

Jessica Bennett

From: Sarah Lovell <Sarah.Lovell@parliament.tas.gov.au>
Sent: Monday, 14 July 2025 5:11 PM
To: Jessica Bennett
Subject: Correspondence from Tasmanian Labor

Importance: High

Dear Jessica,

Thank you for writing to Tasmanian Labor with TASSO's priorities for the State Election and public education.

A Dean Winter Labor Government is committed to building a stronger, fairer education system that supports children from early learning through to life beyond school.

A Labor Government will reinstate the Parliamentary Inquiry into Discrimination and Bullying in Schools, so that the Inquiry can complete its work and produce its report and recommendations. The Inquiry was chaired by Labor Deputy Leader Anita Dow MP, and we are committed to ensuring that this work can be completed in a new Parliament.

Labor strongly supports the role of families in learning and will continue to prioritise additional Child and Family Learning Centres to be constructed in those areas already identified, to foster continued early engagement with families in their child's learning. **Labor is committed to working with families and schools to explore other ways for family engagement to be enhanced in the student learning journey.**

Labor recognises that allied health services in schools have been chronically under-resourced by the Liberal Government, in the face of rising demand, and that this has contributed to deteriorating educational outcomes and student wellbeing.

In response to questions I asked as Labor's Shadow Minister for Education and Early Years, during Budget Estimates hearings in 2024, the Minister for Education revealed that students were waiting, on average, 250 days for assessment by a school psychologist, and 198 days for intervention, with 2217 students on the waiting list at the end of March 2024. The waitlist for speech pathology for the same period was 179 days on average, with 598 students on the waitlist.

This is a significant problem that requires a long term plan, and Labor is committed to developing a plan with allied health professionals and schools to increase the number of permanent, directly employed allied health professionals.

In the short term, to ensure all students are happy, resilient, and ready to learn Labor will invest \$10 million in a two-year **Mental Health and Wellbeing Menu** pilot for Tasmanian Government schools. All public schools from kinder to year 12 will be allocated funding to invest in optional programs and resources that have been pre-approved for inclusion on the Menu. This will allow schools to deliver tailored mental health and wellbeing support programs for students, that meet the needs and capacity of their school community, while being assured that the available programs and resources are evidence based, and appropriate for delivery in schools.

This commitment will provide an immediate boost in funding while longer-term action is taken to address the need for more allied health support in schools.

Labor commits to de-politicising expenditure on infrastructure and maintenance in public schools, ensuring it is needs-based, transparent and strategically aligned with ensuring effective learning environments.

After 11 years of the Liberals, Tasmania continues to deliver poor educational outcomes, with below average retention and completion rates. Data now shows that the extension of Year 11 and 12 into high schools around the state is not delivering the intended outcome in addressing the low number of students continuing their school-based education beyond Year 10. Tasmania continues to have one of the lowest retention rates from Year 10 to Year 12 in the country.

A Labor Government will ensure every student has choices beyond Year 10 that lead to either further education, vocational training or meaningful employment opportunities, and empowering students with the knowledge and skills they need to participate in the workforce.

Labor will establish local roundtables across Tasmania, bringing together schools (including students), community leaders, local industry representatives, the University of Tasmania and TAFE. These roundtables will provide a collaborative forum to identify and design tailored educational pathways beyond Year 10 that better reflect the unique needs, strengths, and opportunities of each community.

By integrating local knowledge with educational expertise, a Dean Winter Labor Government will create meaningful, flexible options that connect students to further study, vocational training, and employment.

The roundtables will:

- Identify the post-Year 10 education, training and employment pathways required beyond Year 10
- Connect local students with local workforce opportunities
- Involve the broader community and local employers in actively supporting young people
- Consider what support structures are needed
- Address barriers like transport and mentoring

Labor recognises that inadequate, unreliable or expensive transport is a barrier for children and young people in attendance at school. **A Labor Government will review student transport**, with a view to developing an action plan to ensure all public school students are able to access reliable transport to school.

In addition to these specific issues, Labor has developed an education policy package, which is available on the Tasmanian Labor website. **A Fresh Start for Tasmanian Education** focuses on three core priorities: student wellbeing, supported educational pathways, and better access to long day care and outside school hours care for families. I encourage you to read more about our policy package online.

[Click HERE to find more of our policies to deliver a Fresh Start for Education](#)

After over a decade of inaction, Tasmania needs a government that listens, acts, and delivers. Under Dean Winter's leadership, Tasmanian Labor is committed to putting students and families first. Together, we can give every child the support and opportunity they need to thrive. After 11 years of the Liberals, it's time for a Fresh Start for Education under a Dean Winter Labor Government.

Yours sincerely,

Sarah Lovell

Member for Rumney

Shadow Minister for Education and the Early Years

Shadow Minister for Children and Youth

Leader of Opposition Business in the Legislative Council

P: (03) 6212 2330

M: 0499 550 234

E: sarah.lovell@parliament.tas.gov.au

Labor Tasmanian