

Meeting Notes- Stephen Gniel

Meeting: [redacted] - Response Team

Date: 1/11/15 11:30 am

Intro

- Coordinating meeting & function
- Cross Directorate response required
- Important to share pertinent information
- Individual responsibility for team accountability

Meeting w

- * Consistency in messaging in school team LD → [redacted]
- * Action - confirm school leadership team in [redacted] ✓
- * Messaging for staff/community LD → [redacted]

CM

- * Principal reassigned ✓ [redacted]
- * [redacted] Investigation [redacted]
- * [redacted]

LD

- * Overarching statement / key messages
- * Letter draft prepared
- * Phone calls to p/b made SG

~~A~~ Timeline

Meeting Notes- Stephen Gniel

Meeting: [redacted] - Response Team

Date: 1/4/15 4:30 pm

BM

- Contact w DEP
- Team Teach
- Contact to
-

- Leadership team
- SNL Support tomorrow
- [redacted] →
- Letters provided to [redacted] parents ✓
- P&C contact to A/g principal

CM

- Investigation in place (shared services) ✓

[redacted] ✓
[redacted] ✓

LD

- Letters drafted to
- Speaking pts
- A/g principal notes for commis

Package tonight

Meeting Notes- Stephen Gniel

Meeting: _____

Date: 1/4/15

7¹⁵ pm P/C Glenn Fowler - Message

7⁴⁰ pm P/C " " - Update provided

[REDACTED]

8¹⁰ pm

[REDACTED]

8¹⁵ pm

[REDACTED]

Dobson, Liana

From: Dobson, Liana
Sent: Wednesday, 1 April 2015 2:37 PM
To: [REDACTED]
Cc: [REDACTED]
Subject: Letter - parents
Attachments: Letter - parents.doc

Afternoon [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] asked me to send you the attached.

Thanks

Liana Dobson
Media and Communications
P 6207 0001
M [REDACTED]



Dear parents and carers

An issue was raised [REDACTED] about a withdrawal space [REDACTED]. The Education and Training Directorate was also made aware of the issue.

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

The withdrawal space has been removed.

A full investigation of this matter is underway to inform further actions.

The school's first priority is to provide a safe environment for all students.

The school will continue to work with the Directorate and Therapy ACT to develop ways to respond to and support the needs of all students.

Should you wish to discuss this issue further, please contact me on

Yours sincerely

[REDACTED]

01 April 2015

Dobson, Liana

From: Dobson, Liana
Sent: Wednesday, 1 April 2015 8:50 PM
To: Gniel, Stephen; [REDACTED]
Subject: Message for school
Attachments: Doc13.doc

Thanks

Liana Dobson
Media and Communications
P 6207 0001
M [REDACTED]

Front office (if needed):

For media enquiries:

Any calls from media outlets should be referred to the central office media team x54196

[Redacted]

- [Redacted]
- [Redacted]

Acting Principal for school staff:

- Some of you might be aware that concerns have been raised about the structure that was built and then removed [Redacted]
- [Redacted]
- We won't know much more until the outcomes of the investigation are known.
- In the meantime, we have some extra help [Redacted]
- The nature of the complaint means it is possible there will be some media attention.
- If anyone receives a request, please let me know. We will refer them to the central office media team. It is important that you do not get into conversation with the media about this issue.
- Media attention also means that we might get questions from our families. Since there is an investigation underway. Please refrain from conversations with families about this. You can tell them:
 - Concerns were raised about a structure that was built and then removed [Redacted]
 - [Redacted]
 - Next steps will be known when the investigation is complete.

Community messages (after media):

- Concerns were raised about a structure that was built and then removed [Redacted]
- [Redacted]
- Next steps will be known when the investigation is complete.
- [Redacted]
- Additional staffing support has been provided to the school during this time.

Dobson, Liana

From: Gniel, Stephen
Sent: Wednesday, 1 April 2015 9:45 PM
To: McAlister, Coralie; Cuzner, Jane; Mitchell, Beth; [REDACTED] Dobson, Liana
Cc: McKinnon, Dominique; Sizer, Cheryl; Brighton, Meg
Subject: FW: STATUS UPDATE [REDACTED]
Attachments: 201504011850.pdf; 201504011847.pdf
Importance: High

Team

See below status update provided to Minister's office. Notes from this afternoon's meeting including actions below, I have removed actions and added to update where they have been completed.

Response team meeting held 1 April 2015, 16:30pm

Present: DD-G Steve Gniel, Jane Cuzner, Coralie McAlister [REDACTED] Liana Dobson and Beth Mitchell (by phone)

ACTIONS

- [REDACTED]
- Jane – make arrangements to convene a Board Meeting next week
- [REDACTED]
- [REDACTED]
- [REDACTED]

From: Gniel, Stephen
Sent: Wednesday, 1 April 2015 9:42 PM
To: Hawthorne, Maria
Cc: Joseph, Diane; Emerson, Marc
Subject: STATUS UPDATE [REDACTED]
Importance: High

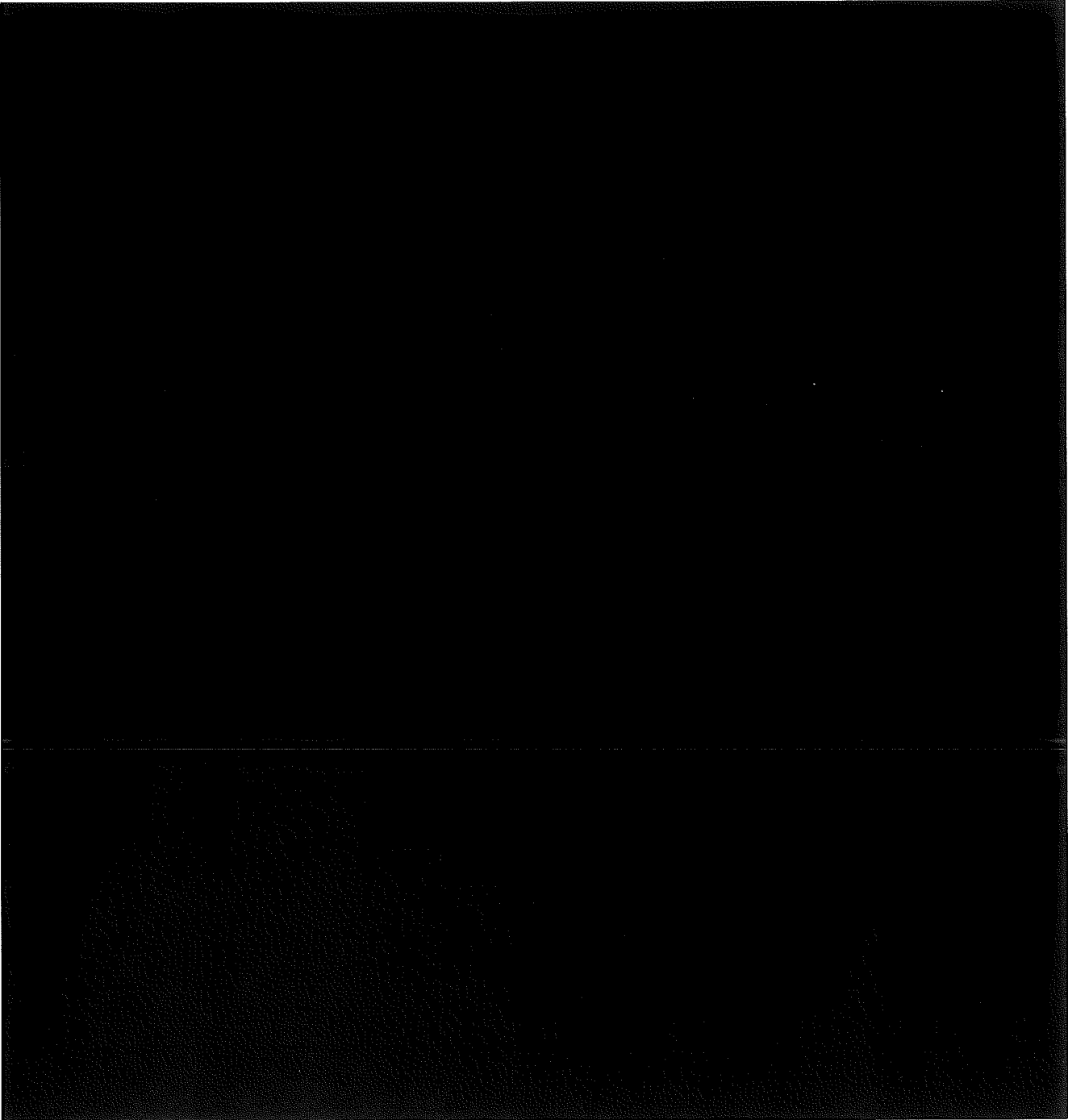
Maria

STATUS UPDATE [REDACTED]

Communications

- DD-G has made contact with:
 - Parent of the student
 - The person who made the complaint to the ACT Children & Young People Commissioner
 - The school P&C President
 - A School Board Representative
 - AEU (Glenn Fowler) – Update provided at 810pm
 - Children and Young Peoples Commissioner (Alasdair Roy) – [REDACTED]
 - [REDACTED]
 - Message left for P&C Council - [REDACTED]
 - [REDACTED]
- Letter has been sent to the P&C President and a Board Representative (in lieu of a Board Chair) – see attached
- Speaking points being finalised

- Letter from [REDACTED] were provided this afternoon to the parents of students [REDACTED] (previously provided to Minister's office)



Regards

Stephen Gniel

Deputy Director-General

Phone: 6205 2360 | Mobile: [REDACTED] | Email: stephen.gniel@act.gov.au

Education and Training | ACT Government

Level 6 220 Northbourne Avenue | GPO Box 158 Canberra ACT 2601 | www.def.act.gov.au



[Redacted]

Dear [Redacted]

I am writing to you [Redacted] following our conversation earlier today. [Redacted] about a withdrawal space [Redacted]. The Education and Training Directorate was also made aware of the issue.

[Redacted]

A full investigation of this matter is underway to inform further actions.

Our first priority is to provide a safe environment for all students.

The Directorate will continue to work with the school to develop ways to respond to and support the needs of all students.

We will be in contact with you and other Board members to convene a special Board meeting next week.

Should you wish to discuss this issue further in the meantime, please contact the School Network Leader [Redacted]

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be "Stephen Gniel". The signature is fluid and cursive, written over the typed name.

Stephen Gniel
Deputy Director-General
01 April 2015

Cc: [Redacted]



P&C President

[Redacted]

Dear [Redacted]

An issue was raised [Redacted] about a withdrawal space [Redacted]. The Education and Training Directorate was also made aware of the issue.

[Redacted]

A full investigation of this matter is underway to inform further actions.

Our first priority is to provide a safe environment for all students.

The Directorate will continue to work with the school to develop ways to respond to and support the needs of all students.

Should you wish to discuss this issue further, please contact the School Network Leader

[Redacted]

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be "Stephen Gniel". The signature is fluid and cursive, written over a white background.

Stephen Gniel
Deputy Director-General
01 April 2015

Cc: [Redacted]

Dobson, Liana

From: ACT Government Executive Media
Sent: Thursday, 2 April 2015 10:35 AM
Subject: Minister Burch media alert - Statement Education and Training
Attachments: 02 Statement alert.pdf



Joy Burch MLA

MINISTER FOR EDUCATION AND TRAINING
MINISTER FOR POLICE AND EMERGENCY SERVICES
MINISTER FOR DISABILITY
MINISTER FOR RACING AND GAMING
MINISTER FOR THE ARTS

MEMBER FOR BRINDABELLA

MEDIA ALERT

**Attention news editors and chiefs of staff
Not for broadcast or distribution**

Statement – Education and Training

Minister for Education and Training and Minister for Disability, Joy Burch and Director-General Education and Training Diane Joseph will be in the Legislative Assembly courtyard to make a statement about a serious complaint about an ACT school.

WHERE: Legislative Assembly Courtyard

DATE: Thursday 2 April 2015

TIME: 1:30pm

Statement Ends

Media Contact: Kim Fischer

Ph: 6205 7402

kimberley.fischer@act.gov.au

Kimberley Fischer
A/jg Media Adviser

Office of Joy Burch MLA
Member for Brindabella
Minister for Education and Training
Minister for Police and Emergency Services
Minister for Disability
Minister for the Arts
Minister for Racing and Gaming

P: (02) 620 57402 | F: (02) 620 53165





Joy Burch MLA

MINISTER FOR EDUCATION AND TRAINING
MINISTER FOR POLICE AND EMERGENCY SERVICES
MINISTER FOR DISABILITY
MINISTER FOR RACING AND GAMING
MINISTER FOR THE ARTS

MEMBER FOR BRINDABELLA

MEDIA ALERT

02 April 2015

**Attention news editors and chiefs of staff
Not for broadcast or distribution**

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Statement Ends

Media Contact: Kim Fischer

Ph: 6205 7402

kimberley.fischer@act.gov.au

ACT Legislative Assembly

Phone: (02) 6205 0020 Email: BURCH@act.gov.au



[@JoyBurchMLA](https://twitter.com/JoyBurchMLA)



www.facebook.com/joyburchmla



Dobson, Liana

From: ACT Government Executive Media
Sent: Thursday, 2 April 2015 4:20 PM
Subject: Minister Burch media release - Statement: Education and Training
Attachments: 02 Statement release.pdf



Joy Burch MLA

MINISTER FOR EDUCATION AND TRAINING
MINISTER FOR POLICE AND EMERGENCY SERVICES
MINISTER FOR DISABILITY
MINISTER FOR RACING AND GAMING
MINISTER FOR THE ARTS

MEMBER FOR BRINDABELLA

MEDIA RELEASE

02 April 2015

Statement – Education and Training

Minister for Education and Training Joy Burch has directed the Education and Training Director-General to undertake an investigation following an incident in an ACT government school.

“Late last week I became aware of an inappropriate withdrawal place being put in one of the classrooms.

“This action was taken by the principal who was dealing with a student exhibiting challenging behaviour.

“Despite all good intentions this type of withdrawal space is wrong and should not have occurred.

“Our students deserve to be treated with dignity and respect. Our families need to know that their children are safe and supported in our school system.

“I ask that the media consider the privacy of the family involved, “Ms Burch concluded.

Statement Ends

Media Contact: Kim Fischer

Ph: 6205 7402

kimberley.fischer@act.gov.au

Kimberley Fischer
A/g Media Adviser

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ACT
Government





Joy Burch MLA

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“I ask that the media consider the privacy of the family involved,” Ms Burch concluded.

Statement Ends

Media Contact: Kim Fischer

Ph: 6205 7402

kimberley.fischer@act.gov.au

McKinnon, Dominique

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Thursday, 2 April 2015 5:14 PM
Subject: Message to Network Principals

Importance: High

Colleagues

As you may be aware there is media attention relating to one of our public schools in Canberra. [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

A withdrawal space was erected inside a classroom [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

The leaders and teachers in our schools, together with families have done an immense amount of excellent work in providing safe and supportive classrooms for students.
[REDACTED]

An immediate investigation, independent of the Education and Training Directorate, [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

The matter was referred to the ACT Human Rights Commission [REDACTED]

Our priority is to maintain the privacy of the student and the family and to provide a safe and supportive learning environment for all students at the school.

There has been communication with appropriate members of the school community.

Should you have any further questions please contact me.

Regards

[REDACTED] Schools Network Leader [REDACTED]

Phone: +61 2 [REDACTED] | Fax: +61 2 6205 8327 | Email: [REDACTED]
Office for Schools | Education and Training | ACT Government
Level 4 Hedley Beare Centre for Teaching & Learning | Fremantle Drive, Stirling ACT 2611 | www.det.act.gov.au

Dobson, Liana

From: Gniel, Stephen
Sent: Thursday, 2 April 2015 9:12 PM
To: Brighton, Meg; Cuzner, Jane; McAlister, Coralie; [REDACTED] Dobson, Liana; Mitchell, Beth
Cc: Sizer, Cheryl; McKinnon, Dominique
Subject: FW: STATUS UPDATE [REDACTED]
Importance: High

Team

See below status update provided to Minister's office. Actions from this afternoon's meeting also below.

Response team meeting held 2 April 2015, 18:30pm

Present: DD-G Steve Gniel, Jane Cuzner, Coralie McAlister, Meg Brighton, [REDACTED] Liana Dobson and Beth Mitchell (by phone)

Support: Cheryl Sizer, Dominique McKinnon

ACTIONS

- Coralie – organise EAP deployment to school for Tuesday morning
- [REDACTED]
- Beth/Jane – to request Coralie to organise EAP counsellors onsite at HBCTL/220 as required (including CPRU and SE)
- SNL – Contact Tuesday with broader school community re change Executive (prior to newsletter on Friday)
- SNL – review Executive structure for the start of term 2
- Beth – ensure additional counsellor support for students for full week 10
- Coralie – finalise scope employee conduct with SET
- [REDACTED]
- Coralie & SNL - to be onsite for school support 8:30am Tuesday morning
- [REDACTED]
- Jane – to coordinate the agenda and briefs for the Board meeting attendees
- Liana – update key questions based on the media tracking information (shared service support):
 - also include previous stories that may surface
 - group the key themes/questions that arise
- Liana – provide printed copy of the two additional media releases from today to D-G and DD-G for support packs, ensure electronic copy emailed also (cc Catriona, Lynn and Janet)
- [REDACTED]
- [REDACTED]
- Meg – organise low profile security to be at school for Tuesday morning should details become public
- Liana - ETD Media member to be onsite Tuesday morning
- [REDACTED]

From: Gniel, Stephen
Sent: Thursday, 2 April 2015 9:06 PM
To: Hawthorne, Maria
Cc: Emerson, Marc; Joseph, Diane
Subject: STATUS UPDATE [REDACTED]
Importance: High

Maria, update below.

Communications

- Media standup at 130pm today
- Multiple request from media following stand up, DG interviewed by 2CC, 666 (with Minister) and Prime Television
- DDG spoke with
 - Hugh Boulter – acting president P&C Council prior to media stand up and following
 - [REDACTED]
 - GSEC Chair – Craig Curry
 - Disability ACT, Meredith Whitton
 - [REDACTED]
- [REDACTED] made follow up contact with P&C President and key School Board contact
- ETD statement released
- Message from DG sent to all staff 5pm
- School Network Leaders sent message to all principals with key messages for them to use with community and staff
- School Network Leaders personally contacted all Network Executive Members to reinforce support and key messages
- Arrangements being made to provide advice to school community about current school leadership arrangements (possibly newsletter)
- Meeting with current Board members being arranged for next week
- [REDACTED]

School/Staff Support

- School Network Leader, [REDACTED] was onsite to support [REDACTED] Executive team before school and during morning session and met with staff to:
 - Provide key message advice
 - reiterated the need for privacy and confidentiality specifically around social media use
 - [REDACTED]
- [REDACTED] was present during after school care to field school community concerns
- School Network Leader and Director, People and Performance will be on site Tuesday morning
- Directorate media staff will be onsite Tuesday morning to redirect any media attention
- Low profile security being organised should it be required Tuesday morning for media attention
- Additional School Counsellor support being arranged for next week to provide additional support for students

Central Office Staff Support

- Concerns raised about central office staff wellbeing, particularly those with connections to the school
 - staff in section, EAP support can be provided

• [REDACTED]
• [REDACTED]
• [REDACTED]

Stephen Gniel

Deputy Director-General

Phone: 6205 2360 | Mobile: [REDACTED] | Email: stephen.gniel@act.gov.au

Education and Training | ACT Government

Level 6 220 Northbourne Avenue | GPO Box 158 Canberra ACT 2601 | www.det.act.gov.au

From: Gniel, Stephen
Sent: Wednesday, 1 April 2015 9:42 PM
To: Hawthorne, Maria
Cc: Joseph, Diane; Emerson, Marc
Subject: STATUS UPDATE [REDACTED]
Importance: High

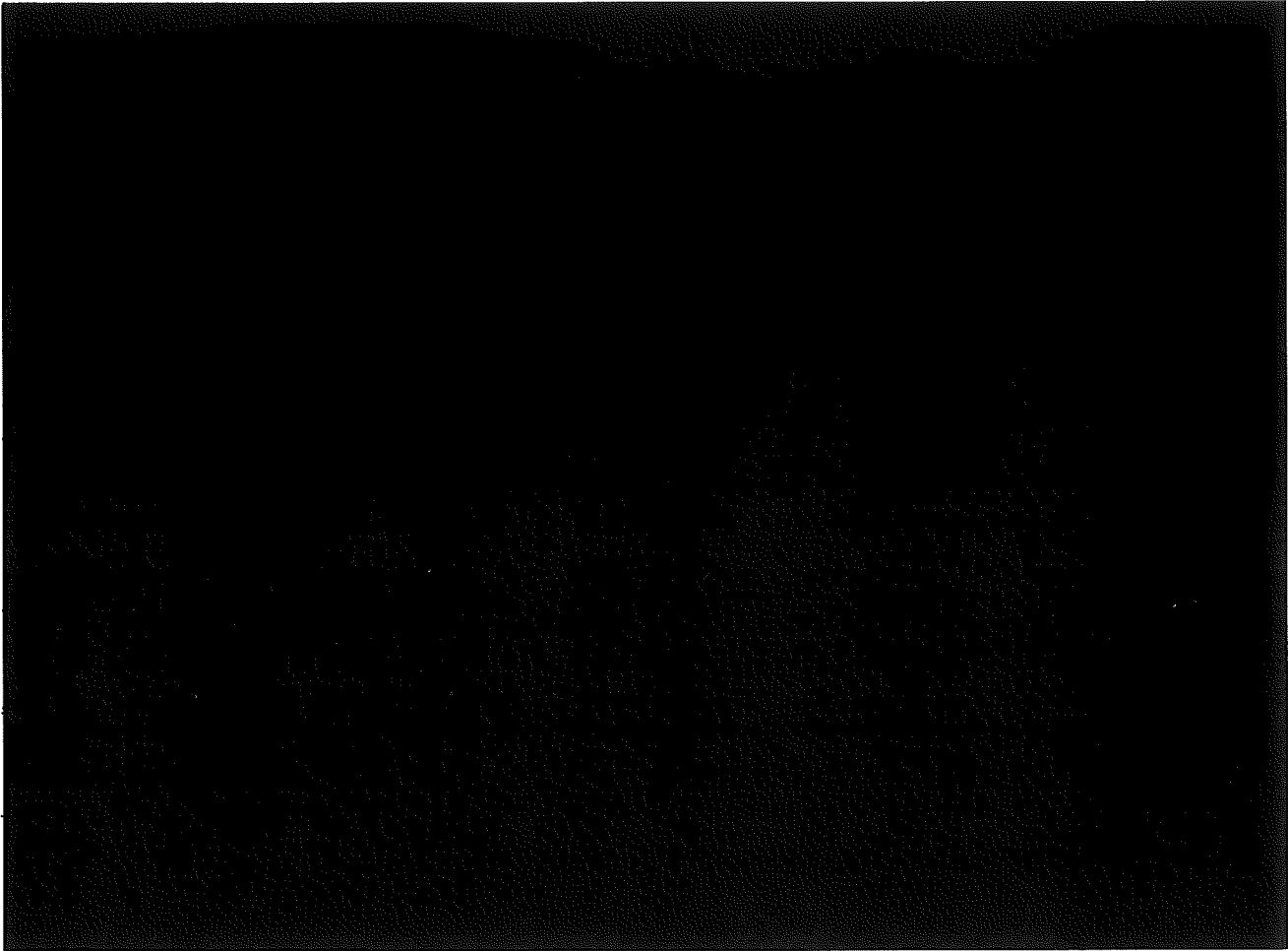
Maria

STATUS UPDATE [REDACTED]

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- DD-G has made contact with:
 - Parent of the student
 - The person who made the complaint to the ACT Children & Young People Commissioner
 - The school P&C President
 - A School Board Representative
 - AEU (Glenn Fowler) – Update provided at 810pm
 - Children and Young Peoples Commissioner (Alasdair Roy) - [REDACTED]
 - [REDACTED]
 - Message left for P&C Council - [REDACTED]
 - [REDACTED]
- Letter has been sent to the P&C President and a Board Representative (in lieu of a Board Chair) – see attached
- Speaking points being finalised
- Letter from [REDACTED] were provided this afternoon to the parents of students [REDACTED] (previously provided to Minister's office)

[REDACTED]



Regards

Stephen Gniel

Deputy Director-General

Phone: 6205 2360 | Mobile: [REDACTED] | Email: stephen.gniel@act.gov.au

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Level 6 220 Northbourne Avenue | GPO Box 158 Canberra ACT 2601 | www.det.act.gov.au

McGarvey, Caitlin

From: DET Alerts
Sent: Thursday, 2 April 2015 5:01 PM
Subject: Advice to staff regarding a public complaint

Categories: FOI-Right to know



Colleagues

Today, Thursday 2 April 2015, the Minister for Education and Training and Minister for Disability, Joy Burch and I made a public statement about a serious complaint about an ACT school. The complaint related to the use by a public school of a structure within the school intended as a withdrawal space for a student with behavioural challenges and special needs. The space [REDACTED] and it has been removed.

We have immediately implemented a full independent investigation into the incident.

Public school leaders and teachers, together with families work hard to provide safe, supportive and inclusive learning environments.

Our priority is to maintain the privacy of the staff, student and the family and to provide a safe and supportive environment for all students and staff at the school.

Should you require support please speak with your Principal, School Network Leader or Supervisor. The Employee Assistance Program (EAP) is also available should you feel that you would like support.

Diane Joseph
Director-General