

TIWI COLLEGE



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The Secretary
Senate Standing Committee
Environment, communications and the Arts
The Department of the Senate
Parliament House
CANBERRA ACT 2600

Dear Secretary

Tiwi College is a remote indigenous day school for Transition to Year 6 students and a residential campus for Years 7 to 12. It was established in 2008 under the governance of the Tiwi Education Board, comprising 8 Tiwi men.

Tiwi College is a direct response to both the disillusionment in educational outcomes on the Tiwi Islands together with a desire on the part of the Tiwi to take more responsibility for the education of their own people. The College draws students from virtually every community and homeland centre across the Islands.

Put simply, the College is a journey, with the final destination being sustainable employment. Without the prospect of employment, the College loses enormous purpose for the students and families that support it.

Not only did the existence of the Forestry Industry assist in the establishment of the College but the College relies upon the sustainable Forestry Industry on Melville Island to provide employment prospects for many of its future graduates who will remain on the Islands. This industry is established and visible with plots surrounding the College.

The impact of not having this Industry, which exists on the same Island as the College, is that much of the vision for its students would be undermined.

Our students need to capitalize on every opportunity to find purpose in their education, i.e. they need to catch the concept of employment; they need to see it in their front yard and on their horizon. The Forestry Industry also provides opportunities for vocational education within an engaging partnership with an established industry.

Tiwi College is built upon the precept that in order for a remote indigenous school to be functional, it must exist within a functional environment, away from the potential strife of the Tiwi Communities. Tiwi College has also been built upon the precept that there is sustainable employment during and at the end of the journey.

The impact upon Tiwi College, of both continuing OR discontinuing the Forestry industry is life changing for our students.

Regards

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