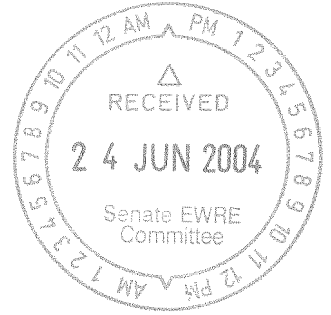


The Secretary,
Senate Employment, Workplace Relations
and Education References Committee
Suite SG.52, Parliament House
CANBERRA ACT 2600



Friday, 25 June 2004

Dear Sir or Madam,

I chose Blue Gum Community School for my child's education for a number of reasons. I really wanted my son to go to a small school where all students know and interact well with each other, and the classes are small and well staffed. I really like the values the school holds i.e. that children are capable and responsible, amongst others. The teachers treat each child as an individual and are very supportive in areas any child may find difficult.

I am on a very low income (single parent/student) and struggle to pay the fees to send my son to Blue Gum. However, I strongly believe every child should have access to the education Blue Gum offers. If the Government provided equitable funding to Blue Gum Community School then I could afford to send my son there a lot easier, and more people would have the choice available to them as well.

The Federal Govt gives Blue Gum Community School \$1,817 for my child but, if I moved my child to other independent schools in the area, those schools would get \$3,404. This isn't fair. Why should my choice of school for my son be made on financial considerations, rather than what I think is best? Why am I penalised for sending my child to Blue Gum? Either provide a similar education through the government schools, or increase the funding to Blue Gum Community School.

Yours sincerely

Jo Coaldrake