

Inala Update

State Schools of Tomorrow

New era for schools one step closer

A \$49 million transformation of state schools in the Inala area has moved a step closer, after months of community consultation.

A wealth of community ideas and views have now been shaped into recommendations by a Community Reference Group (CRG). Its report has been sent to the State Government and will now be considered by the Government, as part of its planning for the future of education in the Inala area. (See article below right).

The CRG made recommendations on the structure of schools in the cluster, which new facilities were most wanted, and how schools rated in terms of sustainability. The CRG reported strong support for:

- creating what it called “family friendly, community-focused schools” that addressed disadvantage and the needs of a multi-cultural community;
- renewing schools with high-quality facilities and resources which ensured they were of a similar standard to new schools;
- facilities to support the creative and performing arts; and
- increased opportunities for senior students to undertake school-based vocational training.

There was enthusiastic support for the facilities and resources that will be put into every renewed school, including larger, more flexible classrooms, the latest communications technology and suitable areas for arts, science and other activities. (See article on Page 3).

Local needs

The CRG’s over-riding recommendation was for facilities that suited the needs of students of this multi-cultural community. A number of proposals were strongly favoured because they supported student engagement and learning.

There was strong support for a “learning for life centre” at each renewed primary school, which would help to engage students and foster their life skills. As part of a multi-functional area, these centres would have facilities such as a kitchen and laundry, and could be used both for teaching and for activities such as a breakfast club. The space could also have a room available to promote closer contact with parents and adjoin a covered area.

The CRG saw improved vocational education and training opportunities as a high priority. It supported the redevelopment of Glenala State High School’s facilities for industrial arts and home

economics into a skills centre, providing greater opportunities for students and supporting the growing links with Bremer TAFE.

The CRG proposed a work skills centre for Western Suburbs Special School, whose training model was seen as ideal with its emphasis on both work ethic and work competency skills. The centre could possibly contain a production line, a metal and woodwork area, a nursery, and a design centre with CAD (computer aided design), the report said. A large area could also be established for “papermaking and craft, car wash and detailing”.

The State Schools of Tomorrow initiative also offers facilities that will be sited at one school but shared among the cluster. The CRG advocated creation of a literacy centre for primary school students, focused on the early years and linked with the Inala community literacy project which was launched last year.

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Where to from here?

The CRG’s report has now been sent to the Queensland Government, where it will be considered along with other available information in the government’s planning for the future of education in Inala.

The recommendations are the result of significant community consultation. The CRG, consisting of the principal and Parents and Citizens Association (P&C) representatives of cluster schools, was established as the central consultation group to represent the interests and consider the feedback of the wider community.

For the time being, it is business as usual at all of the cluster schools. The schools and wider communities will be kept informed as more information becomes available.

Through the State Schools of Tomorrow initiative, communities are helping create a long-term educational vision for their state schools. This encompasses what schools they need for the future; where they should be located; what they should look like, and what facilities they should have.

The Inala project involves eight state schools: Durack, Inala, Inala West, Richlands, Richlands East and Serviceton South primary schools; Glenala State High School; and the Western Suburbs Special School.



Schools rated on sustainability

The CRG considered a range of factors in determining the sustainability of individual schools in the cluster. Its objective was to put forward the best pattern of schools to serve the community’s needs for the next 20 years. It considered such factors as enrolment projections and future development; the area of the school grounds; special contributions to the cluster and community; and proximity to other schools and infrastructure.

The CRG reported that all schools in the cluster are in close proximity and many students do not attend their closest school. There has been a significant enrolment decline over the past 30 years. It said the largest four primary schools – Durack, Inala, Richlands East and Serviceton South – were clearly sustainable.

When considering school size, CRG members favoured an enrolment of around 400 for Inala-Durack, which they thought gave a good balance between staffing and service delivery, while retaining a small-school feel.

Inala West and Richlands State Schools, both sited close to other schools, were seen as less sustainable. The two schools are on

small sites (about half the typical size for new primary schools) and have low enrolment projections.

The report said that while some development growth was possible at Richlands in the medium to longer term, an independent demographer had confirmed this would not significantly affect sustainability, given Richlands State School’s site, proximity to other schools, and the likely distribution of students to other schools.

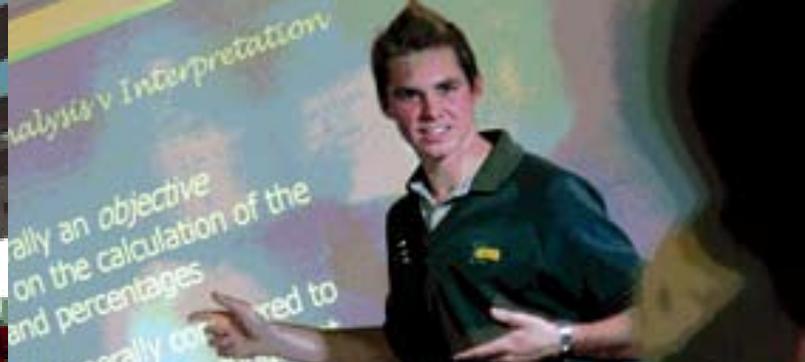
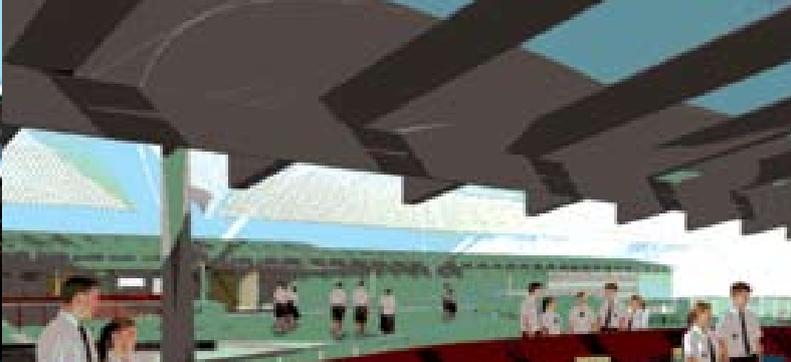
The CRG said the Western Suburbs Special School “should remain as an important school” in Inala and recommended further work be done to expand its relationship with other cluster schools.

Retention of a high school in the area was seen as “non-negotiable”. The upgrading of Glenala State High School’s facilities, together with programs to expand its curriculum and further support students, could result in increased enrolments and “a more positive community image for Glenala”, the report said.

Where students live and go to school

Suburb	School						
	Durack State School	Inala State School	Inala West State School	Richlands East State School	Richlands State School	Serviceton South State School	Glenala State High School
Inala	54.8%	51.4%	74.5%	86.6%	61.0%	65.5%	65.9%
Durack	28.4%	32.4%	4.3%	2.7%	3.1%	1.2%	12.4%
Doolandella	7.2%	1.8%	0.0%	1.3%	1.3%	25.5%	3.2%
Richlands	1.0%	0.9%	11.3%	1.0%	10.1%	0.3%	3.0%
Forest Lake	3.9%	1.8%	0.9%	1.3%	7.5%	3.6%	2.9%
Carole Park	0.5%	3.5%	1.7%	3.7%	5.0%	0.0%	3.8%
Oxley	0.5%	2.0%	0.4%	1.3%	0.0%	0.3%	1.1%
Darra	0.5%	1.1%	0.9%	0.0%	3.1%	0.6%	1.0%
Wacol	0.0%	0.2%	1.7%	0.0%	3.1%	0.6%	1.0%
Gailes	0.5%	0.9%	0.4%	0.0%	0.0%	0.6%	1.0%
Goodna	0.0%	0.2%	0.9%	0.7%	1.9%	0.6%	0.8%

As this table shows, the Inala group of state schools draws enrolments from a large number of suburbs and students do not necessarily attend their nearest school.



Project brings early benefits

The CRG report says that although the Inala-Durack schools renewal project is still in its formative stages, benefits to schools in the cluster are already becoming evident.

Representatives from the cluster have developed a proposal for consistent literacy programs in the schools and have a vision “to develop an Inala Cluster Literacy Framework”.

Glenala State High School has continued to build on its partnership with Bremer TAFE. In Term 4 2007, the TAFE provided vocational training in engineering and furnishing at the school. This is expected to be extended in 2008 to include hospitality practices.

The CRG report said principals of cluster schools had discussed behaviour management issues and resolved to adopt a consistent approach across the cluster. Work was under-way “to scan what processes need to be in place in the near future to achieve this aim (of safe, productive school environments)”.

“The vision is to improve the depth of resources and direct support available...to increase the range of options available for students who are disengaged or at risk of disengagement in education,” the CRG report stated.

Quality facilities for all renewed schools

All schools to be renewed under State Schools of Tomorrow will receive high-quality facilities and resources which raise them to a similar standard to new schools now being built. This means:

- Larger and more flexible classrooms with modern furniture and fittings
- Practical learning areas for arts, science and other activities
- Multi-purpose rooms which can be used for parent meetings and interviews etc
- The latest information and communication technology
- Teachers' preparation and storage areas

- Improved landscaping, indoor/outdoor linkages and more attractive school entries
- Better school parking
- Modern administration and staff facilities
- Improved toilets
- Incorporating environmentally sustainable initiatives, such as water tanks.

The CRG report said: “The Group felt the upgrades would transform schools to make them better able to meet the needs of students in the 21st century”.

New era for schools (from Page one)

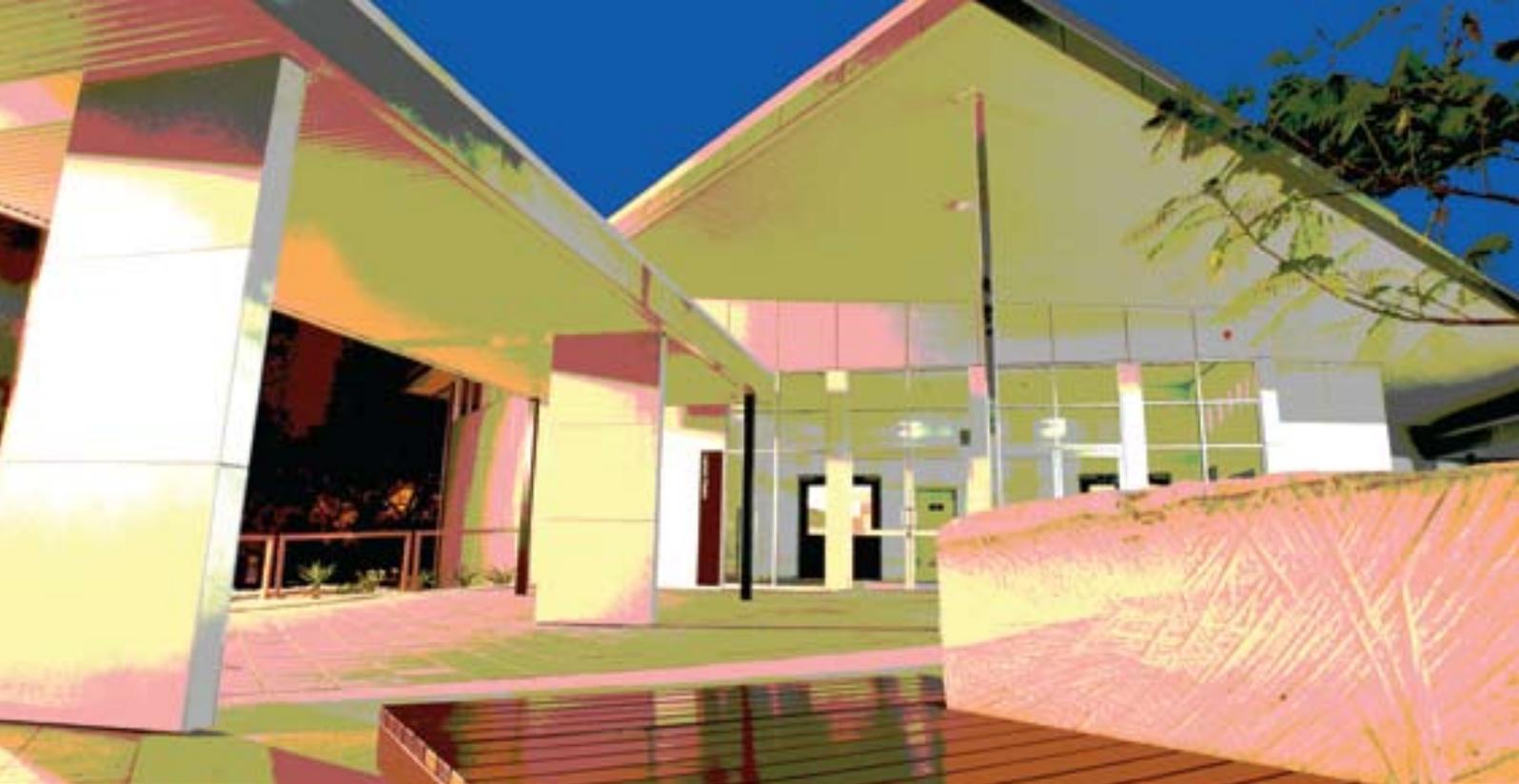
A student engagement centre was also proposed as a shared facility, to support suspended and disengaged students. It was acknowledged further work was needed on its function, location and staffing.

Inala schools lack a modern, multi-purpose performance centre. To fill this need, the CRG recommended major renovation and enlargement of Glenala State High School's hall to make it such a centre. This facility would be available to all cluster schools, as well as community groups and organisations.

Another proposal was for a Sports Performance Measurement Centre/Gymnasium attached to the Glenala State High School sports hall. The CRG saw the facility as “a good way to engage Inala students through the use of sport, to explore maths, science and other skills”.

Also put forward as a concept was an Indigenous cultural centre. The report said dance, music and other forms of creative and performance arts were especially important to a community with significant representation of Indigenous, Pacifica and Vietnamese peoples. Further investigation into the concept was needed, however, to establish the essential role and location of such a facility and its links with local organisations.

The CRG's report suggested a school enrolment of about 400 students as a “right size” for this area. This was perceived as enabling good management and educational services while being small enough to offer a family and student-friendly environment.



Inala among first chosen

Inala is one of just four areas — along with Innisfail, Eastern Ipswich and Brisbane Bayside — chosen as initial State Schools of Tomorrow projects.

In all, the State Government has set aside \$850 million for state school renewal — the largest one-off investment in education in Queensland's history.

Schools in Inala were chosen because they have generally older facilities in significant need of upgrade or renewal, and they share an area where state school enrolments have been in decline since the 1970s.

This means that most of the schools have considerable spare capacity. The close proximity of schools means there is also

an opportunity for them to work together more closely to deliver educational services.

State Schools of Tomorrow comprises the major part of a record \$1 billion five-year investment in the State's education system, to modernise and build new school facilities across the State.

The package has three guiding principles:

- enhancing educational opportunities — to promote students' skills, knowledge and creativity;
- enhancing partnerships with the community — for both educational outcomes and to encourage community use of school facilities; and
- enhancing sustainability — for schools to have long term viability and service their community.

Further information

Information about Inala State Schools of Tomorrow Project is included on the website,

www.education.qld.gov.au/tomorrows-schools

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