



Inquiry into annual and financial reports 2024–2025

Answer to question on notice

Asked by: Ms Laura Nuttall MLA

Addressed to: Minister for Education and Early Childhood

Reference: Education

Hearing: 17/11/2025

In relation to: Education and Out of Area Enrolments

Question received: 21/11/2025

Answer Due: 05/12/2025

You stated that there have been over 1000 applications for students to attend out of area schools on wellbeing grounds for the 2026 school year.

(1) What is the exact number of applications on wellbeing grounds for 2026?

(2) How many of these applications have been rejected?

Ms Yvette Berry MLA: The answer to the Member's question is as follows:

Across ACT, 1215 out-of-area applications were received for consideration on wellbeing grounds.

Of these, 263 were recommended for acceptance and 952 for decline.

Common factors in applications recommended for acceptance included:

- Professional confirmation of mental health or diagnoses indicating that the child's best interest may be served at a school other than their PEA school.
- Significant, documented bullying or safety concerns suggesting a fresh start may be in the child's best interest.
- Documented evidence proving continuity and stability at key transition points critical for wellbeing.
- Complex family/social circumstances (e.g. care arrangements, trauma, refugee status) indicating that the child's best interest may lie at a school other than their PEA school.
- Documented evidence a child's particular physical or sensory environment issues mean the child's best interest may lie at a school other than their PEA school.

Common factors in recommending applications be declined include:

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- Local schools can support wellbeing needs.
- Convenience, curriculum preferences, family history, and friendships are not considered unless there are other well-documented factors involved.
- Professional letters lacked evidence that local school was unsuitable.
- Transition concerns acknowledged but manageable.
- Safety/bullying concerns addressed through school processes.
- Shared zone families guaranteed a PEA school, not necessarily preferred school.

Approved for circulation to the Standing Committee on Social Policy

Signature:

A handwritten signature in blue ink, consisting of a large, stylized 'S' followed by a horizontal line and a loop.

Date: 10/12/25

By the Minister for Education and Early Childhood, Yvette Berry MLA