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## **Damla College Takes Over Ferndale Primary School Site**

Dr Mike Nahan, the Member for Riverton and Steve Irons, the Federal Member for Swan have today congratulated Damla College on its new permanent location at the recently vacant Ferndale Primary School.

Dr Nahan and Mr Irons have been lobbying for some time to secure a permanent site for Damla College and said that the school will now be able to continue serving families in the Canning region with classes from kindergarten to Year 10.

"Damla College has a very good reputation as a private, low-cost secular school that caters for students from a variety of ethnic backgrounds. I am very pleased to see that the excellent facilities at the Ferndale Primary School site will continue to be fully utilised," said Dr Nahan.

Mr Irons said that Lynwood, Langford and Ferndale families deserved access to good schools and that Damla would be an asset to the region.

"During its time at the Kinlock Primary School site, Damla became a very popular school in the local community. I am pleased that it will now be able to continue its good work in the local area. This is a good decision for students, parents and the whole community".

Dr Nahan said that as a result of a fall in student numbers, the State Government had decided to amalgamate students from the Ferndale, Kinlock and Lynwood Primary Schools into one new school.

"The State Government recently completed the construction of the purpose-built Bannister Creek Primary School where the students from these schools have been relocated," said Dr Nahan.

"There were plans to convert the residual land from two of these schools into high density public housing estates. However, the local community was uncomfortable with this proposal, in part because the Ferndale Primary School was in very good condition."

"To satisfy Damla's need for a facility and to address the wishes of the Ferndale community to keep the site as a functioning school, the Barnett Government sold the Ferndale Primary School site to Damla College."

This process was facilitated through the Minister for Housing, Troy Buswell and the lobbying efforts of the Member for Riverton and the Federal Member for Swan who have been working together to help Damla achieve its goals.

Mr Irons said that he was first made aware of the lease situation at Damla College after visiting the school last year to open an Investing in Our Schools Program.

"After learning that the school's future was in doubt and hearing Ferndale resident's opposition to a high density public housing development, I met with both the Education and Housing Ministers to try and find a site for the school," he said.

"I would like to thank the Principal for his patience and diligence and I am sure he will continue to ensure his school is a model part of the community at the new Ferndale site".

Dr Nahan said he was able to facilitate meetings between the college, the Minister for Education and the Minister for Housing, and assisted the school with the negotiations over the purchase of the site.

"It is an extremely good outcome and the perfect alternative use of the existing facilities. I am also pleased to see that although the majority of the land at the Ferndale Primary School site will be utilised by Damla College, a small portion of it, together with the land from the old Kinlock Primary School site will be developed to help ease the strong demand for public housing in this area," Dr Nahan said.

"I join with Steve Irons in wishing the school and its students every success for the future."

For further comment, contact Dr Mike Nahan 0412 911 969 or Steve Irons' office on 0439 412 855