

The Secretary
Standing Committee on Education, Training and Youth Affairs

Dear Sir/Madam,

The closure of Hall Primary School has had a devastating effect on individuals in the Hall District and therefore on the village of Hall at large. The Stanhope Government's Towards 2020 policy ignores the fact that Hall Village is a service centre for the district. This district encompasses areas of both ACT and NSW. At the time of closure the numbers of children attending Hall Primary School were steadily growing due to the huge increase in development in the Murrumbateman area and the fact that Hall Primary School was the only facility for primary education in this district.

During the Government's insipid "consultation meetings" Mr Barr told attendees that the ACT Government gave significant financial subsidy to NSW students attending Hall Primary School. This in fact has proven to be incorrect. The truth of the matter is that for every NSW child attending an educational facility in the ACT, the ACT Government receives an amount which is greater than the agreed amount to educate that child. **Therefore there is no financial disadvantage to the ACT Government in having NSW children attend primary school in the ACT.**

The closure of Hall Primary School has meant that there are far fewer people coming into the village each day. When the school was operational parents would come to the village, often twice a day, to drop off and pick up children. During these visits to the village they would very often use another facility in the village and this led to a vibrant village which serviced the entire district.

It is a very interesting that the ACT Government has chosen to ignore the fact that the Village of Hall is a service centre for the larger Hall/Murrumbateman area. In the instance of Hall Primary School the ACT Government has suggested that this interaction between ACT and NSW disadvantages the ACT and it appears to advocate a very clear cut border with no interaction from either side of that border. On the other hand the ACT Government seems particularly keen on endorsing advertising campaigns for the "ACT Wine Industry" when in fact the vast majority of "ACT" vineyards and cellar door facilities are well and truly located in areas of NSW surrounding the ACT. There is a definite hypocrisy in the Government's attitude to ACT/NSW interactions.

We, as residents of Hall, firmly believe that the Hall Primary School should re-open. The ACT Government's idea of large, super schools is not for everyone. Many families want a smaller rural environment for their children's education and the village of Hall was, and still is, an ideal location for this type of school. Hall Primary School was a very vibrant focal point in our community and the absence of this has been sorely missed. We have lived in this village for 21 years and until recently, operated a business in the village for 19 years. We can honestly say that the closure of Hall Primary School tore the heart from this community.

We sincerely request that the ACT Government reopen Hall Primary School.

Allan and Margaret Monahan