



WESTERN AUSTRALIAN  
COLLEGE of AGRICULTURE  
CUNDERDIN

267 Baxter Road Cunderdin  
PO Box 132 Cunderdin WA 6407

Telephone (08) 9635 1302  
Facsimile (08) 9635 1334

Email Cunderdin.AC@det.wa.edu.au  
Web: cunderdinag.wa.edu.au

ABN 80 523 778 131

## INDEPENDENT PUBLIC SCHOOLS PROCESS 2012 BRIEFING NOTE

In becoming an Independent Public School (IPS), the Department of Education has considered the impact on FIVE main school areas including:

1. Curriculum;
2. Student Support Services;
3. Human Resources;
4. Financial Management; and
5. Building Facilities

There is no forced requirement for an IPS to take on ALL changes identified within these areas. Each school can determine which areas of independence they can adopt and implement, and these areas can be reviewed yearly. As an IPS the only requirement is that the College will take on a one- line budget for staffing.

Before the College can apply to become an IPS, we must ensure we have support from our staff, our parents, our Farm Advisory Committee and our College Council.

***Over the coming weeks, we will be seeking your input, comments and questions about this process.***

Outlined below are some of the anticipated changes that will occur once the College becomes an IPS. Also added (in italics) is how we believe the IPS process will impact specifically on the College.

\*\*\*\*\*

### 1. Human resources

#### Staff Management

- Authority to determine the staffing profile (Administrative staff, teaching staff and school support staff).
- Authority to approve leave decisions (including leave without pay) and responsibility to backfill associated vacancies with central support provided where required.
- Flexibility to manage relief costs for staff leave in the one-line budget.

## **Recruitment and Selection**

- Authority to select and appoint all staff, including fixed term staff and the management of expressions of interest.
- Exemption from central placement processes including the central transfer process and placement of redeployees. This does not preclude redeployees from applying for positions advertised in Independent Public Schools.
- Following a transition period, a redeployee generated by an Independent Public School's decision to change its staffing profile is the responsibility of that school to manage and fund until a suitable placement in another location is arranged. Central office will support an Independent Public School to place redeployees generated due to a significant decline in enrolments.
- Facilities to make an 'early offer' of placement to student teachers and school psychologists on their final year practicum.

## **Payroll**

- Payment of staff salaries remains with ETSSC, however a school has the flexibility to approve and enter electronically (HRMIS) information on commencement, termination, leave, variation and movement of staff.

*As an IPS, the College will be able to manage its \$2.5 - \$3 million staffing budget 'in-house', which will allow for any savings made in staff allocations to be put directly back into student and teaching resources.*

*The College will also be in a position to manage most staffing administration 'in-house'.*

*There will be no impact on employee levels, employee salaries, and the College will continue to be bound by the Education Act and Workplace Relations Act (1996).*

## **2. Curriculum**

*There will be no change to the College's Curriculum. We will remain a Registered Training Organisation (RTO) and will retain all Curriculum Council courses of study.*

## **3. Student Support**

- The College will have the flexibility to appoint or contract student support staff including, but not limited to, school psychologists, education assistants, speech pathologists and social workers.

*Funding is currently available for the College to employ a school psychologist, but given the lack of available staff for this position in rural WA, the College does not currently utilise this funding. As an IPS, the College will be able to use the funding to employ a school chaplain, or another student support staff member.*

## **4. Financial Management**

- Authority to manage staff and contingencies through a one-line budget.

- Flexibility to determine accounting and financial procedures and practices provided they meet compliance and reporting requirement of financial legislative frameworks such as treasurer's Instructions.
- Flexibility to establish a wider range of reserve accounts (such as Salary, Building and Facilities)
- Authority for the principal to award contracts and dispose of assets with values up to \$150,000; and exercise or decline contract extensions and approve price variations up to \$150,000 for contracts specifically awarded for the school.
- For future Department contracts, potential for the principal to choose to exclude the school from using whole of Department contracts based on value for money decision.

*Set-up funding will be made available to assist the College with the establishment of internal administration and financial management systems.*

*The establishment of a 'reserve account' will enable the College to have greater financial independence in regard to staffing, building and the upgrade of College facilities.*

## **5. Building and facilities**

*The College believes, given its remote location, that building maintenance; the management of faults, repairs and breakdowns; and the management of property service contracts (e.g. lawn mowing, cleaning hygiene etc) would be best left within the administrative network of the Department of Education. The College would take advantage of the ability, as an IPS, to submit requests directly to central office for capital works projects; thereby fast tracking capital works projects.*