



MEDIA RELEASE

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For immediate release

CRIPPS TAKES FIGHT FOR HINCHINBROOK SCHOOLS TO PARLIAMENT

Member for Hinchinbrook, Andrew Cripps, has taken his fight for the future of Moresby and East Palmerston State Schools to the Queensland Parliament, after meeting with the P & C Associations of both schools on the weekend to plan a response to the threat of closure.

Speaking in the Queensland Parliament, Mr Cripps told the Minister for Education that he would be providing every support he could to the P & C Associations of Moresby and East Palmerston State Schools, to try and prevent the two small rural schools from being closed.

“Last week I received advice from the Education Minister that EQ would be conducting a review of the viability of East Palmerston and Moresby State Schools. I am extremely disappointed that less than two years after Moresby was forced to endure a viability review, it has been subjected to yet another one by the Bligh Labor Government” said Mr Cripps.

“If there is one thing that undermines confidence in a school and disrupts and distresses a school community, it is the threat of closure. Enrolments at Moresby are currently 16. Only one student will leave, having completed Year 7 at the end of 2010. At least 4 new students will commence the Prep year in 2011. A simple phone call to the school would have avoided this unjustified review and its associated disruption to the school” he said.

At East Palmerston, news of the viability review has upset the school community. Parents of several students have told of the significant progress their child with learning difficulties has made under the guidance of the Principal, who has been able to provide more time, individualised attention and support to these students with special needs when other larger schools have been unable to provide a conducive learning environment” said Mr Cripps.

“Some parents drive past other schools to send their child to East Palmerston such is its reputation for providing a supportive learning environment for students with special needs. East Palmerston currently has 18 students. Other schools in the district are all more than 20kms away, which would put students on the road for almost 50kms every day” he said.

“\$300,000 is being spent at both Moresby and East Palmerston to construct new facilities and refurbish existing school facilities under the Commonwealth Government’s stimulus package. It would appear that Rudd Labor and Bligh Labor have failed to communicate with each other and that more taxpayer’s money risks being wasted as a result” said Mr Cripps.

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