

26 March 2009

The Secretary,
Standing Committee on Education, Training and Youth Affairs: Inquiry into
school closures and reform of the ACT education system

Dear Committee Members

The Impact of the closing of Hall Primary School on the Village of Hall and District

The closing of Hall Primary School has had a significant impact on the Hall community.

The school was the centre of the community, and as such, drew residents of Hall Village, the surrounding rural farms and nearby suburbs together. Community events revolved around the school and it was school community members who often took on community leadership roles. Families grew up together, children all knew each other and the community thrived.

Something has died with the closure. It's harder to draw the community together, it's more difficult to get engagement and the neighbourliness of Hall has suffered. At a time when communities want to draw together and to feel a sense of belonging the school is not there to act as the catalyst. It is the wider community (and the Government that represents it) that will suffer if communities become disengaged and alienated.

Concomitantly there has been an economic impact on the Village. With less through traffic, and fewer people in the Village, local businesses have suffered. There is also less reason for new businesses to locate in Hall without a school to attract them.

Hall Primary School provided a good all-round education. Its graduates have gone on to many different careers bringing with them the sense of community developed at Hall Primary. They also have friends for life.

The utilisation of the Hall Primary School site as a school (public or independent) would be extremely beneficial to the people of Hall Village and district and build both social and economic capital for the community at large.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Hugh Watson". The signature is written in a cursive style with a prominent loop at the end of the word "Watson".

Hugh Watson
Hall Village Resident