

8 April 2009

Dear Parents,

Currently on display at Singleton Council is a document which is of great concern to our school community. The 'Singleton Town Centre Traffic and Parking Strategy Investigations' is a contract report by ARRB group. The report was commissioned by council and is open for community comment until May 8, 2009. This report has far reaching implications for our school and the welfare of our students.

The report recommends that:

- Hunter Street becomes a major route for Heavy Vehicle Traffic travelling between the New England Highway and John Street.
- This route will be well signed and traffic deliberately directed past our school
- Further parking restrictions be placed in Hunter Street
- Parking restrictions be placed in Church Street
- Elizabeth Street become one way westbound (towards John Street)
- Parking restrictions be placed in Elizabeth Street
- Singleton Public School could be asked to consider modifying pick up and drop off arrangements for students &
- Singleton Public School could be asked to consider staggered arrival times of private cars and buses in Elizabeth Street.

The Singleton Public School Council feels strongly that these proposals are not acceptable for our school's future. We have grave concerns for the safety of our children with heavy vehicle traffic increasing in Hunter Street. Our current fencing arrangement is inadequate to ensure the safety of our students under these conditions. The existing crossing in Hunter Street will not be sufficient protection at any time of day, let alone during peak crossing times. Our students will be in classrooms that are not equipped for the increase in noise level that will result from this plan, therefore making our classrooms less effective for teaching and learning. Our school buildings on Hunter Street are set too close to the road and were built in 1858, they were not built to withstand the stress that will be placed upon them by the constant flow of heavy vehicles that will result from this plan.

Added to all of this is the reduction of on street parking facilities around our school. With less parking in Hunter, Church and Elizabeth Streets pick up times at the school will be unmanageable. These streets already overflow with parents, buses and other commercial vehicles at 3:10pm, placing further restrictions here would make picking up children a nightmare in safety, particularly for parents with toddlers. With less parking during the day, our school becomes less inviting to parent volunteers and other community helpers, as well as prospective staff. These factors diminish the quality of education that we are able to provide and threaten to reduce our student enrolments.

What are we doing about it? The School Council has met with Mr Chris Martin from Council and discussed our issues. We are organising letterbox drops to local residents for their support. We will be speaking with the Argus in order to have our concerns raised in the wider community. Letters will be written to Singleton Council from the School Council, the P & C and from the staff. We will address the Singleton Council meeting and other public forums when this is tabled for discussion.

What can you do? *Look at the report.* It can be found at www.singleton.nsw.gov.au under 'Latest news' it is the 5th item listed. *Send a letter or e-mail* (that is also addressed to the Councillors) to the address on the website or *simply sign the letter that we have pre-written and attached* with this newsletter and return it to the school before May 5th for us to post, or post it to council before May 8th. This letter is also available on the school website. *Keep an eye on future newsletters for updates.*

Yours sincerely,

Singleton Public School
School Council Members