



Friday November 13th 2009

Hallam Valley Primary School - Senate Enquiry Response

Hallam Valley Primary School was a successful applicant for a round 1 grant under the Building the Education Revolution program. Our successful application was for a full sized gymnasium worth an estimated \$1,500,000.

As published on the Federal Government website Hallam Valley Primary School has a funding entitlement of \$3,000,000. After local media releases and public meetings it is the School Council's understanding that we are entitled to build projects up to, but not over \$3,000,000. This has been confirmed to us by local Federal Member, Mr Anthony Byrne.

As indicated at our original meeting with John Haines and Steve Wishart we wished to proceed with the building of a library/resource centre with the remaining funds from our \$3,000,000 allocation. We had originally been told that 'Companion Projects' could run alongside the original project to the value of \$3,000,000. Our aim for this facility, is to do away with the temporary structure that connects two portables to another two permanent rooms by building a purposeful and permanent library/resource facility in its place.

The Principal of our school has discussed designs for the library/resource facility with an independent architect who could build this project within the allocation of funds and in line with the predetermined timeline. Follow up discussions with Michael Small at Casey North Network meetings suggested, in no uncertain terms, that there would not be the possibility of 'Companion Projects' as any remaining money would be used in a 'pool' to fund projects where costs exceeded expectations.

It would appear that the 'pool' of money is only being contributed to by some schools. Other neighbourhood schools have been granted their full financial allocation to build what they choose which is also case with Catholic schools. Where is the equity in that!

At this stage work has begun on our gymnasium which is about to have the concrete slab poured. This building appears to be being built on our site with minimal input by the school. The principal has not been able to make any changes to the template and has had very limited choices in relation to colours and facade both internally and externally. She is also trying to negotiate fibre optic cabling for the venue as it is quite a distance from the central server and will not provide effective ICT coverage at that distance. We have also been trying to get another internal wall constructed allowing for an additional teaching space for things like student support services and a TV/radio studio. We have been told that this cannot happen and will need to be completed later with the costs incurred by the school. This doesn't make sense as we have asked for the operable door to be left off and made a permanent wall which is a considerable saving to the project and yet again these

... used to put in the additional wall we have requested. Again it is hard to
... fairness and in fact sense in the way this project has been coordinated.

Mallam Valley School Primary School appreciates the senate enquiry being conducted with
reference to the BER project as from where we sit the whole concept, whilst injecting
necessary funds into the economy and providing jobs for the community, appears to have
been an exercise in inequity leaving us wondering what was the rationale behind allocating
funds to schools and then not following through with the promise.

Yours faithfully,

Angelo Herft
President
School Council

Mark Ogden
Vice President
School Council