

**7. BELFAST SCHOOL
- BEHAVIOUR RECOVERY PROGRAMME**

Officer responsible Community Advocate	Author Barbara Lindsay, Community Secretary
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The purpose of this report is to convey a request for Board support from the Belfast School.

A letter has been received from the Principal of the Belfast School, as follows:

“This year Belfast School has begun an innovative Behaviour Recovery Programme for children with behavioural and learning difficulties.

The need to begin this programme was highlighted for us last year when we had some real behaviour difficulties which resulted in ten suspensions, seven of the definite nature and three indefinite’s. However, two of our major concerns were the effect this behaviour was having on the teaching and learning of the large majority of pupils. Secondly these pupils were excluding themselves from any learning at all and were at risk.

Other factors that concerned us were the stress being placed on Classroom teachers and parents worrying about the behaviour and the loss of some pupils as a result.

A Parent meeting was called at which 170 Parents turned up. It soon become apparent that Parents, Staff and the Board of Trustees wanted some positive action taken to arrest the downward spiral that we were in. In discussion with the Specialists

Education Services the Behaviour Recovery Programme was developed (copy attached – under separate cover to Board members).

An application was sent to the Ministry of Education for funds from their new Innovations Funding Pool of \$1.2 million they set up for programmes in schools to meet the needs of children at risk. They were prepared to fund between 10-20 programmes nationally. Unfortunately we were one of 380 applications that didn’t get to the second round – 50 schools did. The amount of applications certainly demonstrate the need for such programmes.

The school has made a large commitment to this programme, this involves two full time teachers, two classrooms, staff training, including sending one teacher to Sydney for a Conference on Boys, (copy of Programme attached – for Board members only) and materials to set the programme up to run for twelve months.

Unfortunately over the Christmas Holidays we had a net loss of 51 children due to transfers out of the district, leaving our school for other schools, eg Intermediate and some leaving because we wanted to place their child in the programme and they not wanting that to happen.

As a result of the roll drop we are now in a position that we will lose one, probably two teachers as well as \$17,000.00 from our Operational Grant.

This has placed our Behaviour Recovery Programme in jeopardy. The teacher we would lose has to cease their duties on May 21 because they are a Long Term Reliever. The school had to make a decision what to do with that position. The options available were:

- (a) Pay for the Long Term Reliever to continue in her position until the end of the year.*
- (b) Remove one of the teachers from the Behaviour Recovery Programme and put them in the classroom to replace the Long Term Reliever when they left and abandon the Behaviour Recovery Programme.*
- (c) Place a Teacher Aide into the programme to support the one remaining teacher in the Behaviour Recovery Programme.*

After consultation with the Staff the Board of Trustees has elected to pay for the Reliever for the rest of the year. They reached this decision because they felt committed to the programme they had promised the Parents would run for twelve months, and the very early results to date are very positive.

The main factor however, was the need to have two trained teachers running the programme as it has been set up and this precluded using a Teacher Aide.

This comes to the reason for this letter, we are requesting from the Community Board some money to support the continuation of this programme.

The costings to do so are as follows:

<i>Teacher</i>	<i>\$22,000.00</i>
<i>Evaluation</i>	<i>\$1,500.00</i>
<i>Materials</i>	<i>1,000.00</i>
	<i><u>\$24,500.00</u></i>

The Evaluation cost is for 20 hours from the Specialists Education Services BEST Team.”

For discussion