased significantly. When I assumed my position there three years ago we had 38 students, so in that short period the school population halved. The Branxholm community are looking positively at retention of the school as an educational facility. Some businesses are looking forward to increased impetus from having mature-aged people attending in their community.

The consultation phase was lengthy, in depth and gave everyone who wanted a voice an opportunity to talk about the future of the school and the decisions being made. Brian Wightman - the principal on leave at the moment - and I talked at length about the benefits and deficits of amalgamation. Everything was transparently presented to the community, and public meetings allowed the community to ask questions and have input into whatever decision or direction the schools were taking.

**Mr RAINBOW** - Regarding the consultative process, our first question was: where do you start? We should thank Michelle and Brian because it was an extremely difficult



subject to broach in two small country towns. We had seen the demise of Gladstone, Pioneer and Derby. The numbers indicated that Branhholm had to go. We made a lot of mistakes in handling Gladstone, and before my time with Derby and other schools. We decided we needed to put it on the table and talk. CB&M were engaged by the Education department to facilitate discussions about whether we could proceed with the merger. The first one was in Branhholm Town Hall. A lot of people were there, probably in the 40s or 50s. There were some really good questions. CB&M has some visions in their background and we also discussed things on a couple of occasions at school association level. We had the backing of both school associations to find out what our communities interests were, their questions, their negatives and positives and whether we could proceed. We came away from Branhholm thinking that was not too bad because it was the losing school if you considered this from a win-lose situation.

We then went to Derby and they came with a different lot of questions. All of a sudden another local school, Ringarooma, decided that perhaps they needed to have input as well. The questioning from there became a little big antagonistic - I presume because they were all protecting their patch. So we moved on from there and had one at Winnaleah and, again, some really good questions came out of that. After the next process we put all those things down together at different association levels and called for a meeting between both school associations, which we held at Winnaleah. While there were some issues that we will continue to work through over the next years to come - they won't all be fixed in a very short time - there was positive feedback. There were more positives than negatives and there are still consultative issues going on now. We are finding it is not so much the people who have been on the journey - and the journey has now been 18 months to two years - it is more the people who move into the area and who have not been included on the way through because they have come in halfway through the two schools merging, and we go backward to come forward all the time.

The biggest issue we found in small towns is probably based on sport. That has always been the tough one. The current school at Winnaleah is a district high school and of course it fields netball, footy and cricket teams and so on, and everybody sticks up their hand to protect their patch to the benefit of their communities. That has been a positive that has been worked through. Sure, we will have some interesting times as this all moves even further ahead, but the merger process has been a real eye-opener.

**CHAIR** - Thank you. Are there any questions on any of the presentations?

**Mr GREEN** - With respect to the consultation, do you think the community is generally satisfied that the improvements that have been made at the school overall will have the desired effect from both the educational and social points of view?

**Mr RAINBOW** - Bryan, the initial aim of the merger was for better educational outcomes - and we have talked about the small number of students and we have talked about the three boys out in the yard being able to have a kick of the footy, and so on - so I would imagine that we have not had too many complaints. As late as a fortnight ago the School Association sat down with the teaching staff and we opened the suggestions box. The box had many and varied questions in it about the merger moving ahead - questions ranging from not wanting a name change through to a request for laptops for teacher aides. There were some interesting dynamics in that. Other people looked at it



differently, and talked about the building process, or the values for the students. From a parent's perspective the value of a district high school is that the children in primary school have the ability to do manual arts, science and sport - we have a specialist sports teacher and there is sports science being offered at the school now. There have been very few negative outcomes, and most of those negatives have been things that we can work our way through.

**Mr GREEN** - With the capital outlay, the money that is being spent to improve the school, is the community generally satisfied with the project as it stands at the moment?

**Mr RAINBOW** - The way that the community can utilise those facilities has been of paramount importance in designing the plans and delivering the outcomes which include the opportunity to use a first-class gymnasium - and we currently have none unless we go to Scottsdale - the library, IT on line et cetera. This will deliver exactly what the community wants. So the answer to your question is yes, and the community will look forward to it.

**Mr GREEN** - Do you think that generally the consultation has been good between yourself, the designer and the schools and the community as a whole?

**Mr WILKINSON** - Yes, it has been quite extensive. We have been at this now for nearly six months.

**Mr GREEN** - Have changes been undertaken as a result of the consultations?

**Mr WILKINSON**- Yes, things have been refined. Each time we meet the changes become fewer and fewer. It has been a good process.

**Mr GREEN** - To be honest, I am more than satisfied. I think it has been a good process.

**Mrs NAPIER** - I haven't had many phone calls, which means it is good.

**Mr GREEN** - From my point of view, this is a good example of how communities can work together. I know it is difficult for people who are directly involved to undertake those consultations, but I take my hat off to you because I think this has been a really good outcome as a result of all the work you have done. I think that many school communities around Tasmania will be looking at this sort of model at the present time, given that there is quite a bit of money on the table to take advantage of. Congratulations to you all.

I know the chairman is far more technically-minded than I am, so he will probably ask some technical questions about the building and the project overall, but it seems to me that it has been extremely well thought out and people are enthusiastic about it. That says to me that it is a good and worthwhile project.

**Mrs NAPIER** - I agree with those comments.

**Ms PICKETT** - We are hoping to build on that too, because the more the community comes into the school and uses the new facilities, the more they become familiar and comfortable with the school and know that their input into what they want out of the



school will increase. Every contact that we can make there to build the school will be enhanced by this development.

**Mr GREEN** - As I said, it is the nicest driveway that I have seen.

**Mrs NAPIER** - On the relationship between the Winnaleah and Branhholm campus beyond 2009, the \$3.2 million being spent on the project overall does not include any allocation for the Branhholm site and I think the indication was that that would be the site for VET. Then we have the announcement that the northeast will be a trades training centre. What would you see as the relationship between the VET offerings that will be run at Branhholm and the VET at Scottsdale in the context of the trades training centre? What funding might be available or accessed for that Branhholm campus?

**Ms SHAW** - Sue, I don't know that I can answer that in its entirety because I haven't had anything to do with the funding for the skills centre. Jane may well be a bit more aware of that, having come from Scottsdale High -

**Ms PICKETT** - No, but I have been on leave, so I am not familiar with the intimate details of that funding. However, my understanding is that if we continue to use the Branhholm for our VET program that would be resourced out of the Winnaleah District High School resource package, because it would be another campus. That school won't be resourced in terms of a school the way it is now - with cleaners and all that sort of stuff - so how we use it for that extended learning would be from the Winnaleah resource package. I imagine that it would be catering for those people who are unable to access the trades training centre because of the remoteness. It will be under the auspices of the Polytechnic, I understand.

**Mr GRIFFITHS** - Yes, when the school is vacated as a primary school site at the end of this year, we will ensure that it is still a good-quality building for the use of the local community in Branhholm and elsewhere for the variety of purposes which have been nominated. The building is already in a fairly good condition, but we will provide for some painting or carpeting - whatever is appropriate to ensure that it has an immediate and effective use for its ongoing purposes.

**Mrs NAPIER** - So you would anticipate that capital funds or any recurrent funds that might be required for that Branhholm facility would come from the Polytechnic and the Academy - or just the Polytechnic?

**Mr GRIFFITHS** - It will need to be sourced from its new users, which will be the Polytechnic, but it won't be through the traditional form of funding.

**Mrs NAPIER** - Could someone tell me what the other funding is, the \$1.2 million? There is \$2 million of State funding, and \$1.225 million -

**Mr GRIFFITHS** - That is the announced Australian government funding for primary schools.

**Mrs NAPIER** - So that is Australian government funding?

**Ms PICKETT** - Yes, Primary Schools for the Twenty-first Century.

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**Mr GRIFFITHS** - That funding was quite a blessing in terms of this project because it meant instead of building what would have been very basic new hall facilities - that is all we were looking at, given our original budget - it meant that we could enhance that part of the project and achieve an excellent community facility.

**Ms SHAW** - It is probably important to mention - and Kelvin certainly touched on it - that the Branhholm School is in exceptionally good condition for its age. It has been really well maintained over the years and certainly that was one of the considerations when we looked at this proposal - is it going to cost down the track? Certainly, for the foreseeable future, no large amount of money will need to be spent on the physical environment there at all.

**Mrs NAPIER** - In terms of the other program that will be based at the Branhholm site, which is the Zero to Four parenting and early childhood program, has this area been identified as a family/child centre program?

**Ms SHAW** - Not at this stage, as far as I am aware.

**Mrs NAPIER** - Because there would be some equipment and ongoing funding issues for that, I suppose.

**Ms SHAW** - The cluster has very capable Reading Magic group and an early learning group and they use Branhholm as a base on Thursday mornings -

**Ms PICKETT** - Yes, they do. I was at a principals' meeting on Friday and they were talking about Launching into Learning. Our schools are eligible to apply for the new bucket of funding that is available to that because our ENI is quite high - the mean ENI of our two schools is 61 and the cut-off point is 60. I will be doing something about that funding - or Brian will when he returns - that may well have something to do with supporting that, but I don't really know much about it yet - I am just learning that bit.

**Mrs NAPIER** - What is your kinder readiness score at the moment?

**Ms PICKETT** - I must admit I don't know the answer to that question, but I could find out for you. I know that we are one of the schools that are running the extra day of kinder. We have three days kinder this year and that is going well.

**Mrs NAPIER** - Coming back to Branhholm site and the trades training centre, it is not envisaged that you have to move any of your MDT to that site?

**Ms SHAW** - No, nothing like that.

**Mrs NAPIER** - The trades training centre could use that facility as well.

**Ms SHAW** - It certainly offers potential for partnerships between the two school communities, and I imagine that will be pursued when Brian returns and a little more is known about the skills training centre.



**Ms PICKETT** - Before, when you asked about the money question, I forgot to mention that we have also put our hand up for another lot of money for the science centre - I don't think it is included in that \$1.2 million, is it?

**Mr GRIFFITHS** - It is a related program, but no, it is not included in the \$1.2 million.

**Ms PICKETT** - No. So that extra money is to refurbish the science area, which is desperately in need of refurbishment. Now that we have a really fantastic science teacher, it would be really good to have an area that was up to scratch in which he can teach practical science. There is quite a lot of stuff to be done there in terms of chemical storage, fume cupboards and soundproofing, because it backs onto the MDT area. That is a bit of an issue.

**Mrs NAPIER** - You said that someone had looked at the travel time factor for some of the students. I wonder if you could enlarge on that.

**Ms PICKETT** - You might like to table those maps, Michelle.

**Ms SHAW** - I will table those maps if you will bear with me for a moment. These were sent to me on Friday, and Jane has only just seen them today. It gives you a bit of an idea of the areas that the students are drawn from and visually represents quite a distance. The calculations show that we have one student who is travelling almost 100km a day to access secondary education. We have a huge feeder area - basically it goes from Ansons Bay right through to Icena, Musselroe Bay and Rushy Lagoon.

**Mrs NAPIER** - And you have some by student choice?

**Ms SHAW** - Yes, and there are certainly adult learners who are accessing VET courses from Winnaleah who travel up from Scottsdale to tap into what is offered up here, even though they have some on their own doorstep.

**Mrs NAPIER** - Looking at Ringarooma, some are younger than high school age. Is that brothers and sisters, so that they like to travel with a brother or sister?

**Ms SHAW** - I do not know who those students are. Certainly there is a family trend for that to happen. They may be VET students, years 11 and 12, possibly travelling from Ringarooma.

**Ms PICKETT** - There is quite a scattergram there. Those people really need the same educational opportunities as everybody else and Winnaleah is a great place to provide it. This year our options program is rich in art, catering, sports science, music, performing arts, technology, food and agriculture sciences, welding, maths and TCE. We have a lot of students studying extension courses online, things like art, aqua science and writing. The older students are doing TCE maths and English online to get that readiness that they would not otherwise have. Our curriculum offerings are rich and we have put a lot of work into grouping of students, so we are doing our best to cater for individual needs all the time. That extension online program goes down to grade 2 and through to grade 10.



**Mrs NAPIER** - A number of students and teachers raised the issue of a weights and gym facility. When I looked at the plans I wondered why the gym equipment had been put in the middle of the northern wall, whereas it might accommodate some extension if it were put perhaps to the north-west of the building. In that way if there were an extension then that area might become part of the weights room.

**Mr WILKINSON** - In looking at providing a weights training room or small gymnasium we needed to have something of a certain size which fitted the budget. In fact we are pushing the envelope at the moment with that, but it could be extended.

**Mrs NAPIER** - It would be a great community facility as well. If we moved this equipment store one way or the other then the cost of extending it would be just in moving one wall rather than opening up two walls. We have it right in the middle at the moment. If we moved it one way or the other then we only have to take out one wall if it were decided that this would be a good place to have the gym and weights room, which would be complementary to the whole facility. I am also delighted to see a netball court.

**Mr RAINBOW** - One of the things we spoke about at association level was to put the project into priorities. The first priority was the GLAs, then the gymnasium area so that we had a gymnasium, then the whole gymnasium redevelopment, then admin - the last one on the list in dollars and cents because at this stage we still do not have the quantity surveyor numbers in, so that could go by the wayside altogether, depending on how far the money stretches. It is in there for the right reason. Your point is taken that it could be shifted to one end of the building or the other. We would love to have it but at this stage it does not look as rosy as we would like.

**Mr GRIFFITHS** - It might be on top of the wish list.

**Mr RAINBOW** - Yes. We did put those into different priorities to make sure that GLAs were first and foremost.

**Mrs NAPIER** - I do not have an argument with that. It is just that it would not cost you any more to move that store one way or the other. That would then accommodate the aspirations of a gymnasium at some future stage. Having an equipment store is important for a community-based gym.

**Ms PICKETT** - We have to have it anyway for our gymnastics and so on.

**Mrs NAPIER** - Because you have to put your gymnastics equipment in there?

**Ms PICKETT** - Yes.

**Mr RAINBOW** - If there were another \$100 000 about, then, yes, that would be great.

**Mrs NAPIER** - I was just looking at the contingency factor. Hopefully the cost index will be depressed a bit, though in Tasmania that might not be so.

**CHAIR** - I am more than satisfied with the detail on the plans, as well as the briefing we had on site.



**Mrs RATTRAY-WAGER** - This has been one of the best exercises I have seen in progress, going on site to look at the needs and aspirations of a community that has joined forces with another small community to provide a fantastic learning opportunity for our children. I am very proud of this community, as our many others in the community who are working hard to be viable and sustainable. I am pleased that the committee made the trek into the north-east. I hope you do not take too long to come back again for the next project - which could be the recreation ground.

**CHAIR** - When we were in the existing school hall I wondered to what extent the students had been engaged with the design and post-design processes. Josh Whelan understood that students had been engaged once the plans had been completed, and they were guided through the process. That is commendable, but an extension of that is something the department, and Mike, might consider.

I see projects like this, particularly in schools, as a really ideal learning opportunity, not only to engage the students in the concept stage, but once even conceptual drawings like this are done, for the learning perspective there are often students in schools who are interested in architecture or building or electrical matters - the allied trades that go together with a building. It was an interesting conversation that I had with Josh, because he is looking at doing a trade when he leaves high school. Once this concept is done, has there been any move to put the mud map down for students, orient it the right way and explain to them how this will be dug out and so on? Has any of that occurred now that we have reached this stage? It is still not too late, of course.

**Ms PICKETT** - No, I don't think that has occurred. I stand to be corrected if I am wrong, but I absolutely concur with what you have said. At Scottsdale High, where I was involved in the recent redevelopment of the performing arts centre and various other bits and pieces, the design graphics class actually engaged in helping with the planning of the landscaping. They drew the plans and they all went through the consultation. That was fantastic, so I absolutely agree with you. I have learned an awful lot because when we had the ICT plans come down and they were laid on top of this, all you see is power points and computer outlets. When Mike turns up with his five layers of plans for all the different bits, it is a big learning experience! It is a rich opportunity for those students to undertake and I am pretty sure that the teachers involved would be learning heaps as well along the way.

**Mr RAINBOW** - The leadership group at the school have always had the opportunity to come to the School Association. Indeed, until recently they held two positions at the table. Last year when the plans first started being done and the consultative process was going on with CB&M, we had one girl actually take up the opportunity and go away and do her work experience at CB&M. That opportunity has been there and the kids have taken that up quite openly.

**CHAIR** - The other thing in addition to that is that Mike's company probably has the capacity to do 3D simulations so that the students can see on a computer screen just how this will look when completed. That might be a valuable learning opportunity.



**Mr WILKINSON** - We do our drawing in 2D and 3D, so it gets built up to the third dimension. We are quite happy to provide a CD of the modelling we have to date on the school.

**Mr GRIFFITHS** - One thing we have done with previous projects, provided we have concurrence with the builders, is let students have a walk-through, look at the progress and talk to the builders on site as to what is happening and what will happen.

**Ms PICKETT** - I imagine that the students will be very keen to do that photographic journey.

**Ms SHAW** - Certainly not much has happened in the Winnaleah school vicinity for a number of years, but we have always made sure that the children are involved in the progress, right from kindergarten and we have had students working alongside builders while they have been doing deck extensions and so on, so we will certainly ensure that that happens again.

**Mrs NAPIER** - I accept that what is actually drawn here on page 4 is not necessarily what finally might be configured, taking account of comments about the arts studio, but I was interested in what your thoughts might be, Mike, about how the sound issue can be dealt with in those three rooms, whatever it might eventually become.

**Mr WILKINSON** - As part of these plans we have included in the library resource room and also the visual art studio or project room, small lit ceilings over sections of that space to reduce the scale of the space, and there are acoustic panels so they should have a good ameliorating effect on the sound bouncing around in there. Also, with the flooring, we are using rubberised wet-area flooring, so that is an environmentally-friendly product and it also has some good acoustic qualities. In the library resource room we are putting in a carpet with some underlay. Those sorts of additions to the space will have the desired effect acoustically, I would think.

**Ms PICKETT** - We have also taken into account the acoustics of the upstairs because at the moment it is quite noisy in the downstairs rooms.

**Mr WILKINSON** - We can do a certain amount, but it will not get rid of all the noise -

**Ms PICKETT** - But it will be better than it is now.

**Mr WILKINSON** - What we are doing is putting down an underlay and carpet up there, so that will have a lot of effect. At the moment the carpet is just on the floor itself without any underlay. We can probably also upgrade that underlay a bit to an acoustic underlay. The only thing you can do after that is put a ceiling underneath on resilient mounts that take up any vibration and what have you, but that is a significant impost on the cost of things, so we will see how we go with the tender. I think we have the basics in there; if we can build on that we will do so.

**Mrs NAPIER** - Coming back to the new multipurpose hall, what about heating? I know you said the nature of the cement was heat-absorbent -



**Mr WILKINSON** - I don't think we'll be putting in heaters there -

**Mrs NAPIER** - So that can be another project?

**Mr WILKINSON** - I suppose it would be good to have heaters in there if it is being used as a performance centre, rather than for sports use.

**Mrs NAPIER** - I was thinking of nighttime as well.

**Mr GREEN** - There are a couple of existing heaters, I understand.

**Mrs NAPIER** - Usually now they put the heaters up in the top part, don't they?

**Mr WILKINSON** - Yes, I could look at that.

**Mrs NAPIER** - Everyone assumes that you can get warm playing sport, but depending on the activity, whether it is dance or drama or something like that, or watching a performance, it need not necessarily be that everyone can keep warm.

**CHAIR** - Okay, I detect that we are about done. We thank you for the evidence provided to the committee in this sitting. I reiterate our gratitude, particularly to the student leadership group, who were a delightful group to show us through the building. These building proposals will enhance what you already have, but our observations this morning of the grounds and what you have got there are just outstanding. This is just a very nice setting in which to undertake education. Thank you Lester for facilitating the use of these premises as a place to meet. With that, I declare this part of our deliberations concluded.

**THE WITNESSES WITHDREW.**