



**LYNEHAM HIGH SCHOOL BOARD**  
**LYNEHAM HIGH SCHOOL P & C ASSOCIATION**  
Goodwin Street LYNEHAM ACT 2602

21 October 2006

*Towards 2020* Submissions  
PO Box 1584  
Tuggeranong ACT 2901

Mr Andrew Barr  
Minister for Education & Training  
ACT Legislative Assembly  
GPO Box 1020  
Canberra ACT 2601

**SUBMISSION ON *TOWARDS 2020* PROPOSAL**

The Lyneham High School Board and P&C (Parents and Citizens) Association would like to jointly raise their profound concerns about the *Towards 2020* proposal to close Dickson College, and the implications this has for the future of Lyneham High School and its students.

The Lyneham High School Board and P&C Association assert the following position:

- That Lyneham High School remain a 7-10 high school.
- That Dickson College remain open as a stand-alone year 11-12 college.
- That Dickson College remain as a pathway for Lyneham High School students.
- That there be further development of the excellent transition initiatives from Lyneham High School to Dickson College, as recommended by the College Review tabled in February 2006.

Furthermore, the Lyneham High School Board and P&C Association:

- Are dismayed that the *Towards 2020* plan has impoverished the educational opportunities for students attending inner north Canberra schools, many of whom come from a lower socioeconomic group.
- Express their lack of confidence in the planning process, community consultation process and are concerned about the divisive nature of the *Towards 2020* proposal.

These resolutions were passed unanimously by an extraordinary joint Lyneham High School Board and P&C Association meeting on 1 August 2006. The precise resolutions from this meeting are at Attachment 1. Lyneham High School retaining its current 7-10 structure was also the subject of a school wide parent survey, which overwhelmingly supported retention of the current 7-10 structure.

In the event that the decision is made to close Dickson College, the Lyneham High School Board and P&C Association would insist on extensive and genuine consultation and guarantees that all students graduating from Lyneham High School would not be disadvantaged, and in particular that:

- All students would be suitably accommodated for years 11 and 12 in accordance with their requirements, including educational requirements, logistics, transportation and peer groups.
- Quality transition programs would be provided for all students transitioning from year 10 to year 11, in accordance with the College Review and current practices between Lyneham High School and Dickson College.
- All students and their families would not be disadvantaged, regardless of their circumstances.
- Careful attention would be paid to ensure that all current year 9 students, that is those that will be undertaking year 11 in 2008 and consequently those most impacted by the implementation of *Towards 2020*, would not be disadvantaged or subjected to ad hoc planning or uncertainty.

### ***Lyneham High School and the College Education of Its Graduates***

While Lyneham High School is successful on many levels, three key factors contribute to the strength of Lyneham High. These are the size of the school, the 7-10 year structure and the diversity of programs on offer. It is also essential for the continued strength of a high school, that there be an identified college for the students to transition to for years 11 and 12.

The programs offered at Lyneham High School cover the full spectrum of learning needs and range from LEAP, SEAL and Band, to the Learning Centre and Learning Support Unit. There are also many other programs and extra curricular activities including the school musical, debating, Tournament of Minds and chess. A complete list of programs and activities are at Attachment 2. It is vital that the government and policy makers recognise that synergies generated by the various programs work in a cohesive and positive manner to effectively enhance choice and developmental opportunities for Lyneham High students. The range of programs also creates a healthy balanced community and helps ensure the sound maturation of students as responsible members of such a community. Any effort to upset this balance by moving some of these programs to other locations would definitely result in very negative outcomes for Lyneham High students.

Together, all of these programs and activities allow every student the opportunity to find the niche in which they excel. This creates a rich learning environment that contributes to student retention at the college levels.

The success of Lyneham High School has meant that 86% of potential students in the priority enrolment area attend the school. This is the equal highest enrolment rate for a high school in the ACT.

Dickson College and Lyneham High already have close ties, and these are continually being enhanced to ensure the best educational outcomes for the students. The staff and communities of these two educational institutions are already acting upon the

recommendations of the College Review, and implementing initiatives to further facilitate the transition from high school to college and improve the continuity of educational programs. Indeed, Lyneham High School students now at Dickson College have reported that the transition to Dickson has been very rewarding and developmental.

The success of Lyneham High School needs to be built upon and leveraged. Building upon one's successes and using them to improve other areas is a proven strategy. This has been occurring through the close ties and the transition of students between Lyneham High School and Dickson College, and was yielding results. The *Towards 2020* proposal to close Dickson College would mean that the Lyneham High School successes cannot be effectively leveraged, and detracts from the enhancement of public secondary education in North Canberra. Indeed, a survey of North Canberra year 10 students about their enrolment intentions for 2007 showed that some 60 students, who were intending to enrol at Dickson College, changed their minds as a consequence of the *Towards 2020* proposal.

The Lyneham High School Board and P&C Association are concerned that the proposed Year 7 to 12 model at Campbell High School is detrimental for current and prospective Lyneham High students. The proposal does not offer a diversity of choice for North Canberra students. Our review of the literature provided on the Department of Education and Training website has found that there was very little evidence that showed how the characteristics of the year 7-12 model outweighed the advantages inherent in a year 11-12 dedicated college structure. In particular, the recent external review of the college system found that the ACT college system should be retained, as discussed further below.

The August 2006 findings in *Education, Training and Employment in an International Perspective* by Richard Sweet, an eminent adviser on post-compulsory education in both Australia and to the OECD, also strongly support the existing ACT college model. This paper finds that "one feature of all OECD countries in which upper secondary participation rates are high is that upper secondary and lower secondary education take place in different institutions". The paper provides details of the improvements realised as a result of the ACT switch to the college system in 1976, and uses the ACT and Tasmania experiences with college systems as good grounds for advocating switching from 7-12 high schools to separate 7-10 and 11-12 campuses throughout Australia.

The Lyneham High School Board and P&C Association are strongly opposed to the notion that students who complete years 7 to 10 at Lyneham High would then be expected to integrate into the last two years of the Year 7 to 12 program at Campbell. No reference was found that supported such an integration.

The Government proposes that the Year 7 to 12 model at Campbell High School will have greater links to the CIT and the Chamber of Commerce, but the Lyneham High School Board and P&C Association do not believe that this model will be attractive to most Lyneham High students. Furthermore, CIT is located across five sites, and the Lyneham High School Board and P&C Association do not believe that the Reid CIT campus provides the courses applicable to greater 11-12 interaction, noting that Dickson College already provides CIT accredited hospitality courses.

The Lyneham High School Board and P&C Association believe that the greater number of Lyneham High School students require support to excel at their UAI. The Lyneham High School Board and P&C Association support the relationship with the ANU and the establishment of the ANU Secondary College as a companion to college education. While acknowledging that the ANU Secondary College is available to all government college students in Canberra, the Lyneham High School Board and P&C Association do consider that it provides a continuation of the LEAP program at Lyneham for gifted and talented students, as well as providing opportunities for Level 1 students. Dickson College provides the natural home college for students also attending ANU Secondary College as it is the closest to the ANU site.

The Lyneham High School Board and P&C Association have a number of other concerns which directly affect current and prospective Lyneham High students.

### ***Year 11 and 12 for Students from Lyneham High School under Towards 2020***

The Lyneham High School Board and P&C Association are struggling to understand where Lyneham High School students would complete years 11 and 12 if the closure of Dickson College went ahead as proposed in *Towards 2020*. In particular, the following points are made:

- In order to accommodate all North Canberra year 11-12 students, there is a requirement for at least 210 places for each of years 11 and 12, giving a total of 420. This requirement is for students currently in the Dickson College priority enrolment area who are attending the two North Canberra high schools. This figure is calculated by taking the in-area percentage for Campbell (32%) multiplied by a quarter of the student population, and adding the percentage of Lyneham High School students from the Dickson College priority enrolment area (65%) multiplied by a quarter of the student population. Lyneham High School has a considerably higher percentage of students within the Dickson College priority enrolment area (65%) compared with the figure for in-area figure for Lyneham High School (46%), due mainly to some portions of the Campbell High priority enrolment area being geographically closer to Lyneham High (in particular Hackett and the northern part of Ainslie).
- *Towards 2020* appears to make no allowance for the year 11 and 12 students who would have attended Dickson College, apart from the limited number of places in the proposed 7-12 Campbell High School. From the figures given in *Towards 2020*, Campbell High School would only have a capacity for 246 year 11 and 12 students. Considering that there are currently a total of 634 students attending Dickson College (February 2006 Census), and the government projection for 2010 is for a total of 678 students attending Dickson College (Projected Enrolments 2006 to 2010), this capacity is grossly inadequate and fails to account for some 400 or more students.

- If attempts were made to accommodate the 420 in-area students at a 7-12 Campbell High School, the *Towards 2020* proposal would require removing Campbell High School's students from New South Wales who have studied 7-10, and not allowing them to complete years 11-12 at the same school. It would possibly also require the removal of New South Wales students in years 7-10, and maybe even ACT out of area students, in order to make room. This would cause considerable resentment towards the Lyneham High School students integrating into years 11 and 12, and create significant social difficulties within the school environment. Note that the first three years of students who would attend the proposed Campbell 11-12 are already attending Campbell High School, and the fourth year have already been offered places in year 7 2007.
- Campbell High School could not accommodate 600 or more year 11-12 students (there would only be room for 236 or less year 7-10 students - which is not viable). Accommodating only the 420 in-area students would also not be viable, as this would only leave 416 places for year 7-10 students. Therefore the towards 2020 derived figure of 246 year 11-12 places at a 7-12 Campbell High School appears to be the appropriate figure for the configuration. This capacity would basically allow Campbell High School to transition students already attending 7-10 at the school to years 11-12.
- With a cohort of only 246 year 11-12 students, a 7-12 Campbell High School could not offer the variety of programs and choice of subjects and levels that the larger cohort of over 600 at Dickson College currently allows.
- The *Towards 2020* document establishes a demand for 580 year 11-12 students in the North Canberra region. As discussed above at least 420 are resident in the North Canberra region. Where would they go? *Towards 2020* shows that there is no room in Narrabundah College, no room in Hawker College, and not enough room in Lake Ginninderra by itself. Depending on what happens at Copland College, there is possibly no room for everyone even when capacity in the adjacent Belconnen and South Canberra regions is considered.
- When an analysis of government projections for college-based education across the ACT is undertaken using the Projected Enrolments 2006 to 2010 data, this confirms the above assertion. At the February 2006 Census there were 6088 students undertaking college-based programs. Under *Towards 2020*, Copland College Option 2, there are only 6184 places available for college-based education. This provides only 96 places more than the current enrolment, and does not consider the extra capacity requirements for special programs. Additionally, the analysis confirms that even after filling all of the northern colleges and 7-12 schools (Hawker, Lake Ginninderra, Copland and Campbell), as well as Narrabundah College, to capacity, there is still insufficient room for all of the students that would be displaced by the closure of Dickson College.
- This filling to capacity of all northern and inner south colleges as proposed under *Towards 2020* would mean that any year 11-12 college students arriving in these regions of Canberra at the beginning of the year would need to travel to Canberra College in Woden in order to be accommodated. There would also be limited year 7-10 high school places available in North Canberra for late arrivals. This

would have a very substantial impact on families arriving in Canberra, in particular those from government departments, including the Department of Defence, which relocate substantial numbers of families over the Christmas period.

- While all schools do not necessarily need to be within walking distance or in the same suburb as the students they serve, they do need to be within the same region. This should apply at all levels.
- The Lyneham High School Board and P&C Association recognise Mr Barr's acknowledgement, at the 29 August meeting with Dickson College, Campbell High School and Lyneham High School Boards and P&C Associations, that a Campbell 7-12 school only has room in years 11 and 12 for students attending Campbell in years 7-10 progressing to years 11-12. (Note that enrolment data for 2007 that has become available since this meeting indicates that Campbell High School doesn't even have the capacity for all of its own students to progress to years 11 and 12.) The Lyneham High School Board and P&C Association are however gravely concerned about Mr Barr's statement that the students from Lyneham High School would have to travel out of the region for their years 11 and 12 education, and reject the notion. The Lyneham High School Board and P&C Association are also deeply concerned that under *Towards 2020* there is not the capacity within the proposed year 11-12 system to accommodate all students graduating from Lyneham High School at realistic locations.

### ***Towards 2020 Transition Arrangements for Current Year 9 Students***

Current North Canberra Year 9 students appear to be severely disadvantaged by the proposal. It would appear that the proposal requires them to complete year 11 2008 at the closing Dickson College, and year 12 somewhere else. The Lyneham High School Board and P&C Association consider it unacceptable for students to have to complete these last two years in two different schools. Mr Barr's response at the North Canberra Community Forum on 3 July also illustrated that no plan had been developed to manage this impact on current Year 9 students.

The Lyneham High School Board and P&C Association recognise Mr Barr's acknowledgement, at the 29 August meeting with Dickson College, Campbell High School and Lyneham High School Boards and P&C Associations, that this is an issue. The Minister's statement that there will be no year 11 at Dickson College in 2008 if Dickson College is to close at the end of 2008 is considered appropriate under these circumstances, as it acknowledges that years 11 and 12 should not be split. However, his statement that all North Canberra year 11 students in 2008 will be required to travel outside of the North Canberra region is of great concern. It is acknowledged that the department is also looking at various options, but there is no evidence of any real planning. The prospect that the current year 9 cohort of students from North Canberra will be disadvantaged by the *Towards 2020* proposal, including the prospect that they are subjected to ad hoc arrangements and uncertainty, is strongly opposed by the Lyneham High School Board and P&C Association.

### ***Towards 2020 Community Impact and Discrimination***

The *Towards 2020* proposal militates against the development of safer communities and has the potential to discriminate against those of a lower socio-economic status. For example:

- Closing Dickson College will force students to travel longer distances to colleges such as Lake Ginninderra, Copland, Narrabundah and Hawker. Public transport timetables make this very hard for students, especially noting that college students do not all attend for the same fixed hours, thereby mitigating against special services. Lower income households have less capacity to take the private transport option, so the policy discriminates against North Canberra households on lower incomes, public housing residents and single parent families. The proposal threatens the school retention rate and future employment prospects of these groups.
- One of the strengths of the inner north suburbs of Canberra is the diversity of demographics. Public housing is mixed in with older housing and new developments. Children/students mix freely and well with students from other cultures, demographics and socioeconomic circumstances. Any proposal to require lengthy travel, including as has been suggested by Mr Barr regarding students driving themselves, would disrupt this free mixing of the diverse demographics, as those in better socioeconomic circumstances will be able to travel more effectively. This would disrupt the tolerant and inclusive society and culture that has emerged in the inner north.

### ***College Review***

The proposal to close Dickson College is completely at odds with the *Report of the Review of Government Secondary Colleges* undertaken by Atelier Learning Solutions Pty Ltd on behalf of the ACT Department of Education and Training in 2005 and tabled in February 2006. This review found that the essential integrity of the current model of separated provision for Years 11 and 12 should be maintained. When alternative models were considered by the review, there was no compelling evidence that effectiveness would be increased to an extent that would justify a new structure or the effort and costs associated with it. The Review noted that "investment in any other model would constitute a significant distraction from current and emerging imperatives" (pages 9-10). The Report also found that "in a relatively small system such as the ACT, structural diversity is likely to impact negatively on its capacity to set and maintain strategic directions. More cohesion is required, not less" and that with reference to a variety of models "a further issue to be considered is whether the resources necessary to provide what may be a relative small number of parents with an additional choice could be justified in the context of the financial resources available and competing demands" (page 40).

The College review clearly found that the "current model of secondary schooling provision should be retained" and that "there is no evidence that any other model at this time would deliver higher quality provision in secondary schooling" (page 41).

The Lyneham High School Board and P&C Association are very disappointed that the government is using out-of-context quotes from the College Review to support the establishment of 7-12 schools.

### ***Conclusion***

For all these reasons, the Lyneham High School Board and P&C Association, representing the Lyneham High School community and the views of Lyneham High School parents, strongly oppose the *Towards 2020* proposal to close Dickson College. Likewise, we strongly oppose the notion of integration of students from Lyneham High School into the last two years of a proposed 7-12 school, the requirement for Lyneham High School students to have to travel out of the region for years 11 and 12, as well as any changes to the highly successful structure of Lyneham High School.

In the event that Dickson College does close, the Lyneham High School Board and P&C Association will insist on extensive consultation and guarantees to ensure that all students from Lyneham High School are not disadvantaged in their year 11 and 12 education.

The Lyneham High School Board and P&C Association encourage the department and the government to leverage the successes of Lyneham High School, and use them to continue to strengthen Dickson College and public education in North Canberra.

As innovators ourselves, the Lyneham High School Board and P&C Association would be happy to discuss these issues further and assist the Government in developing truly innovative solutions for the youth of Canberra.

Yours sincerely

Bobby Graham  
Chair  
Lyneham High School  
Board

Gary Bulluss  
Parent Representative  
Lyneham High School  
Board

Jo Dixon  
President  
Lyneham High School  
P&C Association

Attachments:

1. Lyneham High School Joint Board and P&C Association Resolutions
2. Programs and Activities at Lyneham High School

**LYNEHAM HIGH SCHOOL JOINT BOARD AND P&C ASSOCIATION  
RESOLUTIONS**



**LYNEHAM HIGH SCHOOL**

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The Lyneham High School Board and P & C held a combined meeting Tuesday night, 1 August, to discuss the Towards 2020 vision for education in the ACT. In particular the meeting was called to address concerns that Lyneham High School may become a 7 – 9 high school. The 7 – 9 idea is outside of the Towards 2020 proposal, but had been relayed by the Education Minister in a number of forums. The Minister's assurances on ABC radio Tuesday morning that Lyneham High School had full self-determination on this additional issue are acknowledged. The meeting passed the following resolutions:

This meeting and the results of the school wide parent survey overwhelmingly supports the maintenance of the 7-10 structure for Lyneham High School.  
Passed unanimously.

This meeting overwhelmingly supports the existence of Dickson College as a stand alone year 11 and 12 school and as a pathway for Lyneham High School students.  
Passed unanimously.

This meeting supports the further development of the excellent transitions initiatives from Lyneham High School to Dickson College, as recommended by the College Review tabled Feb '06.  
Passed unanimously.

This meeting is dismayed that the Toward 2020 plan has impoverished the educational opportunities for the students attending inner north Canberra schools, many of whom come from a lower socioeconomic group.  
Passed unanimously.

This meeting expresses its lack of confidence in the planning process, the community consultation process and is concerned about the divisive nature of the Toward 2020 proposal.  
Passed unanimously.

Gary Bulluss  
Board Representative

Jo Dixon  
P & C President

## PROGRAMS AND ACTIVITIES AT LYNEHAM HIGH SCHOOL

	<b>Title</b>	<b>Category</b>
LEAP	Lyneham Enriched Academic Program	Timetabled
SEAL	Sporting Excellence at Lyneham	Timetabled
	Sports Science	Timetabled
	Sporting Teams	Extracurricular
	(over 50 teams in a broad range of sports)	
Band	Concert Band	Timetabled and Extracurricular
	Performance Music	Timetabled
	Keyboard Music	Timetabled
	Drama	Timetabled
	Dance	Timetabled
	Musical Production	Timetabled and Extracurricular
	Jazz Band	Extracurricular
	Flute Ensemble	Extracurricular
	Vocal Group	Extracurricular
	Dancefest	Extracurricular
MUST	Music for Students with Talent	Extracurricular
VET	Vocational Education and Training	Timetabled
	Food Technology	Timetabled
	Cafe Hospitality	Timetabled
	Textiles	Timetabled
	Agriculture	Timetabled
	Technology (metal, wood, plastic)	Timetabled
	Electronics	Timetabled
	Computing	Timetabled
	Multimedia	Timetabled
	Photography	Timetabled
	French	Timetabled
	Media Studies	Timetabled
	Visual Arts	Timetabled
	Art Club	Extracurricular
	Outdoor Education	Timetabled
	Duke of Edinburgh Award	Extracurricular
	Year 10 Leadership Program	Timetabled and Extracurricular
	Year 10 Peer Mentoring	Extracurricular
SRC	Students Representative Council	Extracurricular
HPS	Health Promoting School	Extracurricular
ISCF	Interschool Christian Fellowship	Extracurricular
LSU	Learning Support Unit	Timetabled
LC	Learning Centre	Timetabled
	Boys Education	Timetabled
	Messenger	Extracurricular
	Scaffolding Literacy	Timetabled
	Learner Assistance	Timetabled
	ESL Assistance	Timetabled
	Study Centre	Timetabled
SNAPS	School Based New Apprenticeships	Extracurricular
WEX	Work Experience	Extracurricular
	Debating	Extracurricular
	Tournament of Minds	Extracurricular
	Chess	Extracurricular

These programs and activities are in addition to the standard core English, Mathematics, Science, Studies of Society and the Environment (SOSE) and Physical Education programs.