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1.0 Introduction

The purpose of this report is to detail the findings of the community consultation regarding the Queensland Government’s proposed closure of Everton Park State High School (EPSHS).

EPSHS was identified for closure by the Department of Education, Training and Employment (DETE) as part of an annual review to assess the viability of state schools using the School Viability Assessment criteria; it was subsequently referred to the Minister for Education, Training and Employment for consideration as a potential school for closure. Under the Education (General Provisions) Act 2006, if the Minister proposes closing a state school, the Minister must publish a notice about the proposal in the Queensland Government Gazette and the closure must not happen earlier than six months after the publication. Consultation must occur with the community as part of the viability process.

JTA Australia was selected to provide independent consultancy services to facilitate the consultation regarding the proposed closure and assume responsibility for assisting the school community to develop appropriate consultation approaches with each community. JTA’s role included co-ordinating and facilitating community meetings and the collation of information presented during the meetings and through written submissions. Its role did not include the formulation of recommendations. The recommendations will be determined on the information provided to the Minister via the School Viability Assessment criteria and this consultation report which outlines the quantitative and qualitative issues submitted to JTA through the consultation process.

Following the finalisation of the annual School Viability Assessment process, DETE plans to seek feedback on both the assessment and consultation processes. This will be considered along with feedback provided through the submissions to JTA, P&C Queensland and the Isolated Children’s Parents’ Association.
2.0 Methodology

The aim of the methodology was to ensure genuine engagement and consultation with transparent and effective processes. It had to include processes with the capacity to encourage individuals within school communities to express their views and then for JTA to be able to collect and collate them fully and accurately.

The methodology had as its objectives:
- advice to the school communities re the Minister’s statement about the potential closure of EPSHS
- clear understanding of the timeframe and the purpose of the consultation
- identification of all stakeholders and ample provision of opportunities for school communities to become involved
- encouragement and receipt of an optimal number of views, issues, questions and submissions and
- assurance that the Minister and his departmental officers were given a report that identified all local issues and concerns as well as supplementary information on the four viability assessment criteria.

To achieve these objectives the following methodology was established:
- immediate and ongoing contact with the school principal, followed shortly afterwards by liaison with the P & C Association
  - This contact and co-operation included the provision of assistance to the school (when required) in relation to the preparation of a consultation plan which was then communicated to the wider school community
- utilisation of appropriate communication tools to ensure the school community was fully aware of the consultation and its timelines
  - This was facilitated through early completion of the consultation plan, including a list of communication media to be used. Supported by JTA the consultation plan was developed and owned by the school community and then communicated to the wider school community to ensure optimal involvement by all stakeholders
- three avenues for EPSHS stakeholders and community to express their views
  - Via meetings (minimum two public/community meetings) as well as meetings of other designated stakeholders such as students, teachers, P & C Associations, community groups, local businesses etc. Jan Taylor participated in and/or facilitated all meetings listed in section 3.2 and notes were kept to ensure inclusion of all points raised during the meetings. There were other meetings held within the school but these have not been listed in this report.
  - Via submissions (to be lodged by 26 July¹). A total of 59 submissions were received. DETE provided an email address for the consultation exercise but JTA also asked for the addition of another address (an independent JTA email one) which guaranteed the anonymity of the submission author if required.

¹ Initially the closing date for submissions was identified as 9 August. However during the consultation process the Minister indicated his desire to provide the earliest possible advice to communities regarding the outcome of the proposed school closure consultation process. Accordingly the consultation period close was amended to Friday 26 July 2013 (by which time all submissions must have been received by JTA). The amended timeframe meant JTA could collate submissions earlier and bring forward the completion of the report to enable the Minister to fully consider the feedback and make an earlier determination.
o Via DETE and Ministerial correspondence: when views were expressed on the potential closure of Everton Park State High School

- reference to the four criteria in DETE’s School Viability Assessment\(^2\) procedure
  o This four page document is on DETE’s website. JTA downloaded the document and ensured that all stakeholders had access to it as it formed the basis of why the school had been identified for potential closure. This procedure outlines the four criteria upon which each identified state school was assessed:
    ▪ enrolments
    ▪ accessibility
    ▪ curriculum
    ▪ resourcing equity

- data and issues collection
  o This required establishment of an appropriate spreadsheet system for the collection of all issues, concerns and options via both stakeholder and community meetings as well as by submissions.

- ongoing interface with Regional Directors and staff from DETE’s Infrastructure Services Branch to ensure that information required by the school community was distributed to them
  o While school communities often asked questions for which there were no immediate answers, in some instances there were questions to which they demanded answers in a short timeframe. When possible, these questions were forwarded to DETE and the responses received were then returned to whichever group of stakeholders had asked the questions.

JTA believes the methodology has worked to the benefit of the school community and the level of engagement and input has been strong.

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\(^2\) The School Viability Assessment criteria procedure ensures DETE has a formal process in place to meet its obligations under the Education (General Provisions) Act 2006 around school closures and amalgamations. The procedure was developed in consultation with key education stakeholders, including P&C Queensland, Isolated Children’s Parents’ Association and the Queensland Teachers’ Union.
3.0 Everton Park State High School

3.1 Profile

Everton Park State High School was established in 1961, and celebrated its 50th anniversary in 2011. It is located on Stafford Rd in the north western suburb of Everton Park and is serviced by a number of bus routes in the area.

EPSHS has the capacity to take 1,084 students; on Day 8 of 2013 there were 230 students enrolled, giving the school a current utilisation rate of 21 per cent.

Junior secondary school students study the Australian National Curriculum in English, Mathematics, History, and Science and Queensland Curriculum Assessment Reporting (QCAR) programs in The Arts, Chinese, Health and Physical Education and Technology. The Year 10 curriculum is underpinned by the Australian National Curriculum and QCAR with students also commencing a three year course of EPSHS Leadership and Futures (ELF) program which includes Certificate II in Workplace Practices. Year 10 commences the senior phase of learning and students are guided towards career pathways through a rigorous Senior Education and Training (SET) planning process. The Senior Curriculum is diverse to meet the needs of students preparing for university, TAFE programs or the world of work.

EPSHS has established links with the business and tertiary learning community ensuring that all students study real life learning.

3.2 Consultation plan and activities

The consultation plan is attached as Appendix 1.

Jan Taylor attended and facilitated those meetings to which she was invited (nine in total), with the exception of the one attended by the Minister; Melissa Salisbury from JTA also attended a meeting to ensure a record was kept of questions and comments.

The table below identifies the number of attendees at each meeting as well as the purpose.

Table 1: List of EPSHS Meetings

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Meeting</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Attendees (incl consultant)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Initial meeting with Sue Wallace, Principal, Ros Brock, Secretary of</td>
<td>8 May 2013</td>
<td>1.00pm</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>the P&amp;C, and Richard English, Acting Metropolitan Regional Director</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Initial community meeting attended (and addressed) by Hon John-Paul</td>
<td>14 May 2</td>
<td>7.00pm</td>
<td>200+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Langbroek MP</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meeting with small group of parent representatives</td>
<td>17 May</td>
<td>9.30am</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meeting with students from Years 10, 11 &amp; 12</td>
<td>20 May</td>
<td>1.15pm</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Event Description</td>
<td>Date</td>
<td>Time</td>
<td>Duration</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>------------</td>
<td>----------</td>
<td>----------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meeting with school staff</td>
<td>21 May</td>
<td>3.15pm</td>
<td>30+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meeting with Brisbane Irish Rugby Club and local business representatives</td>
<td>24 May</td>
<td>11.00am</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meeting with Youth Outreach Service and Chaplaincy Committee</td>
<td>24 May</td>
<td>12.30pm</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meeting with primary school principals and P&amp;C representatives</td>
<td>24 May</td>
<td>1.30pm</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Second community consultation meeting</td>
<td>11 June</td>
<td>6.30pm</td>
<td>50+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meeting with principal, P&amp;C president and parents</td>
<td>18 July</td>
<td>9.00am</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
4.0 Everton Park State High School Issues

4.1 Preamble

The discussion of issues identified below is the result of notes taken by Jan Taylor or Melissa Salisbury at each of the meetings and the collation of 59 submissions. The submissions came from a mix of parents, students, staff, unions, groups involved with the school or community members including former students and families of the school. In relation to the information provided at meetings or in submissions by the EPSHS community JTA has not attempted to verify the accuracy of the data provided; if subsequently disputed DETE is in a much better position to establish the validity of issues raised.

To keep this report as succinct as possible a spread sheet indicating the number of times certain matters were raised via submissions has been attached as Appendix 2. A qualitative summary of those matters follows to provide an indication of the strength of the views held on issues by some parts of the community. The first four headings are those identified in DETE’s School Viability Assessment criteria.

In addition to submissions and meetings, the Student Representative Council (SRC) also initiated a survey of students in order to establish their individual perception and opinion of the school and to indicate the reasons why students thought it important the school should remain open. Approximately half of all students responded and a summary of the issues raised in their survey can be found in section 4.6.5.

4.2 Enrolments

DETE’s SVA enrolments criteria includes enrolment history (especially the past five years) and forecasts for the next five years and the number of students attending the school who do not live in the school catchment area.

Many community members commented on the changing demographics of Everton Park with young families moving into the area and the older population moving out. Evidence of this was provided via demographic data, enrolment numbers in younger years at feeder schools, and anecdotal evidence such as real estate sales. It was believed that the increase in young families and the related need for educational facilities meant there will be a demand for a locally based high school, leading to potential for growth in enrolments in the coming years. It was claimed the area is undergoing rejuvenation of the business and local community. Comments on the changing demographics and the implications for the school included the following:

- primary schools in the local area have had a 50% increase in the Prep to Year 4 enrolments compared to current Year 5 to Year 7
- Everton Park has a disproportionately large percentage of people in the 20 to 30 year age bracket, and a birth rate that was higher than the state average in 2011
- an established high school along with a range of educational facilities is considered imperative when young families decide to move to an area
- shortly EPSHS won’t just be an option for some families in the area; in the future it will become essential due to the ‘lag’ effect of a young population reproducing
- increasing population and the further development of the catchment area’s business community means a secondary school in the area would be advantageous
- the real estate market has seen increased interest in Everton Park since the tunnels opened. It was said the area has good amenities and the potential for growth and there has been an upturn in sales
- given the current demographics of surrounding primary schools EPSHS will pass 500 students in the next ten years
- EPSHS is in an area of Brisbane that will experience significant population increases in the medium to long term; to close it for short-term reasons would be short-sighted.

The community made reference to proposed neighbourhood plans and population projections. It was claimed the predicted growth in both density and population indicated there will be a greater demand for places at EPSHS as the population grows. The following information was provided:
- the ‘Everton Park Neighbourhood Plan’ in the Brisbane City Council Draft City Plan was cited as identifying a high density (up to seven storeys) residential future for the sub-precinct which includes the former Woolworth’s distribution centre
- mapping associated with this sub-precinct specifically includes the area’s link with the SHS and it is believed that access to the school has been factored into the area’s planned future
- Mitchelton is identified as a ‘growth node’ in the Draft City Plan, with Enoggera Road and the North-West rail transport corridor from Kelvin Grove to Mitchelton as a selected transport corridor
- Chermside is identified as a major centre and growth node to the east of Everton Park
- the government’s Schools Infrastructure Demand Maps, developed for the Queensland Schools Planning Commission, show a projected annual average growth in secondary school-aged persons to 2021 of 2% or more in Chermside, Wavell Heights, Kedron, Gordon Park and Stafford.

It was claimed that enrolments will naturally increase with the introduction of Year 7 into high schools in 2015. Similarly there was a view that increases in the cost of living (including private school fees) may lead more families to access ‘free’ government education.

Comments were made about the capacity and size of surrounding high schools. It was claimed that most of the alternative high schools are nearing enrolment capacity; three have implemented Enrolment Management Plans (EMPs) which limits viable alternatives for EPSHS students if the school was to close. Other comments made regarding this issue were:
- Kedron SHS (at 85% capacity), Wavell SHS (107% capacity) and Kelvin Grove State College (103%) have implemented EMPs
- except for Mitchelton SHS, alternative schools have at least/or close to 1,000 students each; closing EPSHS will further restrict the option of choosing a smaller school that offers an alternative’ educational approach
- inclusion of Year 7 will further stretch resources of surrounding schools
- development associated with BCC’s Draft Chermside Centre Neighbourhood Plan will only serve to increase pressure on the capacity of neighbouring schools
- overcrowding (especially by removing ovals to create classrooms) places students at risk.

The diverse student population of the school was noted in submissions and reasons given for the suitability of EPSHS as the best fit for the education of these students including:
- it is an inclusive school where Indigenous students, students from other ethnic backgrounds and students with disabilities (SWD) are all given equal opportunity to achieve
- data from the Index of Community Socio-Educational Advantage (ICSEA) shows students come from a wide range of backgrounds; compared to seven other high schools in the area EPSHS has a higher percentage of Indigenous students, lower and middle quarter rated family characteristics and the lowest ICSEA score (946)
- EPSHS has an Indigenous student population of 12% (state average 8.3%) and SWD 15% (state average 4.9%).
Parents commented that if students are forced to attend a school outside their local
catchment, public schooling will no longer be a matter of choice for parents and will not suit
the individual needs of their children. It was noted that families are currently travelling from
all areas around Brisbane to attend EPSHS as it is a school of choice for their children’s
educational needs. Other comments with regard to enrolments included:

- the government should consider filtering students from the bigger schools to the
  smaller ones
- parents questioned the choice of EPSHS for potential closure (if enrolments were the
  major criterion) as there have been extremely low numbers for the local primary
  schools
- the threat or discussion of potential school closure will stop people enrolling
- if DETE has been looking at declining numbers for years why has it taken so long to
do something about it.

4.3 Accessibility

DETE’S SVA accessibility criteria includes distances and travel times to and from school,
access to nearby schools or alternative education programs, transport options and
arrangements for the school and neighbouring schools (road networks, bus routes, train
routes).

The location of EPSHS on the north side of Brisbane, its accessibility for local residents and
the ability to safely ride and walk to school was raised by a number of people. It was felt that
closing a local high school runs counter to the contemporary urban planning principle of a
more decentralised approach to development where communities are integrated and contain
a suite of essential amenities and services (including schools).

A number of other concerns were raised about the accessibility of alternative schools and
potential impact on the diverse range of students including:

- EPSHS is ideally located between its feeder schools
- the only alternative high school within five kilometres of EPSHS is Craiglea SHS
- the four closest high schools (Mitchelton, Craiglea, Kedron and Wavell Heights) are
  not easily accessible by public transport with a number of bus changes required
- re-location to a new school will mean public transport (if viable) or parents driving
  students to and from school
- student involvement with, and school support for, local businesses may not be able
to continue if students have to commute from other schools
- low socio-economic families will have restricted access to other schools due to cost
  of public transport
- the additional cost of public transport to a new school equates to $656 to $722 per
  student per year
- travelling to a new school will place more cars on the road during peak travel times
  exacerbating an already congested road network and increasing vehicle emissions
- the increased fuel and wear and tear costs on vehicles will especially impact families
  on lower incomes
- increased travel pressures create difficulties for parents who work
- students in the Enoggera, Newmarket, Everton Park and Stafford Heights areas will
  not have a convenient local high school.

4.4 Curriculum

DETE’s SVA curriculum criteria is about the extent of a school’s curriculum and its ability to
access suitable educational resources
Comments made through meetings and submissions expressed the view that EPSHS offers a broad range of curriculum options including OP, vocational education and training (VET) and the Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT) for all students. There was consensus that EPSHS has successfully built its curriculum on individual pathways and by creating community connections which differentiate it from other schools.

Parents were very positive about the quality of the school's social and academic education, claiming that EPSHS outperforms every other state high school in the northern metropolitan region. The ability of EPSHS to provide alternative or advanced options for all students (including those with learning or behavioural difficulties) was reinforced by the following comments:

- its distinctive curriculum offerings and extra-curricular activities make it stand apart from other schools
- it specialises in individual programs within a community setting
- the school's curriculum is dynamic; as the needs of its students change, so do the subject offerings. This year Science Technology Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) have been introduced as an elective
- all Year 10, 11 and 12 students complete Certificate II in Workplace Practices which ensures that every student leaving EPSHS, regardless of background, has a VET certificate as well as a Senior Statement, QCE/QCI and/or an OP tailored pathway into university or vocational qualifications for employment
- EPSHS offers many advancement programs through its Academic Program of Excellence (APE) for more talented students
- it supports the Everton Park Leadership and Futures (ELF) program at each year level; ELF is designed to develop career education, leadership skills and resilience programs to support students’ ability to access a successful future pathway
- the school runs the Alternative Education Curriculum (AEC) program in collaboration with the Salvation Army Youth Outreach Service to identify and support students at risk or disengaged from mainstream education; this program is unique to EPSHS
- 100% of students in the AEC program have shown improved social skills and educational engagement
- EPSHS received the Impact Award in the NAB Schools First National Awards in 2011 in recognition of the AEC program
- parents have chosen EPSHS specifically because of the VET program’s outstanding reputation
- the school provides services to students which are unique and cannot be modelled in larger already established schools with cultures that demand excellence from entry
- EPSHS often takes on troubled and disenfranchised students (and turns them around) as well as those seeking refuge from bullying
- EPSHS is a coalition member of the Dare to Lead project which is committed to improving the educational outcomes of all Indigenous students
- enrolments in the Special Education Unit have steadily increased, indicating there is a need for this service which is not being met by other schools in the area.

Representatives of the wider community strongly endorsed EPSHS for its relationship with the community and local businesses. Many of the latter said they provide work experience and traineeships for students, including those with special needs, because of the interface with the school Principal and her staff as well as the management of the process by the school. It is believed that local business partnerships give students an opportunity to apply their skills in the real world and increase opportunities for securing employment. Businesses (many of whom had no children at the school) enthusiastically commended the school for its Community Partnerships (e.g. Meals on Wheels, Freehills Law Firm, Antipodeans Abroad and the local Everton Park Business Group) which were seen as enhancing the community and creating social capital.
There was consensus across submissions that EPSHS provides an outstanding educational model of achievement which should not only be preserved and enhanced but also replicated.

4.5 Resourcing equity

DETE’s SVA curriculum criteria is about the extent of a school’s curriculum and its ability to access suitable educational resources.

It was generally agreed that EPSHS costs more per student because it is a smaller school and it caters to a high proportion of students with special needs. Additional funding is required to support the school’s high levels of students from Indigenous and low socio-economic backgrounds and students with special needs. The funding level of the students (with special needs) will follow the students to whatever school they go, so while the per-student cost will be altered, the net cost to the state will not change. It is noted, however, that despite its proven results for students, the level of capital expenditure for EPSHS was the second lowest of all schools in the north of the Metropolitan Region during 2009 to 2011.

It was advised school facilities are used as a base for seven teachers and one teacher aide who work in surrounding schools and have no connection to EPSHS students. Some concern was expressed that there are rumours circulating re the school being over-resourced.

4.6 Local issues

This category (and those that follow) is not included in DETE’s viability assessment criteria. However, the Minister encouraged the community to participate in the consultation process and raise other local issues the community believed he needed to be aware of in making his decision.

4.6.1 Quality education

Many comments were made about the quality learning environment and education options at EPSHS. The following are some of the comments made about school and student performance:

- the school provides intensive programs that enable children to better themselves
- EPSHS caters for students that other schools want to forget about as well as providing top quality academic education
- it is competitively superior to surrounding schools in terms of academic achievements e.g. OP 1-15, 88% of OP students; 98%, of VET students; 22% in SAT, and 100% QTAC offers in 2011
- EPSHS has the lowest ICSEA score (946) of any of the high schools in the northern metropolitan region yet is leading all of them in academic and vocational achievement for Year 12 students
- it provides students from lower ICSEA backgrounds with the ability to leave school with a QCE/QCIA, Senior Statement, VET certificate or a tailored pathway to university
- the school is performing better than Craigslea, Kedron and Wavell State High Schools and students graduating with a VET certificate are substantially higher than any of these other schools
- over the past five years EPSHS has developed a broad range of educational approaches such as whole child education, service learning, social-emotional learning, and civic education to help students become responsible, caring and contributing citizens
- the school’s 2012 annual report lists 100% satisfaction from parents with all the surveyed performance measures
the academic and VET results of EPSHS should not be dismissed as unimportant as the cost to the government could be higher in the long run (e.g. through high unemployment or mental health issues) should these students not perform in other schools).

Some parents said they do not want growth of the school to be at the expense of the school’s current impressive academic and vocational record nor do they want to see those students in the lowest ICSEA quartile get left behind in the new, larger EPSHS.

Parents were keen to express their view that success does not necessarily mean high NAPLAN results or a university place; they viewed success as being the very best an individual can be and choosing the pathway to achieve this.

4.6.2 Strength of small schools
A number of parents stated they were attracted to EPSHS because of its small size. They were adamant that such schools are better for some students so they should have the option of choosing a smaller school for their child, as opposed to being forced to attend a larger one. It was claimed that a variety of schools of different sizes catering for a range of learners is the best option to meet the needs of a diverse community. These parents believe that Everton Park SHS provides quality education and meets these needs. Comments and views on the benefits of small schools included the following:
- students do well because of the individualised attention
- the smaller size of EPSHS has led to a highly integrated and personalised learning program
- other local high schools are already large and parents would prefer the choice of sending their children to a school that is not overpopulated
- large schools may not be as cost effective as assumed, especially if they lower outcomes for significant groups of students and increase inequity in education
- one size does not fit all; for some students the amount of individual care is the difference between success and failure
- a smaller school is better for students with special needs or social issues; they often feel lost at larger schools
- curriculum breadth does not equate to depth or quality outcomes.

4.6.3 Quality of teaching staff
Community members consistently praised the quality of the Principal and teaching staff and the lengths that staff go to in order to provide support for students and improve their educational and social outcomes. Comments include:
- EPSHS has a marvellous Principal, teachers and staff
- staff are very friendly and supportive (e.g. the Principal knows sign language)
- children have thrived because of the entire teaching staff at EPSHS; their grades are better, their confidence is significantly improved and they like going to school
- teachers are passionate and provide individualised learning programs that help each student achieve their full potential
- teachers and staff are valued professionals with knowledge, expertise and commitment to education.

A local resident commented that over the last ten years he had seen the school go from strength to strength in terms of improvements at every level. He attributed this to the Principal and teaching staff who have worked hard to engender pride and respect in their students; he believes the results can be seen in the students’ behaviour and demeanour out of school.
4.6.4 Positive environment

The culture of EPSHS was considered important by the school community. It was noted the school provides a safe place to which students belong regardless of ethnicity, ability or background. Parents and students saw it as providing a community connection, often breaking the cycle of despair that life circumstances can bring. Particular mention was made of the school’s culture of inclusiveness for vulnerable students. Submissions mentioned improvements seen in students’ self-confidence and sense of belonging since attending EPSHS. Comments made on the school environment and culture included the following:

- students feel safe; there is no intimidation, violence, aggression or social isolation which can be found at some other schools
- EPSHS is known for its inclusiveness of students (e.g. special needs, Indigenous, ethnic backgrounds, learning and behavioural difficulties) who are vulnerable and need nurturing
- at-risk students feel comfortable and secure in the school environment
- many students have transferred from other schools because they were unable to achieve academically and cope socially in a large school environment e.g. children with autistic spectrum disorder, dysfunctional family backgrounds, poor academic skills and because of bullying.

4.6.5 Impact on students

Concerns were raised about the disruption to students’ education and their connections to the school and the community. Particular concern was raised in relation to the impact on Year 11 students who may have to finish their education in a school that is closing.

Parents of children at risk expressed gratitude for the environment created at EPSHS, the support and care their children had received and the impact it has had on their children and subsequently the family. Children had often been the victims of bullying, been suspended and/or expelled for most of their school years, consistently poor performers academically with few aspirations or ambitions. These parents unanimously gave the credit to EPSHS both for changing the lives, and future prospects, of their children as well as restoring hope and some normalcy to the lives of parents and siblings.

The school community was concerned that the closure of the school would affect the progress these students had made since attending EPSHS. It was advised that the announcement of the proposed closure is already affecting students, particularly those with special needs or who are vulnerable. These parents raised concerns about the closure because they believe their children will be at risk of not completing school if they are integrated into larger schools and lose the connections they have made at EPSHS. They were concerned about the impacts on their children’s emotional well-being and health. Several parents commented that their children would disengage from education as a result and/or would return to significant behavioural issues. They were concerned about the impact closure would have on vulnerable students where they would not have the hope, support and encouragement that EPSHS provides. It was also suggested that students from dysfunctional families would find it very hard to go to a larger school.

Students of EPSHS completed a survey initiated by the Student Representative Council and were asked questions pertaining to how they would describe the EPSHS community in one word, what they saw as some of the values of EPSHS that are important to them, why EPSHS should be kept open, and how they saw EPSHS contributing to the community.

There were a total of 121 surveys completed and a range of answers were given to the questions. In brief, they included the personalised help and support provided by the teachers and the ‘passion’ they bring to ensuring every student has a future after they leave high school. The students made mention of the improved grades they obtain at Everton Park.
compared with former schools they had attended; survey responses showed they feared being seen as a failure again if they had to transfer to another high school. Particular mention was made of the great Special Education Unit and the school’s volunteering and fundraising programs. Finally, the responses clearly demonstrated the appreciation and awareness students had for the friendly and inclusive environment, and a belief that the school had given them values like self-respect, responsibility and the need to always do their best.

4.6.6 Other issues

Only one submission received supported the closure; it stated that EPSHS does not offer what is needed for mainstream children and is not a credible local high school. Government funds should not be expected to fund EPSHS students at such a high cost when there are other schools in the area the students could attend.

However, across the many meetings held and submissions received, the impact the school closure might have on the children, parents and wider community was seen as negative. Most impacts were discussed in the preceding sections but some fall outside those broad headings. Other issues include:

- closure will devalue land prices as many people buy in the area for the option of affordable schooling
- the school is like a family
- the decision should not be made on numbers and statistics alone
- other schools in the area which are considered more viable have reputations for bullying and violence
- money from sale of the land will be negligible compared to the overall education budget; school should be a long-term investment through good times and bad
- closing the school is a short-term fix without thinking about long term issues and ramifications
- EPSHS is a valuable community resource providing leadership and professional development for surrounding primary schools
- problems associated with closing EPSHS will be exacerbated by the introduction of Year 7 into high school in 2015
- there has been a ‘cloud of closure’ over EPSHS for the past 15 years. The current consultation process has allowed the community to reconnect with the school, highlight achievements and bond together
- closure will significantly impact on teacher aides and school cleaners who will find it difficult to find alternative employment. There has been no consultation or advice for these staff
- feeder schools, community groups and small business will lose access to the school’s facilities and their activities will suffer
- union concerns in regard to the rights and concerns of their members.

The social cost of the closure was raised right across meetings and submissions and it was said that closing the school would slow current growth and development, affecting all areas of business and the community at large. However, the greater consequence was seen as the impact on students who may drop out of the education system leading to a greater economic and social cost.

4.7 P&C submission and endorsements

In addition to the submission made by the P&C Association, provision was made for endorsement by community members. Endorsements were received either through a signed form or via an email advising of endorsement of the P&C submission. Many people who signed the endorsement form did so as an alternative to making their own submission.
In total, 28 endorsements were received including those received from Hon Tim Mander MP, Queensland Rugby Union, Meals on Wheels, Endeavour Foundation, Salvation Army, local businesses and residents, Everton Park Business Club, local real estate agents, parents, staff and students.

The P&C submission detailed the issues the school community has with the proposed closure of EPSHS and listed a number of strategies to address each of DETE’s viability concerns. In addition, the submission included a detailed rationalisation proposal for EPSHS campus.

4.8 Options

A large number of submissions were received in relation to closure alternatives. The EPSHS community recognised the school could not continue to operate in its current form; the preferred alternative was downsizing or the rationalisation of physical resources. Community members believed rationalisation provided an opportunity to create a system for smaller, efficient, high quality education provisions.

It was also noted that well over 30% of Queensland secondary schools are similarly underutilised. It was claimed that the current approach of closing eight schools represents 0.65% of current schools and offers minimal savings. The community saw closure as ignoring the larger issues across all underutilised schools including rationalisation of resources, processes and procedures. It was also suggested that to ensure the future viability of all schools the concept that a school must be big to be efficient needs to be challenged and that EPSHS should become the model for rationalisation.

The main proposal put forward was a combination of a ‘reduced footprint’ option together with a ‘co-location partner’ option. This approach was seen as allowing EPSHS to operate on a sustainable basis, share facilities and ensure the precinct remains devoted to education or education and community service.

Under the reduced footprint proposal, K Block (Science), G Block (Mathematics) and C Block (the Administration building) would be leased to complementary entities such as other education providers and/or non-government organisations (NGOs). Subject to negotiation, the assembly hall and library could be jointly utilised on a shared cost basis. The playing fields would remain as part of the school but could be shared with other entities.

It was claimed that based on a 75% occupancy rate, the partial lease option could potentially save the school’s operating budget $260,000 p.a. and reduce the cost per student by $1,130 p.a. Should long term leases be secured (i.e. 100% occupancy rate is achieved) the partial lease option was suggested to potentially save the operating budget $346,671 p.a. and reduce the cost per student by $1,507 p.a. at current enrolment numbers.

Under the co-location partner option, expressions of interest would be sought from parties who have an interest in leasing that portion of EPSHS no longer required. These could include other education providers and/or NGOs. This option would be progressed upon acceptance of the ‘reduced footprint’ proposal.

The rationalisation proposal was seen as better utilisation of the precinct and grounds, lowering cost of operation and providing community solutions. It was endorsed by parents, community, feeder schools and EPSHS staff.

A number of other alternatives to closure were also submitted and some of these include:
- Look for sporting grants to raise an interest in enrolling e.g. it could become a school of excellence in tennis, AFL, cricket
• model EPSHS as an industry-focussed college e.g. Mining High or Service High. The school can focus on subjects that the industry requires e.g. engineering, science, mechanical & electrical trades, ITS, hospitality and business. Industry can supply sponsorship and scholarships and students can be paired up with an employer
• create a school of excellence in areas such as drama, business, art or science
• partner with Griffith University School of Environment or TAFE for electives and course credit and create a school of excellence in Environmental Studies
• use the land available to offer a certificate in horticulture; e.g. either a joint venture with Ithaca TAFE or a stand-alone course offered by EPSHS
• close the larger schools and filter the students to smaller schools that are supportive, disciplined and respectful to stop gangs, racism and deviant behaviour
• open up enrolments to international students
• EPSHS could become the northern campus of BSHS.

Amalgamating local schools to create a Prep-12 campus was also a popular alternative. Suggestions included:
• develop EPSHS into a P-12 college and close local primary schools which have declining numbers
• link EPSHS with local primary schools (e.g. Enoggera or Stafford Heights) to share facilities
• join EPSHS with Everton Park State School at the high school site, re-naming it Everton Park State College.
• create a P-12 college and close Stafford Heights State School (SHSS). Introduce bus services from SHSS to EPSHS and from EPSS and Somerset State School (SSS). The existing SSS site could become the Northside Christian College campus. The pool and assembly hall at SHSS could be leased to PCYC and the remaining land sold off as affordable housing. The sale revenue would help to fund transport services and equip the new college with additional resources
• EPSHS becomes the junior secondary campus (Years 7-9) for Kedron State High School.

There was agreement from participants that greater support was required from DETE for EPSHS, including increasing capital investment and ensuring the school’s results were promoted more in the local community and primary schools. One submission suggested that a survey should be done by DETE to understand why local children were not attending EPSHS.

Overwhelmingly however, the EPSHS P&C and parents welcomed the opportunity to work with the Minister, DETE, the school leadership team and staff on increasing enrolments for EPSHS.
5.0 Conclusion

Community consultation regarding the proposed closure of Everton Park SHS involved a total of 59 submissions and 11 meetings facilitated by Jan Taylor, Principal of JTA, as the consultant who facilitated and managed the consultation process and activities. Other meetings were held by the wider community.

Every effort was made by the consultant to ensure all views were represented and everyone had an opportunity to make a submission. The dominant theme that emerged was of the regard that parents, students, staff and community members had for the educational and social outcomes the school was providing.

In relation to the School Viability Assessment criteria the Everton Park school community accepted the validity of the data. The focus of many submissions concerned very specific options for the long term future of the school; these included reduction of the school footprint, co-location options, a P-12 campus and a specialised school approach. These options were prepared by a supportive community group which took a very realistic view of the school and its future. There was a view that the Queensland Government legitimately required additional revenue sources as well as better utilisation of assets such as schools which were declining in student numbers.

Other issues which dominated included accessibility to alternative schools if Everton Park closed as well as potential population growth in the area which it was said indicated a short to medium term need for high school places.

While the community emphasised the need for a sustainable future for the school, its current operational and social pluses were clearly articulated. Submissions emphasised the school's success in re-engaging students with formal education and attributed this achievement to the school Principal, staff and the school ethos.

The Everton Park State High School consultation process engaged and involved a broad range of community members, including staff, students, parents, businesses, and local and state government elected representatives. It was evident through the submissions and consultation meetings that the community is proud of its school and united in its desire to remain open.
APPENDIX 1 – Consultation Plan, Everton Park State High School
**Consultation Plan**

**Introduction**
The Department of Education, Training and Employment has identified Everton Park State High School for community consultation regarding proposed closure as part of the Department’s School Viability Assessment process. JTA, an independent consultant, will lead and manage the consultation process, and subsequently provide a written report to the Minister on the issues raised during the consultation process.

This consultation plan has been developed with the Principal and President of the P&C Association of Everton Park State High School to ensure all interested stakeholders are able to participate and have their say on the proposed closure.

The consultation plan outlines the opportunities for the school community to provide input into the discussion about the future educational needs and opportunities for students of the school. It is important that the school community get involved to identify the range of factors that are relevant to the school community and that need to be considered by the Minister in the final determination about the future of the school.

**Stakeholders**
As part of the consultation process, it is important that all stakeholders who are part of the school community have their say.

The following list of stakeholders has been identified by the Principal and President of the P&C Association to be included in the consultation process:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Local Group</th>
<th>Contact Name</th>
<th>Phone Number</th>
<th>Email</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Brisbane Irish Rugby Club</td>
<td>Terry Donaghue</td>
<td>0427308303</td>
<td><a href="mailto:terry.donaghue@optusnet.com.au">terry.donaghue@optusnet.com.au</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Local Businesses and school partners</td>
<td>David Brock</td>
<td>0410610729</td>
<td><a href="mailto:dave_roz@optusnet.com.au">dave_roz@optusnet.com.au</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Youth Outreach Service</td>
<td>Sherene Staines</td>
<td>0409355715</td>
<td><a href="mailto:Sherene.staines@aue.salvationarmy.org">Sherene.staines@aue.salvationarmy.org</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SU Chaplaincy and Tim Mander</td>
<td>Byron Adams</td>
<td>0407368794</td>
<td><a href="mailto:hotcorrespondence@hotmail.com">hotcorrespondence@hotmail.com</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Primary Principals and P&amp;C representatives</td>
<td>Sue Wallace</td>
<td>33540222</td>
<td><a href="mailto:swall30@eq.edu.au">swall30@eq.edu.au</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EPSHS P&amp;C Representatives</td>
<td>Sue Ellis</td>
<td>33540205</td>
<td><a href="mailto:sue4dan@hotmail.com">sue4dan@hotmail.com</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Everton Park SHS staff</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Everton Park SHS students</td>
<td>Sue Wallace</td>
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</table>
**Consultation Plan**

**Consultation activities**
To give stakeholders the opportunity to have their say, a range of consultation activities have been identified by the Principal and President of the P&C Association. The following provides a list of the consultation activities to take place, and the nominated schedule for these activities.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Consultation Activity</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Purpose of activity</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Newsletter to school community</td>
<td>Friday 3 May 2013</td>
<td>Provide initial advice on consultation regarding potential school closure.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Initial meeting with Metropolitan North Regional Director, Principal and P&amp;C President led by independent consultant</td>
<td>Wednesday 8 May 2013, 1.00pm-2.00pm</td>
<td>Discuss development of consultation plan.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P&amp;C petition organised by a Year 9/11 parent</td>
<td>Thursday 9 May 2013</td>
<td>Gather signatures in support of the school staying open.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meeting with P&amp;C, all members of the community welcome</td>
<td>Tuesday 14 May 2013, 7.00pm-8.30pm</td>
<td>Provide an explanation of the School Viability Assessment process and consultation, including the consultation plan and how the P&amp;C can play a role. Opportunities for questions and initial feedback will be captured.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meeting with small group of 5-7 parent representatives</td>
<td>Friday 17 May 2013, 9.30am-10.30am</td>
<td>This meeting will provide parents with the opportunity to ask questions and provide feedback on the potential closure of the school.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meeting with students (15-20)</td>
<td>Monday 20 May 2013, 1.15pm-1.55pm</td>
<td>A meeting with the student body will be held to provide an opportunity for student voices to be heard.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meeting with school staff</td>
<td>Tuesday 21 May 2013, 3.15pm-4.30pm</td>
<td>A meeting with staff will be held to provide an opportunity for staff to make comment in an appropriate forum.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meeting with Brisbane Irish Rugby Club and local business representatives</td>
<td>Friday 24 May 2013, 11.00am-12.00pm</td>
<td>This meeting will provide businesses with the opportunity to ask questions and provide feedback on the potential closure of the school.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meeting with Sheree Staines, Youth Outreach Service, Bryon Adams and members of the Chaplaincy Committee and Tim Mander (MP)</td>
<td>Friday 24 May 2013, 12.30pm-1.30pm</td>
<td>This meeting will provide outreach and chaplaincy representatives with the opportunity to ask questions and provide feedback on the potential closure of the school.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meeting with primary schools Principals and P&amp;C representatives</td>
<td>Friday 24 May 2013, 1.30pm-2.30pm</td>
<td>A meeting with primary school representatives will provide them with the opportunity to have input into the consultation report.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Second Community Consultation Meeting</td>
<td>Tuesday 11 June 2013, 6:30pm-8.30pm</td>
<td>A second meeting with the Everton Park SHS community will provide a formal opportunity for feedback and submissions on the closure to be made.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Written submission via email</td>
<td>Ongoing until 5.00pm 9 August 2013</td>
<td>Written submissions will be accepted in addition to the information collected at other consultation activities. The submissions will be included in the report.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Consultation Plan

Communication Options
Communication with stakeholders about upcoming activities and the progress of the project is integral to a successful consultation process.

The following communication methods will be used to share information with the school community:

- regular communications through school newsletters
- advertise consultation activities on school website
- advertise consultation activities on local community group websites
- consultation on parent Facebook page – Loren Millard
- local newspaper – by parents
- flyer at local businesses/streets – parents to lead

Should members of the school community wish to lodge a written submission, two dedicated email addresses have been established:

evertonparkshs@dete.qld.gov.au

submissions@jtta.com.au

The issues raised in submissions to either of these emails will be included in the report sent to the Minister; contributors can ask that their names be withheld.
APPENDIX 2 – Issues raised in meetings and submissions received
Son is learning hospitality skills and school is providing a lifeline to the community through Meals on Wheels.

Join EPSHS with EPSS at the EPSHS site, re-naming it Everton Park State College. This would maintain 'safety' of both schools and maintain an education presence in the area, and provide a local secondary school.

Develop a unique strand of education, such as a trade high school, and have each student paired up with an employer.

Surrounding high schools are close to capacity, except for Mitchelton SHS, and this will get worse with introduction of Year 7s.

Lease building to within department; current Education office at Kedron and Training Office at Lutwyche need new office space.

Invite potential students to have a day at High School at EPSHS.

Attend EPSHS from outside of catchment because it caters for daughter with Aspergers/Anxiety who was self-harming. She is keen to go to school now she is at EPSHS. Closing the school would cause daughter to disengage from school, affect her emotional well-being and will cause anxiety which may lead to self-harm again and loss of friendships.

The social cost of closing the school will be enormous. Students will become disillusioned and drop out at greater economic and social cost.

Small student numbers means students can have a go at more activities, such as the food competition and involvement with HPE.

Present numbers are at 230-250 students.

Moving from a large school to EPSHS is one of the best choices I ever made.

Daughter used to refuse to go to school and wasn't coping with and couldn't attempt homework/assignments. Daughter has anxiety/aspergers and self-harms. She shares her schooling between EPSHS and the Barrett Adolescent Centre and is doing well. Closure would have a dramatic effect on her health, schooling, emotional well-being and friendships.

Marvellous principal, teachers and staff.

Epsom Park is a growing area and many new younger families are moving into the area. Short-sighted to close the school with the area having an influx of the new generation.

The teachers at EPSHS are passionate about their subject areas and work as a united body.

Many young families are moving into the area, which is changing the demographics and should mean an increased demand for a local high school.

Concern that public schooling will not be a matter of choice anymore; students will be forced to attend a school in their local catchment.

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Other issues

1. EPSHS is a wonderful small school that benefits the students; daughter would get lost in the numbers in a larger school.

2. EPSHS provides a quality education with good outcomes for students and is like a family; the principal and deputy principal know every student's name.

3. EPSHS is like a family; the principal and deputy principal know every student's name.

4. The programs the school offers, such as Meals on Wheels and visiting aged care residents is an education and the community would lose this support, and the kids would not see there is more to life than themselves.

5. EPSHS offers OP, VET and SAT subjects on offer.

6. EPSHS provides ACE and SEU programs/at-risk youth.

7. EPSHS provides a safe, supportive and friendly environment (unlike a big school) for students and parents.

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<tr>
<th>Issue No.</th>
<th>Other Issues</th>
<th>EPSHS can take on Year 7s that larger at-capacity schools cannot take on. If the other schools have to take on EPSHS students and Year 7s, they will be swamped.</th>
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<td>EPSHS can take on Year 7s that larger at-capacity schools cannot take on. If the other schools have to take on EPSHS students and Year 7s, they will be swamped.</td>
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<td>EPSHS can take on Year 7s that larger at-capacity schools cannot take on. If the other schools have to take on EPSHS students and Year 7s, they will be swamped.</td>
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<td>EPSHS can take on Year 7s that larger at-capacity schools cannot take on. If the other schools have to take on EPSHS students and Year 7s, they will be swamped.</td>
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Other issues

Without the Workplace Readiness Program offered at the school, these students will not have jobs and will be relying on the government to support them.

With the population density increasing in Everton Park it seems short-sighted to close the facilities that those perspective families would have used.

Small schools are good for students who need smaller classes and more one-on-one education; even for those who are considered 'normal' but may have problems learning at the same rate as others.

EPSHS provides intensive programs that enable children to better their chances without missing out on a high standard of education.

School is a close-knit community with strong links between families, students, staff and local businesses.

Concerned that many children will drop out of the system if the school closes.

Surrounding high schools have at least 1000 students except for Mitchelton SHS and closing EPSHS will restrict options. The inclusion of Year 12 will further stretch resources of surrounding schools.

Forcing students who are actively and productively engaged in learning at EPSHS into another school will have an enormous social and economic cost; for some students it is the closest to a family they have and disrupting these relationships will make it hard for students to transition to another community, especially those with special needs.

This year the demographics of Everton Park are changing: More young people of high school age will be growing up in the area.

Most small schools achieve much higher academic results; EPSHS provides a quality education with good outcomes for students.

EPSHS is the centre of the community, without it the community loses its heart.

Shouldn’t be closing schools and building new ones; retain schools and build new schools. We need more facilities, not less.

Some local businesses provide work experience and traineeships for students, including those with special needs.

Small high school provides a unique experience including a sense of pride along with an attitude and sense of personal possession.

EPSHS is an inclusive community where all students are mainstream regardless of ethnicity, special needs, academic or social background.

Teachers are passionate and individualise learning programs that help each student achieve their full potential.

The school works closely with, and provides benefits for, both students and the local community.

School closures happened under the Kennett government; once the school is closed it’s gone forever.

Leasing some or all of the buildings not being used would keep the school small, inclusive and unique; keep the manual arts centre, student library and hall; move the hospitality kitchen to another building and expand it.

Businesses will be impacted and lose revenue.

Establish close links with TAFE and other educational institutions.

EPSHS is providing students from lower ICSEA backgrounds with the ability to leave school with a QCE/QCIA, Senior Statement, VET certificate or a tailored pathway to university.

EPSHS has an independent student population of 14% (state average 8.5%) and students with disabilities 10% (state average 4.9%); an inclusive school where indigenous students, students from other ethnic backgrounds and students with disabilities are all given equal opportunity to achieve.

Forcing students who are actively and productively engaged in learning at EPSHS into another school will have an enormous social and economic cost; for some students it is the closest to a family they have and disrupting these relationships will make it hard for students to transition to another community, especially those with special needs.

The demography of the area indicate an increase in student enrolments.

Anticipated increase in student numbers over coming years/area is growing

Enrolments

Conclusion: Business as usual would give the best results for students.

Conclusion: Work on the plan.

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Undertake further consultation and negotiation regarding the land and buildings required to maintain the status quo with consideration to increasing enrolments of students within the next 5-10 years. When schools were closed in Victoria it was a disaster.

Low socio-economic families will have restricted access to other schools due to cost of public transport.

Current demographic, residential and feeder school trends indicate this number will increase within the next five years.

The school’s curriculum provides opportunities for students to achieve excellent results as evidenced by the 2011 Year 12 exam results; results are much higher compared to seven other high schools in surrounding areas.

CIEA data shows students come from a wide range of socio-economic backgrounds; compared to 7 other high schools in the area EPSHS has a higher percentage of indigenous students, higher percentage of bottom and middle quarter rated family characteristics, the lowest CIEA score (946).

Many of the EPSHS students have transferred from other schools because they were unable to achieve academically and cope socially in a large school environment e.g. autistic spectrum disorder, dysfunctional family backgrounds, poor academic skills.

Interim further consultation and negotiation regarding the land and buildings required to maintain the status quo with consideration to increasing enrolments of students within the next 5-10 years. Also, maintain current staffing levels.

Closure of the school would result in a tragic loss of the connection between the school and the community, fractured friendships, loss of morale and self-esteem.

EPSHS was performing better than Craigslea, Kedron and Wavell high schools (more OP1-15 than other schools) and the students graduating with a VET certificate are substantially higher than any of these other schools.

The academic and VET results of EPSHS should not be dismissed as unimportant as the cost to the government could be higher in the long run (high unemployment or mental health issues) should these students not perform in other schools; students currently do well because of the individualised attention they receive due to its small size.

Propose that, because parents want to send their children to a school which is seen to have a better reputation, propose that EPSHS becomes the future secondary campus (Years 7-11) for Kedron SHS; proposal also helps manage Kedron SHS numbers. If Kedron wants to retain its reputation of an academic school, the current VET program could stay at EPSHS campus. Does not relieve concerns of parents who want to send their children to a small school but will keep EPSHS as an asset for the future. Stops overcrowding in other schools and is a cost-saving measure by using an already established site.

There are a much larger number of students in the current Prep-Year 3 than in previous years which means students will need to attend a high school somewhere. With Year 7 going into high school this increases in the cost of living, not to mention the increase in public school fees, a high quality and modern concept needs to be considered to cater for these future families to ensure there is no overcrowding in the future in the other nearby schools.

End the P&K submission.

School should be able to continue to support those students who may have problems as well as the students in our area.

Current demographic, residential and feeder school trends indicate this number will increase within the next five years.

The unique EP curriculum is not replicated at any of its surrounding state high schools.

Most of the nearby schools are nearing enrolment capacity, and three have enrolment management plans. To close EPSHS would severely limit public schooling in this region.

EPSHS specialises in individual programs within a community setting. Moved daughter to EPSHS because of the VET program’s outstanding reputation.

There are a much larger number of students in the current Prep-Year 3 than in previous years which means students will need to attend a high school somewhere. With Year 7 going into high school this increases in the cost of living, not to mention the increase in public school fees, a high quality and modern concept needs to be considered to cater for these future families to ensure there is no overcrowding in the future in the other nearby schools.

Reduce the footprint of the school and co-locate another school or community group into the unused part of the school.

EPSHS and Meals on Wheels developed a partnership 10 years ago where the students helped in the kitchen preparing the food and then helping to deliver the meals to our clients. As a result of our successful partnership, the school has gone on to successfully establish other relationships within the community. It would be a shame to lose this partnership, as obviously the school plays an important role in the community.

EPSHS provides a ‘safe’ place where everyone belongs regardless of ethnicity, ability or background. EPSHS supports parents and gives kids a place to connect with community. It breaks the cycle of despair that life circumstances can bring. Students’ self-confidence improves at this school.

Provides the key academic education in Metro North Brisbane.

Offers the key academic education in Metro North Brisbane.

Eveton Park is in the middle of a population explosion.
Other issues

Everton Park has a disproportionately large percentage of people in the 20-30 year age bracket, and a birth rate that was higher than the state average in 2011. This indicates that Everton Park is The inaccessibility and cost of public transport will impact all students, especially those students from low socio-economic backgrounds or with special needs.

The smaller size of EPSHS has facilitated some of its distinctives, such as its highly integrated and personalised learning program.

1 EPSHS is used as a base for seven (7) teachers and one (1) teacher aide who work in surrounding schools and have no connection to our students.

Under the co-location partner option, expressions of interest would be sought from parties who have an interest in leasing that portion of the EPSHS no longer required. These could include other

Curriculum

Everton Park is a key central part of the Northern transport corridor and developments. However this growth has outstripped infrastructure, creating heavy demand on our roads and public transport system. To remove EPSHS from the large urban area would leave a massive void in the area. Our nearest twenty schools are either primary or private schools!

Kedron, Wavell and Kelvin Grove State High Schools have implemented Enrolment Management Plans due to reaching near capacity. This problem will be exacerbated by the introduction of Year 7 into high school in 2015. One community concern is that the Enrolment Management Plans of surrounding high schools will limit the accessibility of alternative education if EPSHS is closed.

Diverse student population

Distance to travel to new school/unable to walk

Kedron, Wavell and Kelvin Grove State High Schools have implemented Enrolment Management Plans due to reaching near capacity. This problem will be exacerbated by the introduction of Year 7 into high school in 2015. One community concern is that the Enrolment Management Plans of surrounding high schools will limit the accessibility of alternative education if EPSHS is closed.

Future for out-of-catchment students

Impact on current Grade 11s

Downsize school and put excess grounds & facilities to other uses or sell

Alternatives to amalgamation

Change focus of school like Aviation High

Make EPSHS a Prep-12 school

Make EPSHS a selective school for high performance

Other

Finance implications for families

Use of school facilities & grounds by local businesses and community

Benefits of a small school

Depth of curriculum is now seen as more important than breadth, and is achievable in this school

Transport

ICSEA quartile get left behind in the new, larger EPSHS.

EPSHS offers OP, VET and SAT

Work experience opportunities with local businesses

Changing schools will be bad for children

School and Student

Performance

EPSHS has built its success on two pillars: individual pathways and community connection. All Year 10, 11 and 12 students complete Certificate II in Workplace Practices which ensures that every student leaving EPSHS, regardless of background, has a VET certificate as well as a Senior Statement, QCE/QCIA and/or an OP tailored pathway into university or vocational qualifications into employment.

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Despite its proven results for students, the level of capital expenditure for EPSHS is the second lowest for all of Metropolitan Region northern schools during 2009 - 2011. This sustained capital under-investment has made it harder to attract new enrolments. Increased capital investment will build on and enhance our capacity and capability to deliver these types of results for our students well into the future! Assurance of the future for EPSHS is essential to attract new enrolments.

Based on the latest full year results available (2011), EPSHS, on average, leads all high schools in the north of Metropolitan Region both academically and vocationally. The EPSHS P & C and parents do not want growth of the school to be at the expense of the school’s current impressive academic and vocational record. Further, they do not want to see those students in the lowest ICSEA quartile get left behind in the new, larger EPSHS.

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Curriculum

EPSHS has the lowest index of community socio-economic advantage (ICSEA) score (42.13) of any of the High Schools in the North of Metropolitan Region yet is leading in terms of academic and vocational achievement for Year 12 students! Here we see the tremendous value and importance of this school to the local community. EPSHS’s, distinctive curriculum offerings and extra curricula activities make it stand apart from other schools and are its “Point of Difference”.

The EPSHS P & L and parents would welcome the opportunity to work with Ministers Langbroek and Mander, EQ, the EPSHS leadership team and staff on increasing enrolments for EPSHS.

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EPSHS’s distinctive Curriculum Offerings and extra curricula activities make it stand apart from other schools and are its “Point of Difference”. Depth of curriculum is now seen as more important than breadth, and is achievable in this school!
Large schools may not be as cost effective as assumed, especially if they lower outcomes for significant groups of students and increase inequity in education. Some of the distinctives of Everton Park State High, such as its highly integrated and personalised learning program, are due to its smaller size.

EPSHS provides leadership in professional development for our surrounding primary schools. To close our school would destroy a vital hub of primary school support in the region.

The co-location of a state and private education provider and/or complimentary NGO, also suggests some possible synergies and co-operative arrangements that may have benefits beyond better utilisation of the precinct and grounds, lower cost of operation for EPSHS and a possible solution for the private education provider’s expansion needs or NGO’s requirements.

EPSHS is an essential community resource for local business and associations

The school is seen as a place of belonging where students learn how to contribute meaningfully

The school provides safe, supportive and friendly environment (unlike a big school)

The school works closely with, and provides benefits for, both students and the local community

RESOURCING EQUITY: Impact on resourcing/management and teaching

Impact on ACE and SEU students

Impact on current Grade 11s

Downsize school and put excess grounds & facilities to other uses or sell

Make EPSHS the north side campus of BSHS

Promote school

Make EPSHS a selective school for high performance children

EPSHS does not offer the kind of education most parents want for their groups

Use of school facilities & grounds by local businesses and community (as added anecdotally is that the culture in this great school is uniquely positioned for the growth that is about to come! . . The central location, the transport corridor and the wonderful culture and helpful. I worked with ACE students from the EPSHS/Salvos initiative, and was extremely impressed with what the students had to offer.

One size does not fit all. For some students the amount of individual care is the difference between success and failure.

Making the change to EPSHS (from a local private school) was the best decision the family made made. From day one child was welcomed with open arms and has excelled academically

School and Student Performance

Access to a CQUniversity Education-curriculum program for students who would otherwise not be attending school. EPSHS also offers many advancement programs

The school offers many opportunities including a trip to Vietnam itself funded by the school + support to raise funds and teachers in attendance to live with a remote community and to help

The school has a very strong link with local businesses and charities. This was evident in a recent hearing where they turned out in force to support the school as we fight to keep it open.

EPSHS is a dynamic community. As the needs of its students change so do the subject offerings. This year for the first time STEM (Science Technology Engineering and Mathematics) has been added to the school’s program.

Enrolments are poised to rise. The proposed closure has provided the opportunity for the school to promote itself.
Consultation and communication processes have been poor - unacceptable to hear important information first from the media. Timelines and deadlines have changed without consultation and there has been attempt to consult with the larger community.

There has been emphasis made during the consultation process that schools facing closure are not meeting the educational needs of the students. This is insulting and incorrect.

Curriculum school leaders and P&Cs were informed late on the afternoon of Friday, 21 June that the consultation period had been cut by two weeks, from 9 August to 26 July. Informing schools just as the school holidays had begun denied both the staff and P&Cs two weeks' access to their school-based communication networks.

Another issue is that the QTU has not been given access to the independent consultant’s report to date. To ensure full accountability and transparency of decision-making by the Queensland Government, the QTU recommends that a full public release is made of the independent consultant’s report so that the community and other stakeholders can review and comment on the Government’s decision-making processes.

The Queensland Government has failed to provide the school and local community with meaningful dialogue, or given them the information, support and time they need to feel confident that they are indeed a valued part of the Government’s decision-making processes. The QTU further maintains that the Minister has used the resulting anxiety as a cynical excuse to silence public debate and protest.

The QTU maintains that contacting school leaders just a few hours before school is being exposed on the evening television news as targets for closure demonstrates the Minister’s disturbing lack of respect and regard for the affected teachers, school leaders, school support staff, students, families and local communities.

Quality teaching, attention to detail and genuine care of each student has impressed many in the community and has reflected the involvement of every level.

Everton Park SHS facilities are used by local sporting groups, and Federal Member for Brisbane Teresa Gambaro has praised the school’s close partnership with the Salvation Army’s Youth Outreach service (http://teresagambaro.com/2011/10/our-schools-first-awards-brisbane-award-winner/). The students are involved in their own outreach work, with the school’s 2012 annual report noting the strengths of the school’s community partnerships with Stafford Meals on Wheels, Fredricks Law Firm, Antipodeans Abroad Community and Leadership Programs and the Beacon Foundation.
Other issues

50.16


50.17

By contrast, the community reference groups established by the State Schools of Tomorrow process in, for example, the Brisbane Bayside area, included “principals and a Parents and Citizens representative from each of the 13 state schools as well as community and Queensland Teachers’ Union representatives” (http://education.qld.gov.au/tomorrows-schools/round1-brisbanebayside/szarjobject-80-consult.html).

50.18

Any decision made by the Queensland Government or Department of Education, Training and Employment must not consequently violate any agreement, award, memorandum of agreement or other instrument agreed with the QTU.

50.19

Any decision made by Queensland Government or Department of Education, Training and Employment must not impact on QTU members’ working conditions in any way not agreed with the QTU.

50.20

To ensure the previous requirements are met, consultation must actively and formally include representatives from the Queensland Teachers’ Union, as nominated by the Union.

51.1

United Voice Union: EPSHS is situated in a large urban area that is undergoing demographic change. There will be a rise in school population if it remains open.

51.2

There will be a significant impact on families in travel and cost. EPSHS is situated in a fairly low socio-economic area.

51.4

EPSHS has an excellent special needs program.

51.5

Any decision should be in line with any industrial agreements and awards pertaining to School Cleaners and Teacher’s Aides and should not impact on their working conditions or job security.

52.1

Engagera LE PAC: closure of the local high school will have a detrimental affect on the school community and the way ESS hold school events.

52.2

ESS utilise facilities at EPSHS including rooms for school functions and P&C events, the sporting grounds for sports carnival and cross country, school hall for dances and major fundraising activities. Without these facilities ESS would incur high costs and transport issues.

52.3

Many ESS parents also have children at EPSHS. Parents have expressed their satisfaction with EPSHS and its ability to support children with special needs.

52.4

The location of EPSHS is very important for students to walk/bike to school.

53.1

EPSHS Deputy Principal: The EPSHS community recognises that EPSHS cannot continue to operate in its current form. The school community is not opposed to rationalisation of physical resources which is a rare opportunity for ESL school and community to work together.

53.2

Well over 30% of Queensland secondary schools are similarly undersized. The current approach of closing 8 schools represents 0.55% of current schools and offers minuscule savings. This action ignores the larger issues across all under-sized schools - rationalisation of resources, processes and procedures. It is time to move past of historic method of closing bulk schools and look at alternatives for all schools. Given the community support, EPSHS could be a model for rationalisation.

53.3

Through rationalisation there is an opportunity to create a system for smaller, efficient, high quality education provisions. The concept that a school must be big to be efficient must be challenged.

53.4

Curriculum breadth does not equate to depth or quality outcomes.

53.5

Given the current demographics of surrounding primary schools - EPSHS will grow past 500 students in the next 10 years.

54.1

EPSHS teachers and staff are valued professionals with knowledge, expertise and commitment to education.

54.2

EPSHS plans an important role in the area for education regardless of socio-economic, ability or cultural background.

54.3

Student learning outcomes are above the current RSEA score.

54.4

There has been a trend of closure on EPSHS for the last 25 years. The current consultation process has allowed the community to reconnect with the school, highlight achievements and bond together.

54.6

Submission includes a proposed reduced land and building plan to support the viability of the school that has been approved by the community for lease, rent or purchase of land/buildings.
### Issue No. 1: EPSHS58

- **Issue:** EPSHS Parent: Impact on students and families required to relocate. Detrimental effect on students on top of current stress of entering senior high school years. Students excel at this school.

### Issue No. 2: EPSHS59

- **Issue:** Students are happy and the community needs the school.

### Issue No. 3: EPSHS56

- **Issue:** Enoggera SS P&C: supports the downsizing proposal.

### Issue No. 4: EPSHS57

- **Issue:** Parents should be able to choose a school that best meets the educational needs of their children.

### Issue No. 5: EPSHS55

- **Issue:** The size of a school can impact on the learning and social success of some students. It is necessary to maintain and high school in the local area with smaller enrolment numbers to offer support to all students and families.

### Issue No. 6: EPSHS54

- **Issue:** EPSHS offers OP, VET and SAT subjects on offer.

### Issue No. 7: EPSHS53

- **Issue:** EPSHS Parent: Impact on students and families required to relocate.

### Issue No. 8: EPSHS52

- **Issue:** EPSHS does not offer the kind of education most parents want for their children.

### Issue No. 9: EPSHS51

- **Issue:** Growing population in Everton Park means school will be necessary. More families are moving into the catchment area. Changing demographics mean that there may be more young people of high school age growing up in the area.

### Issue No. 10: EPSHS50

- **Issue:** The size of a school can impact on the learning and social success of some students. It is necessary to maintain and high school in the local area with smaller enrolment numbers to offer support to all students and families.

### Issue No. 11: EPSHS49

- **Issue:** EPSHS Parent: Impact on students and families required to relocate.

### Issue No. 12: EPSHS48

- **Issue:** EPSHS Parent: Impact on students and families required to relocate. Detrimental effect on students on top of current stress of entering senior high school years. Students excel at this school.

### Issue No. 13: EPSHS47

- **Issue:** Students are happy and the community needs the school.

### Issue No. 14: EPSHS46

- **Issue:** EPSHS Parent: Impact on students and families required to relocate.

### Issue No. 15: EPSHS45

- **Issue:** EPSHS Parent: Impact on students and families required to relocate.

### Issue No. 16: EPSHS44

- **Issue:** EPSHS Parent: Impact on students and families required to relocate.

### Issue No. 17: EPSHS43

- **Issue:** EPSHS Parent: Impact on students and families required to relocate.

### Issue No. 18: EPSHS42

- **Issue:** EPSHS Parent: Impact on students and families required to relocate.

### Issue No. 19: EPSHS41

- **Issue:** EPSHS Parent: Impact on students and families required to relocate.

### Issue No. 20: EPSHS40

- **Issue:** EPSHS Parent: Impact on students and families required to relocate.

### Issue No. 21: EPSHS39

- **Issue:** EPSHS Parent: Impact on students and families required to relocate.

### Issue No. 22: EPSHS38

- **Issue:** EPSHS Parent: Impact on students and families required to relocate.

### Issue No. 23: EPSHS37

- **Issue:** EPSHS Parent: Impact on students and families required to relocate.

### Issue No. 24: EPSHS36

- **Issue:** EPSHS Parent: Impact on students and families required to relocate.

### Issue No. 25: EPSHS35

- **Issue:** EPSHS Parent: Impact on students and families required to relocate.

### Issue No. 26: EPSHS34

- **Issue:** EPSHS Parent: Impact on students and families required to relocate.

### Issue No. 27: EPSHS33

- **Issue:** EPSHS Parent: Impact on students and families required to relocate.

### Issue No. 28: EPSHS32

- **Issue:** EPSHS Parent: Impact on students and families required to relocate.

### Issue No. 29: EPSHS31

- **Issue:** EPSHS Parent: Impact on students and families required to relocate.

### Issue No. 30: EPSHS30

- **Issue:** EPSHS Parent: Impact on students and families required to relocate.

### Issue No. 31: EPSHS29

- **Issue:** EPSHS Parent: Impact on students and families required to relocate.

### Issue No. 32: EPSHS28

- **Issue:** EPSHS Parent: Impact on students and families required to relocate.

### Issue No. 33: EPSHS27

- **Issue:** EPSHS Parent: Impact on students and families required to relocate.

### Issue No. 34: EPSHS26

- **Issue:** EPSHS Parent: Impact on students and families required to relocate.

### Issue No. 35: EPSHS25

- **Issue:** EPSHS Parent: Impact on students and families required to relocate.

### Issue No. 36: EPSHS24

- **Issue:** EPSHS Parent: Impact on students and families required to relocate.

### Issue No. 37: EPSHS23

- **Issue:** EPSHS Parent: Impact on students and families required to relocate.

### Issue No. 38: EPSHS22

- **Issue:** EPSHS Parent: Impact on students and families required to relocate.

### Issue No. 39: EPSHS21

- **Issue:** EPSHS Parent: Impact on students and families required to relocate.

### Issue No. 40: EPSHS20

- **Issue:** EPSHS Parent: Impact on students and families required to relocate.

### Issue No. 41: EPSHS19

- **Issue:** EPSHS Parent: Impact on students and families required to relocate.

### Issue No. 42: EPSHS18

- **Issue:** EPSHS Parent: Impact on students and families required to relocate.

### Issue No. 43: EPSHS17

- **Issue:** EPSHS Parent: Impact on students and families required to relocate.

### Issue No. 44: EPSHS16

- **Issue:** EPSHS Parent: Impact on students and families required to relocate.

### Issue No. 45: EPSHS15

- **Issue:** EPSHS Parent: Impact on students and families required to relocate.

### Issue No. 46: EPSHS14

- **Issue:** EPSHS Parent: Impact on students and families required to relocate.

### Issue No. 47: EPSHS13

- **Issue:** EPSHS Parent: Impact on students and families required to relocate.

### Issue No. 48: EPSHS12

- **Issue:** EPSHS Parent: Impact on students and families required to relocate.

### Issue No. 49: EPSHS11

- **Issue:** EPSHS Parent: Impact on students and families required to relocate.

### Issue No. 50: EPSHS10

- **Issue:** EPSHS Parent: Impact on students and families required to relocate.

### Issue No. 51: EPSHS9

- **Issue:** EPSHS Parent: Impact on students and families required to relocate.

### Issue No. 52: EPSHS8

- **Issue:** EPSHS Parent: Impact on students and families required to relocate.

### Issue No. 53: EPSHS7

- **Issue:** EPSHS Parent: Impact on students and families required to relocate.

### Issue No. 54: EPSHS6

- **Issue:** EPSHS Parent: Impact on students and families required to relocate.

### Issue No. 55: EPSHS5

- **Issue:** EPSHS Parent: Impact on students and families required to relocate.

### Issue No. 56: EPSHS4

- **Issue:** EPSHS Parent: Impact on students and families required to relocate.

### Issue No. 57: EPSHS3

- **Issue:** EPSHS Parent: Impact on students and families required to relocate.

### Issue No. 58: EPSHS2

- **Issue:** EPSHS Parent: Impact on students and families required to relocate.

### Issue No. 59: EPSHS1

- **Issue:** EPSHS Parent: Impact on students and families required to relocate.

### Issue No. 60: EPSHS0

- **Issue:** EPSHS Parent: Impact on students and families required to relocate.