

Mr Peter and Mrs Elizabeth DeMaria

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Mr David Southwick MP

Chair

Education and Training Committee

Dear Southwick and Committee,

My husband and I are writing to express our extreme concern and anger that the funding to the Music program at Blackburn High School is under threat. As parents of two children who attend Blackburn High School ,both of whom are involved in the Music program ,we have observed directly how the richness and excellence of this program has positively impacted our children's experience of high school and their development.

Blackburn High School is renowned throughout Australia for its Music program which has been built over many years with the hard work ,dedication and passion of our Music staff, students and supportive parents .Blackburn High School has produced many fine musicians but beyond this ,it gives children from diverse socio-economic and cultural backgrounds the opportunity to participate in and observe EXCELLENCE in Music that they would otherwise never have the opportunity to experience .These students also gain much more than musical ability. We have observed and truly believe that participation in the Blackburn High Music program extends students personal development in so many other areas .Students from vastly different backgrounds learn to work together ,respect each other and become team players. These students learn about dedication and hard work and about not letting each other down. Our children ,both boys ,in years 10 and 12 can honestly state that at Blackburn High School they have never experienced bullying. That is a precious and rare thing .We know families happy to travel quite a distance to access the affordable Music program at Blackburn High School .

Why is the Liberal State Govt. seeking to take this funding away from our Government school that has worked so hard with very little -our performance area is the gym -to develop a prestigious program that many who could never consider a private education access. Is there a notion within the Liberal party that no public school should be allowed anything extra or that anything special should not be allowed to flourish ? Perhaps

the Liberal state govt. believes that the opportunity to experience a well resourced music program only belongs to private schools and high income earners . These certainly are questions that we as voters and parents are asking. It will be a sad day if, at the many friendly music events and competitions held throughout the school year, not one Govt. public school can give the private sector a run for their money. Please do not take funding from the Blackburn High School Music program -it is simply the wrong thing to do.

Yours Sincerely

Elizabeth and Peter DeMaria