

# Save Our Seton College (SOS) Inc.

## Media Release

December 7<sup>th</sup>, 2020

### **FIGHT TO SAVE SETON COLLEGE FAR FROM OVER**

This morning, Luke Hinschen, President of Save Our Seton College (SOS) Inc. met with Mike Bennet from 101FM to discuss the updates to the Save our Seton (SOS) campaign, accompanied by prospective parent Bec.

Bec has a son currently enrolled in a mainstream school in year six. With a diagnosis of Autism, ADHD and anxiety, Bec thought she had found the perfect high school for her son, when he was accepted into Seton College with the 2021, year seven intake. In a shocking move, Brisbane Catholic Education (BCE) notified Bec late this year that Seton College would no longer be accepting enrolments for 2021 or beyond, leaving her just a few short months to find a suitable educational option for her son. “He doesn’t have an intellectual impairment, so he doesn’t qualify for a special education school. He qualifies for mainstream schooling, with support. Seton College bridges the huge gap between mainstream and special ed and offers a supportive environment that will allow my son to flourish. In the wrong environment he becomes completely non-verbal.” When asked if she had managed to find an alternative for her son’s high schooling, Bec said that the doors just kept slamming shut. “When the schools see his substantial needs, he’s just automatically rejected.”

The idea of schools ‘gate keeping’ is not uncommon, at least not amongst the parents of Seton College. There are many parents who tell of their experience where they were given the “we can’t cater for your child’s needs” speech and were sent away to look for an alternative schooling option. At the only interaction BCE has offered parents since news broke of the closure in July, BCE insisted this was not part of their policy, and assured parents they would be looking into these claims of gate keeping. To date there has been no further correspondence on this matter.

Luke Hinschen called BCE’s claims of dwindling enrolments at Seton College “absolute nonsense. They turned away over 60 students for this year’s cohort alone. They’ve also stopped ANY future enrolments.” The matter of enrolments is a smack in the face for parents, as BCE’s commitment to remaining open until 2024 is totally reliant on enrolment numbers not dropping below a certain figure prior to then (a figure which has never been disclosed.) It appears that BCE is orchestrating the decline in enrolments by enrolling less than 25% of applicants for year seven 2020, and, furthermore, stopping **ALL** and **ANY** future enrolments, regardless of year level. It appears BCE are winding things up much quicker than originally anticipated, with an exodus of teaching and support staff and the shocking redundancy of the school’s IT manager, who was recently applauded for his work in developing an effective online classroom platform during the COVID shutdown. BCE said they will now outsource the school’s IT department, a move which sounds highly inefficient and costly to the Seton community.

When Mike Bennet asked Luke Hinschen what people can do to support the campaign, Luke was quick to encourage people to follow the newly public Facebook page at [www.facebook.com/saveourseton](https://www.facebook.com/saveourseton) and the website [www.saveourseton.org](http://www.saveourseton.org) for updates. The website offers a link to the petition which currently sits at over 6,500 signatures and members of the public can pledge their support directly on the website’s home page. “Our goal is to get an injunction to stop the 2024 closure,” Luke said.

For further media information contact:

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