

DOVETON CLUSTER OF SCHOOLS



30th September, 1986.

Most Rev. Sir Thomas Francis Little,
Archbishop of Melbourne,
EAST MELBOURNE. 3002.

My Lord Bishop,

Since 1974 there has been outstanding co-operation in the Doveton Community between the schools and agencies that has enabled the establishment of programs and friendships that have been geared to meet the needs of all children, all parents and all members of this community. Some of the programs here have received acclaim internationally and Australia-wide and all have been based on the common philosophy of christian concern for one another and the needs of the community. However, with the resignation of Graeme Sleeman as Principal of Holy Family and the resultant furore that this is causing with parents at Holy Family, the threatened mass resignation of staff and parents talking of withdrawing their children from the school if the resignation is accepted - a very important aspect of the total life of the community is being threatened.

Over 12 years the Cluster has earned the right by virtue of its total involvement in all aspects of this community to speak on behalf of the community and there is unequivocal support for the parents, staff and children at Holy Family by the total Doveton community. The programs at the school are strongly supported and the total community believe that if this resignation of Graeme Sleeman is accepted that a major injustice will be inflicted upon him, the parents, the parish and the school.

For 3 years the community has watched and at times been involved in the problems associated with the school by the placement at the school of a Parish Priest who appears to totally oppose all the areas of community development and involvement the school has been able to achieve.

Representations have been made to Catholic Education Office in 1985 and early '86 concerning these matters and it is common knowledge locally that representatives have been made by parents at the school to the appropriate authorities also over a number of issues.

Never before in my 14 years in Doveton have I known such total community anger at the reasons for this resignation. As Chairman of the Cluster I believe that this situation needs immediate resolution before it destroys relationships that have taken years to build.

It is our desire that a deputation from the Cluster Executive be received by you as soon as possible to outline in more detail our concerns and our perspectives on this most serious situation that has developed here.

I await your reply with anticipation,

Yours faithfully,

M. G. Walker, Chairman.

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