

From: [REDACTED]

Mr David Southwick MP
Chair, Education and Training Committee.

Dear Mr Southwick,

It is understood that there are plans to restructure funding to schools that might mean removing the financial support that allows Blackburn's music program to exist in its present long developed form. This program has been the foundation for many musicians over more than 30 years of its development. More important it has been the essence of the personal development in the lives of thousands more.

Apart from the VCA there is no better avenue for a burgeoning music student in the State and the advantage Blackburn High offers is its concentration on a solid education in all other academic areas. I am sure you are aware of the huge amount of documented evidence supporting music in education. Of course children can go to private teachers to learn their instruments but Blackburn offers much more. At Blackburn there is a music culture where interested students can mix and grow with like-minded friends and the best of teachers.

What no other institution or individual can do is provide the ensemble opportunities for students from Year 7 to Year 12 essential to their musical development. Only ensemble work can fully train most musicians. Only schools can do this and no other school offers the range and depth of opportunity that Blackburn High's music program has.

To take away the funds necessary for this internationally regarded music program to exist would severely damage the school and wipe away what has taken many decades to build. The music program is essential to the culture of this excellent school.

Yours sincerely,

Max Garrard
Retiring International Student Coordinator
Blackburn High School