



The Hon James Merlino MP

Deputy Premier
Minister for Education
Minister for Emergency Services

1 Treasury Place
Melbourne Victoria 3002
Telephone: +613 9651 1222

COR 025439

Mr Stephen Crossley
Principal
Portland Bay School
PO Box 317
Portland 3305

Dear Mr Crossley

Thanks you for your email regarding the draft Portland Bay School transport review.

The Department of Education and Training's Students with Disabilities Transport Program (SDTP) provides daily transport assistance to over 9,000 students attending specialist schools in Victoria. Further information regarding the Students with Disabilities Transport Program Policy and Procedures can be found at: www.education.vic.gov.au/travellingtoschool

I am advised that the Department's Student Transport Unit (STU) undertook a review of Portland Bay School's Self-Managed Bus (SMB) services earlier this year, following a request by the school for one of the SMBs to be replaced. The purpose of the review was to consider the administration, efficiency and viability of the transport services.

The draft review report was provided to Portland Bay School on 12 August 2016 with an invitation to provide feedback on the findings and proposed service options. I understand that representatives of the STU met with yourself and members of the Portland Bay School community on 8 November 2016 to discuss the draft review, and the implications of introducing the proposed service options.

I am informed that the meeting was beneficial for your school community to gain an improved understanding of the correct application of the Students with Disabilities Transport Program Policy and Procedures, and for the STU to understand any possible impact to the school community from the proposed service rationalisation.

Following the meeting and to ensure that all existing students are provided with continued transport I have asked the STU to reconsider the proposed service options and ensure that a third bus is provided at the Portland Bay School for 2017 and beyond.

The STU will work with your school to understand the most suitable service option, which is either a replacement SMB or a larger contracted service that will ensure growth demand is met beyond 2017.

If you would like further information, you may Ms Suzanna Emison, Manager, Student Transport Unit, Department of Education and Training, on 9637 2200 or by email: student.transport@edumail.vic.gov.au.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to be 'J. Merlino'.

18.11.16

The Hon James Merlino MP
Deputy Premier
Minister for Education
Minister for Emergency Services