

5 September 2016

Research Director
Education, Tourism, Innovation and Small Business Committee
Parliament House
George Street
Brisbane QLD 4000

This submission relates to the *Grammar Schools Bill 2016*. The Bill will repeal the *Grammar Schools Act 1975*.

The eight grammar schools in Queensland established under the *Grammar Schools Act 1975* are statutory authorities responsible for the governance and operation of the grammar schools¹. The grammar schools are also non-state schools in terms of the *Education (Accreditation of Non-State Schools) Act 2001*.

The grammar schools are unique and highly respected education institutions which have played and continue to play an important role in Queensland's schooling provision. They were established in the period between 1863 and 1892. The grammar schools currently educate over 9,000 students.

The eight grammar schools are members of Independent Schools Queensland.

Independent Schools Queensland supports the *Grammar Schools Bill 2016*.

It is understood that each of the grammar schools has been consulted in relation to the Bill and that each grammar school board generally supports the Bill.

The Bill modernises the current Act and reduces some aspects of red tape on the grammar school boards.

It is noted the Bill removes the ability to establish future grammar schools under the Act. Given that no new grammar schools under the Act have been established since 1892, this is appropriate.

The Bill also maintains the current restriction on the use of the term "grammar" in the naming of a school, with appropriate exemption in respect of Anglican Church Grammar School and Sunshine

¹ The eight grammar schools are – Brisbane Girls Grammar School, Brisbane Grammar School, Ipswich Girls' Grammar School, Ipswich Grammar School, Rockhampton Girls Grammar School, The Rockhampton Grammar School, Toowoomba Grammar School and Townsville Grammar School.

Coast Grammar School which were established and named prior to the introduction of the restriction.

This restriction is appropriate given the legislative basis of the grammar schools in Queensland. The Bill provides that the Board of a grammar school may request the Minister to appoint two additional members to its Board. This will support greater flexibility in terms of Board composition including seeking out persons with specific skills and knowledge that may be required at a particular time by a Board.

ISQ requests that the Committee give consideration to two matters in relation to specific provisions in the Bill.

Firstly, under Section 5 (3) of the *Grammar Schools Act 1975* it is clear that grammar schools are non-state schools under the *Education (Accreditation of Non-State Schools) Act 2001*. This provision is not included in the *Grammar Schools Bill 2016*. Consideration should be given to including such a provision in the Bill to ensure that it is clear that grammar schools are non-state schools.

Secondly, Clause 28 (2) (b) of the Bill provides that staff employed are employed under this Act and not the Public Service Act 2008. The intent of this is to specify that grammar school employees are not public servants which is correct. However, the inclusion of “are employed under this Act” could be confusing as the Bill does not have any specific provisions in relation to employment (other than that a grammar school board may employ staff to perform its functions). Consideration should be given to deleting “are employed under this Act”.

I thank the Committee for the opportunity to provide these comments in relation to the Grammar Schools Bill 2016 and would be happy to provide any further details or information.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'David Robertson', with a stylized flourish at the end.

David Robertson
Executive Director