

From: Minister Rankine
Sent: Thursday, 2 October 2014 3:33 PM
Subject: National School Chaplaincy Programme

Dear Staff

I am writing to inform you about the National School Chaplaincy Programme.

I have written to the Federal Government advising that the South Australian Government will agree to administer the programme, however, legal advice suggests that it may not be possible to require schools to discriminate in their employment selections based on religious backgrounds. Ultimately, it will be a decision that schools make as they have autonomy of decision making in this area.

The State Government has consistently held the view that where a school would like to engage the services of a Christian Pastoral Support Worker, they should be supported to do so. Where a school would prefer a secular social worker, that should also be supported. This is about giving all students the support their schools believe they need. The South Australian Government will continue to support schools to make this choice.

You should know that the Federal Government is significantly cutting this programme – with around 110 less positions available in South Australia. This cut will include Christian Pastoral Support Workers, so not all schools that have workers now will continue to do so.

The department will now commence work on how best to implement the new National School Chaplaincy Programme and further information will be available on this later in the year.

I appreciate your support and patience while negotiations around this programme remained uncertain.

Hon Jennifer Rankine MP

Minister for Education and Child Development

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