



Taking Parliament to School

Federal Parliament's Electoral Matters Committee will begin a series of school visits tomorrow in Alice Springs as part of its inquiry into civics and electoral education in Australia.

The Committee will be talking to teachers and students from Centralian Senior Secondary School and Our Lady of the Sacred Heart College (Sadadeen Campus) to examine some of the challenges in providing quality civics and electoral education.

Given successive surveys indicating low levels of enrolment among young people and a general sense of apathy and cynicism towards the political process, the inquiry hopes to find better ways of inspiring and engaging this group.

Committee Chairman Peter Lindsay said "the Australian Government has made Civics and Citizenship Education (CCE) a national priority and all schools are encouraged to include aspects of CCE in their curriculum."

Peter Lindsay said "It's important to bring Parliament to regional and remote schools which, because of their distance from the National Capital, are not always able to see how Australia's democratic institutions work."

These school visits will follow the Committee's visit to Warburton, WA on Thursday 27 July to meet with indigenous community leaders and the teachers and students of the Warburton Ranges Remote Community School. This visit will give the Committee a unique opportunity to bring Parliament to this remote community and highlight some of the key challenges indigenous communities face in teaching civics and electoral education.

The inquiry has received over 100 submissions from a broad range of individuals and organisations, including teachers and schools, Federal, State and Territory parliaments and electoral commissions, academics and governments. Copies of these submissions are available on the Committee's website.

The Committee is a Joint Committee of the House of Representatives and the Senate, and comprises members of the Government, Opposition and the Australian Democrats.

Program	Friday 28 July 2006
1030-1200	Centralian Senior Secondary College, Grevillea Drive, Alice Springs 1030-1100 Meeting with teachers 1100-1200 Open discussion with Year 11 and 12 Students
1300-1430	Our Lady of the Sacred Heart College, Sadadeen Drive, Alice Springs 1300-1330 Meeting with teachers 1330-1430 Open discussion with Year 11 and 12 Students

For media comment: Please contact the Committee Chair, Mr Peter Lindsay MP on (02) 6277 4964 (Canberra) or (07) 4725 2066 (Townsville), or by mobile on 0419 656 234.

Further information: contact the Inquiry Secretary (02) 6277 4453, by mobile on 0411 440 490, email jscem@aph.gov.au or visit the Committee's webpage at <http://www.aph.gov.au/house/committee/em/>