



**TO: SCHOOL PRINCIPALS
SCHOOL BUSINESS MANAGERS**

19 August 2013

STAFFING STRUCTURES

With the outcome of recurrent funding for schools becoming a little clearer some schools are realising that for the next few years pressure will be on school fees in order to make up any “real” reduction in funding from governments. Remember that, over the past decade, schools experienced realistic increases from Commonwealth recurrent funding, using AGSRC as the index whilst State funding fluctuated and generally bumped along just above the bottom. The hit last year from the State did impact some schools significantly.

One of the areas that has experienced upward pressure on costs over the past five to six years, even longer, is the increase in academic support and non-academic staffing.

Whilst ever tuition fees and recurrent funding were increasing at realistic levels schools seemed to be able to absorb the upward movement in these costs.

A number of schools are asking me to look at their levels of academic support and non-academic staffing in their schools to see if they have an appropriate structure in place and to see if any efficiencies can be made.

It would be easy to simply line up a school’s data and benchmark the average costs per student against average financial data (ASBA/Somerset Survey data) and benchmark ranges (BGA and EFS data) then draw conclusions about any overspend or underspend in the different categories. The danger in doing this is that you may end up judging components of your staffing that are critical to your education delivery by simply equating them to dollar values.

I have always contended that average financial data and benchmark data is a useful tool to use when looking at comparing a school’s operation against a similar grouping of other schools, but an interpretation of the data is essential in order to get a meaningful analysis and outcome. Many schools have similar curriculums but different methods of delivery. This can influence average per student financial analysis.

If I can assist you to look at your staffing structure and offer you advice, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely

**PETER J HOLLETT
DIRECTOR**