



Essex Heights Primary School

Essex Road

Mt Waverley, 3149

To Whom it May Concern,

In recommendation 8.2 of The Productivity Commission Inquiry into Child Care and Early Childhood Learning report, there is the suggestion that schools should arrange an outside provider to facilitate Before, After and Vacation Care Programs for school aged children.

As a manager of a community based program I feel compelled to submit our community's views on recommendation 8.2.

This recommendation is inequitable in relation to Community Based Before and After Care Programs and biased toward private providers.

My name is Paul Davis and I am the Manager of The Essex Heights Primary School Before and After School Care Program Community.

I find this suggestion rather discourteous, uninformed and short sighted. Coupled with these sentiments is the hurt and offence expressed by my staff in relation to recommendation 8.2. who have invested heavily in our community program for over two decades.

I have been co-ordinator of our community based program for twenty years. The program has been operating for twenty five years. Most of the core staff has been employed by the program between fifteen and twenty five years. With close to 300 families enrolled and strong endorsement from the Principal, Assistant Principals, teaching staff, School Council. PFA and the general school population the program is an integral and efficient element of the school community.

The program educators have significantly bought into the children's holistic development and have forged and nurtured quality relationships with parents. Due to the educators being so effective the program has developed into a crucial and vibrant component of the school community.

Our educators have worked attentively to ensure we have provided the community with a service that is world quality and presents an array of opportunities for children, from our interesting science programs, to our cooking clubs, active after program and homework tutoring program.

These aforementioned ingredients are interwoven into a successful recipe which results in happy and positive outcomes for families.

However the program's cornerstone is that we ensure a safe, happy, secure environment for all children. What underpins the success of the program is that we place the child and families at the centre of everything we do.

Our program is a financially viable program that is managed effectively and provides the highest quality care for all children. We have just completed our Department of Education and Early Childhood Development Compliance Audit and received an "Exceeding," rating. The program's administration is meticulous. It is overseen by myself as well as the program educators, Principal, School Council, the school's Business Manager and The Before and After Care Sub-Committee. The program prides itself on being a pivotal extension of the school community as well as being able to deliver a high quality program.

A school's spirit is steeped in community connections and our outstanding OSHC Program nurtures this philosophy.

In 2010 I voiced many concerns pertaining to The National Quality Frameworks and Childcare in general at Community Childcare. However my concerns were dismissed by Community Childcare management. Those concerns are echoed in many of the points made in The Productivity Draft.

However the one contentious point is private ownership of OSHC programs. Could the Commission please entertain the thought of allowing Community based programs to feature as prominently as private organisations in the final report. This is a decent and fair request from someone who cares about equitable community care.

I am passionately devoted to this program and the community I serve, as are all the current educators and school community.

Please do not underestimate the value of community based care and the major ramifications of any proposed changes.

I understand this is a draft that is why I implore the Commission to ensure community based programs are also endorsed by the government.

These are not words of aggression they are sentiments of concern.

If you wish to contact me I am more than willing to offer any insight into the discussion.

"I am of the opinion that my life belongs to the whole community and as long as I live, it is my privilege to do for it whatever I can. I want to be thoroughly used up when I die, for the harder I work the more I live."

~George Bernard Shaw

Yours Faithfully

Paul Davis