



Parents & Citizens Committee
P. O. Box 131
JINDERA NSW 2642

Committee Secretary Senate
Education, Employment and Workplace Relations Committee
PO Box 6100 Parliament House
Canberra ACT 2600 Australia

Re: Primary Schools for the Twenty First Century - Building Education Revolution
P21 Program

Dear Committee,

We write to express our concerns regarding the management of the Building Education Revolution funding that our school has been allocated. While we are very excited by the prospect of having a windfall of \$2M provided by the Government, we are extremely disappointed in the outcomes for the school and community.

Jindera Public School is a rural public school located approximately 18 kms from Albury NSW with 180 students. Jindera Public School is fortunate to have a very active P & C committee who are involved in decision making within the school and part of a close and united wider community.

Currently there are several projects happening within the school and many more on the scope for future refurbishment and development. We are disappointed that this funding could not have been utilised to fulfil some of the plans already in place within the school. We found the management process of this BER project to be very inflexible and feel the template approach of projects were an inefficient way to manage the funds and support schools in their strategies already in place.

We found the budget of \$2M quickly exhausted with the choice of one of the templates and project management fees. The hall that was offered to our school was the same size as the existing hall which would be doubling up buildings and of no benefit to our school as we hoped for a hall that will accommodate the whole school for such events as assemblies, concerts and visiting performances.

Once told there were “not enough allocated funds” for a new hall of suitable sizing we tried to negotiate an acceptable compromise for extension to our existing hall (this is one of the identified needs and in a state of disrepair). We were presented with a plan that had a small extension at the back of the existing stage which would then be in the middle of the hall with seating back and front. As you could imagine this would not be suitable for whole school events.

After local media attention we were offered some alternatives for our projects which we were forced to accept in fear of missing out on the funding. We were still required to choose from the templates however were able to secure a couple of smaller projects in conjunction.

We have never been supplied with a breakdown of where the funds would be allocated and are still at a loss to understand how only minimal works were achievable with the significant amount of money we were offered.

In summary our main concerns with the process are:

1. lack of transparency given by the company managing these projects
2. seemingly exorbitant pricing for the projects concerned
3. template buildings being used made fit into the school rather than buildings that would complement the school and wider community
4. timelines that forced schools into making uninformed, rushed decisions without consultation with wider school community

We are looking forward to our new buildings and trust this information will be useful for the senate enquiry.

Yours truly,

Deanne Burr
President
Jindera Public School Parents & Citizens Association