



10 September 2008

Regional and Remote Indigenous Communities Committee

The social and cultural contexts of Balgo and other remote Indigenous communities present the school with special challenges that need the following response:

1. Early Childhood Education

To prepare the children for school and to involve parents in their education we need a specialist kindergarten teacher. This person would train and mentor a local woman to operate an Age 3 and younger centre. This centre would educate parents on how to care for their children and play educational games with them.

2. School Nurse

Student health is a concern for the school. Teachers are not trained to look after student health. A school nurse could be based at the school to keep track of the student health issues and to work with visiting health professionals. This person could also be a contact person who teachers can send students who are unwell or injured. This position would not need to be full time. This school nurse could train a local woman in this position.

3. Secondary Young Men and Women

Cultural considerations prevent young secondary men and young secondary women to be in the same classroom. Therefore they need to be in two separate groups requiring two teachers. At the moment our enrolments only allow us to have one teacher. The school is the only regular contact point for these secondary students. When they stop coming to school the dangers of drug abuse and crime increase.

4. Centrelink Family Benefit Payments

Is there a way to get access to part of Family Centrelink payments especially if some of these payments are meant to help families get their children ready for school. This would enable the school to be in partnership with families to provide the following school needs.

- Uniform
- Nutrition
- Excursions/Camps
- Books in Homes
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Thank-you for considering these matters.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'R. Gaffney', written in a cursive style.

Br Rick Gaffney
Principal