



16/11/2009

Dear Ms Gillard,

I write on behalf of the School Council of Swan Hill North Primary School with the grave concerns we have owing to the complete lack of transparency with the Building Education Revolution (B.E.R) program.

As excited as we are to be receiving new classrooms we are troubled that many of our early promises are being taken away from us. Two million dollars has been allocated to build a 21<sup>st</sup> Century Library Learning Neighbourhood. Originally this was enough to furnish the rooms and do the works necessary to clear the site and relocate structures.

Since the store sheds and rebound wall have been dismantled / demolished we are now being told that rebuilding these structures is contingent to funding. Furniture is no longer included and in a town where temperatures range from -.2 in winter to 40 degree plus in summer, we are still battling to get refrigerated air conditioning.

Our own builder's estimates have this new building priced at approximately one million dollars. Department estimates have the fees at approximately \$400,000. Why then with \$600,000 leftover does the body contracted by the Federal Government (Incoll Management Pty Ltd) say that our \$30,000 store shed and \$25,000 reconstructed shade shed / rebound wall is contingent to funding? Surely they know the approximate costs, as the contractor has started building!

These are clearly not the actual costs, they are just our understanding. Which highlights our original point, there is absolutely no transparency in this funding and school communities across Australia must be shaking their heads in amazement at the absolute lack of 'openness' and apparent behind closed door dealings.

Ms. Gillard what we are asking for is not something new or in addition to our original funding. We are requesting the rebuilding of structures that have been taken away from us. Incoll are now saying that we will have to wait till the end of the year to get a response. So we now have items from 5 sheds all being stored outside and unsecured (due to lack of storage facilities). We need our rebound wall rebuilt and shade structure re-erected so that our children have a safe / shaded play area. And air conditioning that works in high temperature conditions.

We believe that it is reasonable to assume we are being fobbed off till the holidays and until who knows when. Meanwhile all our equipment is outside and unprotected and children don't have protection from the sun. It is clear that this situation is unacceptable. We have tried through various channels to get a reasonable response to our very rational request and hope that you might be able to help us,

At Swan Hill North Primary School we are very excited by the governments building program but feel we are being given the run around by a process that lacks clearness. Of considerable concern is the anticipated completion date of this project which now is late June 2010. This is 5 months after the completion deadline detailed in your letter dated 22<sup>nd</sup> May 2009. There has been a lot of time and effort put into organising our school fete by the parents club and the school community and with the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebrations to coincide with the opening of the new classrooms and facility upgrades to highlight our school. We now have had to cancel the fete and the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebrations have been put on hold indefinitely.

Yours faithfully,

Campbell McKay

Principal

(Executive Officer – School Council)