

AUSTRALIAN COUNCIL FOR THE DEFENCE OF GOVERNMENT SCHOOLS

PRESS RELEASE 490#

ACACIA COLLEGE GOES TO THE WALL

The Market Fails both Parents and Children

The Melton Mowbray College and Mernda Acacia College closures are proof of the failure of the 'market' to educate children.

The State Government has failed to provide sufficient State secondary facilities in these growing areas, leaving it to the so-called 'independent' sector.

History and logic indicates that they must fail to educate all the children, or even those aspirational middle class parents who believe they can buy a second or even third class ticket to heaven and the good job.

Mernda Case Study

Aspirational parents in the Mernda area vented their anger online.

Uniting Church moderator Isabel Thomas Dobson held a meeting with parents of Acacia College yesterday to tell them the school was not financially viable and would never become self sufficient. It is due to close on December 14.

As news of the decision broke online, students, parents and local residents immediately started venting, with many expressing their shock and to spread the news.

School parent David Warwick tweeted it was sad news for families and that he would be soon forced to send his daughter elsewhere.

Fellow tweeter Rich Lambert posted: "This is a huge shock — such a rapidly growing school".

The media saw it as a story that could be aligned with the MLC spat.

The Uniting Church, which just recently became entangled in drama when another of its schools, elite Methodist Ladies' College in Kew, sacked long-time principal Rosa Storelli last

month over years of over-payments, has found itself in hot water over the closure. Online commentators have suggested the church should use money earned from schools such as MLC and Wesley College to prop up their struggling counterpart.

"Here is a good chance for the Uniting Church to show if they have a heart by spreading some of the wealth from their money-spinners, to the less-fortunate, but as-deserving multitudes in less-wealthy suburbs," one theage.com.au commentator wrote.

"Kristen" wrote that the church had become an educator of the elite. "They have let down the people and community of the outer northern suburbs and should hold their head in shame for this."

The Minister for Education, Martin Dixon, failed to offer any alternatives, mainly because he could not do so. There is no State secondary school in the area, although land has been set aside for two P-12 schools.

The ALP Yan Yean MLA Danielle Green said she would push for the state government to open access to local state schools for displaced students immediately.

But she can dream on. The nearest secondary schools are at Mill Park or Whittlesea and they are over-crowded.

Read more: <http://www.theage.com.au/victoria/parents-in-shock-as-news-spread-20121018-27sfd.html#ixzz29bBoe37f>

<http://www.theage.com.au/victoria/school-closure-hits-520-students-20121017-27rc3.html>

Other private providers such as the Shia Muslims are waiting in the wings, happy to divide off their children and get paid for the privilege.

But at least one parent understands the issue:

I would love the government to come along and buy the school and turn it into a MUCH NEEDED Public Secondary School!!! It is what this area needs desperately!!! I'm no expert when it comes to how the education system works, or how schools are bought, sought, or sold, but doesnt it make sense for Nixon to see the school available, buy it and quickly turn it into a public secondary school?????

THE DOGS RADIO PROGRAM

3CR

855 ON THE AM DIAL

12.00 NOON SATURDAYS

