

**AUSTRALIAN COUNCIL FOR THE DEFENCE OF
GOVERNMENT SCHOOLS**

PRESS RELEASE 860

**AS PRIVATE SCHOOLS SCREAM ABOUT LOSS OF THEIR INTERNATIONAL
CASH COW
PUBLIC SCHOOL TEACHERS
BRING OUR CHILDREN THROUGH THE TIME OF PLAGUE.**

The Business plans of the private education sector are in disarray. They have lost their international student cash cows. Victoria has more international school students than any other state or territory. There are more than 9500 enrolled in 2018, primarily from China, Vietnam and Cambodia. Many tertiary students have been left stranded by the Morrison government, dependent upon charity and the gig economy. Yet private schools consider both international students and their parents – ‘an income stream.’

On Tuesday 22 September the Age informed us that [dozens of principals representing some of Victoria's most expensive private schools have written to the Andrews government to plead for the urgent return of international students.](#) They warn of cutbacks and closures if the ban on them isn't lifted soon.

While the federal government controls the nation's borders, the letter calls for the state government to work with the non-government school sector to develop plans for the entry of students no later than the start of the 2021 school year.

Some schools face potential closure and significant job losses, if international student enrolments do not recover, the principals say. Signatories to the letter include the principals of Geelong Grammar, Melbourne Grammar, Methodist Ladies College, Brighton Grammar, St Catherine's School and Lauriston Girls' School.

Premier Andrews is listening to their cries of woe and has set up a working party. His answer will be very interesting indeed. But some of the comments to the Age article say it all:

Pluto said:

Once upon a time these schools managed very well educating locals. Now they tell us that they are on the verge of collapse if denied the money that these students bring in. Their building programs have become just too big.

Tuppy said:

Terrible business isn't it, running schools.

I guess the trick is, stop treating it like a business and more like a school!

Public Schools are Not Businesses

Running schools for local children is exactly what public schools teachers have been doing on minimal pay and maximum dedication to their students. A small piece in the Weekly Times of 23 September 2020, tucked in between reports on wealthy Boarding Schools for the wealthy landed gentry, is a report on the work done by public school teachers in isolated parts of the state.

We read that bushfire ravaged Mallacoota relies on a single Telstra exchange, and does not yet have NBN. Limited bandwidth has meant a poor internet connection for the past eight months.

So, the teachers of the East Gippsland town's P-12 college went above and beyond their duties to deliver hard copies of work, keep their VCE students on track with the studies and support all their local families through this year of the Plague.

In Halls Gap, the primary school principal Ja-San Trimble said that parents had internet problems and could not rely on online learning. The community is reliant on the tourism industry and both parents and children need a lot of teacher support. The Wimmera South West Network's Small schools Community of Practice has assisted her staff with an adaptive program for its students during remote learning. The Principals have been quite isolated so the fortnightly virtual meetings with the public schools across the Wimmera have assisted them.

However, it should be noted that many of the principals of these schools are also teaching, so in this year of plague, time and overtime become meaningless.

DOGS note that, like our health workers, public school teachers have proved themselves the true heroes in the time of plague.

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