

# Save our Seton College (SOS) Media Release

Wednesday 25<sup>th</sup> November 2020

## **INEQUALITY IN BRISBANE'S EDUCATION SYSTEM AS SCHOOL FOR KIDS WITH DIFFERENT NEEDS IS SET FOR CLOSURE**

Brisbane Catholic Education (BCE) emailed parents of Seton College to inform them that the school will be closing. BCE explained their decision to close was based on “evidence which tells us children achieve better in an inclusive educational setting.” This statement has angered parents as most of them have ended up at Seton College because their child was not offered a suitable education within the mainstream system and often felt isolated rather than included.

The SAVE OUR SETON COLLEGE (SOS) group have questioned why a school that does so well offering *additional* support to students is closing in order to be in line with an inclusive education system, and yet nearby schools of excellence are allowed to continue to use restrictive enrolment practises for high achievers. Both Brisbane State High School and Kelvin Grove State College currently only accept out-of-catchment enrolments under one of three excellence programs – either sporting, cultural or academic excellence. Mansfield State High School is similar, only accepting students through either the music, technology or French excellence programs. There are many more schools in Queensland with similar enrolment conditions. The number of schools offering an International Baccalaureate (IB) program is increasing, with a new facility set to open in Spring Hill in 2021. IB Diploma programs are academically focussed, with the emphasis being on acceptance into universities all over the world. It is often seen as a pursuit for only the academically gifted, with IB providers often spruiking the need for children to be surrounded by “like minded peers”, which seems to go against the research suggesting “inclusiveness promotes a more productive environment”.

It has left Seton College community members wondering why their college can't be accommodated for, yet it seems the schools for the 'gifted and talented' can. One SOS member commented that “if the parents of students in baccalaureate programs were treated like Seton families and told their children now had to attend a mainstream school because IB schools are no longer considered inclusive, there would be an uproar. So why is Seton any different? Our kids are exactly where they need to be, to get the education they deserve.”

The SOS group are passionate about finding out the truth about what is happening at Seton College. This is a very sensitive topic, and we are taking on a huge challenge. However, all we want is the truth from BCE and real answers for our vulnerable children. Pushing them in to mainstream school takes away their right of having a truly supported, fully inclusive education with real work experience and life skills ready to step into life beyond school.

Please share our story. Seton College is a small community, and we need the public to get behind our campaign. We are asking for pledges of support on our website [www.saveourseton.org](http://www.saveourseton.org) to help keep Seton College open for current families, and all the families who will need a school like Seton in the future.

For further media information contact: [saveourseton@gmail.com](mailto:saveourseton@gmail.com)