

# BRISBANE STATE HIGH SCHOOL

School Council, Parents & Citizens, and Past Students  
Association

JOINT RESPONSE

TO THE

PROPOSED CATCHMENT FOR THE INNER CITY SOUTH  
STATE SECONDARY COLLEGE (ICSSSC)

This document has been prepared by the BSHS P&C and the BSHS School Council in consultation with the School Community and the Past students' Association.

# 1 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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BSHS is a secondary school that has historically combined a mixture of local catchment enrolment and meritorious entry for high performing children living outside the catchment. If you are a local who lives, has been educated and participates in the existing catchment communities of greater South Brisbane or West End, your entry has been guaranteed. If the school has additional places then it enrolls additional students based on an objective and fair selection according to sporting, academic or arts merit.

## 1.1 UNUSUAL ENROLLMENTS ARE A PROBLEM THAT NEED A SOLUTION.

Unfortunately, there is a loophole and that loophole is causing significant enrolment pressure at the school. The current legislative scheme allows people who can afford to do so, to pretend to be local residents for the purposes of enrolment. These so-called unusual enrolments are growing rapidly and will shortly endanger both legitimate enrolment categories.

## 1.2 THIS PROBLEM IS GROWING - UNUSUAL ENROLMENTS ARE PREDICTED TO DOMINATE THE BSHS COMMUNITY IN 2022.

The BSHS catchment population is slowly increasing but enrolments from students claiming to live in catchment is increasing at many times that rate. According to the Australian Bureau of Statistics the population of children aged 10-19 living in the catchment of BSHS increased by just 3% between 2011 and 2015 (**0.6% a year growth**), however local catchment enrolments increased by **18.2% per annum**.

Current catchment enrolment demand at BSHS is being driven by the desire to attend BSHS rather than by increases in local population. Unusual enrollments are predicted to dominate the BSHS community in 2022. It is enabled by exploitation of the local entry criteria by families who either don't live in catchment or who intend to leave after their children are enrolled.

Soon, a person who has lived across the road from BSHS all their lives will have no greater right to attend their local High School than someone who only yesterday purchased a mailing address in catchment and will sell it after the acceptance of their enrolment application. If something is not done to address this method of entry, the unrestricted "catchment shopping" enabled and supported by the current legislation is likely to continue and exaggerate further the enrolment issues faced by BSHS and many other public schools (including eventually the ICSSSC).

## 1.3 THE ICSSSC IS NOT A SOLUTION TO THE ENROLMENT PROBLEM

BSHS wishes the new school every success and expect it to become a popular choice for families as its reputation builds but the BSHS unusual enrollments need to be fixed now. Reducing the catchment simply changes the movement within our catchment of unusual enrolments, while cutting ties with our traditional local families.

The net effect on enrolment pressure at State high will be negligible. Without a simple, enforceable front-end mechanism, the most likely scenario is that BSHS is overwhelmed by true local demand by 2024 after shedding its selected entry program some years earlier. This will destroy the State High that we know.

## 1.4 CHANGE IS REQUIRED NOW, AND MAY HAVE BENEFITS FOR THE ICSSSC AND OTHER HIGH SCHOOLS

The ICSSSC was presented as a solution for BSHS enrolment growth, but the current proposal cannot achieve that end. The only way that enrolment pressure can be relieved in the short term is to stop unusual enrolments at BSHS with a simple, front-end enforceable mechanism that maintains the school's commitment to local students and guarantees that out-of-catchment students go through a rigorous objective entry process.

BSHS advocated for the State Government to rectify this problem by allowing the school to accept only people who have genuine residency in the catchment and to pass the appropriate legislative measures by which that could be achieved. BSHS explicitly asked that the Government not reduce the size and positioning of the school's catchment as this would disadvantage genuine locals and have no effect whatsoever on unusual enrolments. The catchment could be the size of a handkerchief and we would have the same problem.

The school believes that the simple and affordable solution to this problem is to allow BSHS to implement the enrolment eligibility plan set out in detail below.

1. It is simple. BSHS wants to be able to manage its extraordinary demand with a mechanism that does not rely on having to question every local application about their residency.
2. It is front end. The school would like the simple mechanism to prevent the scale of "unusual" enrolment so that back-end measures are largely unnecessary.
3. It is enforceable.
4. It is long-lasting. Any solution must provide a long-term fix rather than a short-term delay which lasts just a year or two.

## 2 BSHS ENROLMENT PRESSURE

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The catchment population is slowly increasing but enrolments from students claiming to live in catchment is increasing at many times that rate. According to the Australian Bureau of Statistics the population of children aged 10-19 living in the catchment of BSHS increased by just 3% between 2011 and 2015 (**0.6% a year growth**), however local catchment enrolments increased by **18.2% per annum**.<sup>1</sup>

Therefore, current catchment enrolment demand at BSHS is being driven by the desire to attend BSHS rather than by increases in local population. It is enabled by exploitation of the local entry criteria by families who either don't live in catchment or who leave as soon as their children are enrolled.

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<sup>1</sup> Between 2012 and 2016

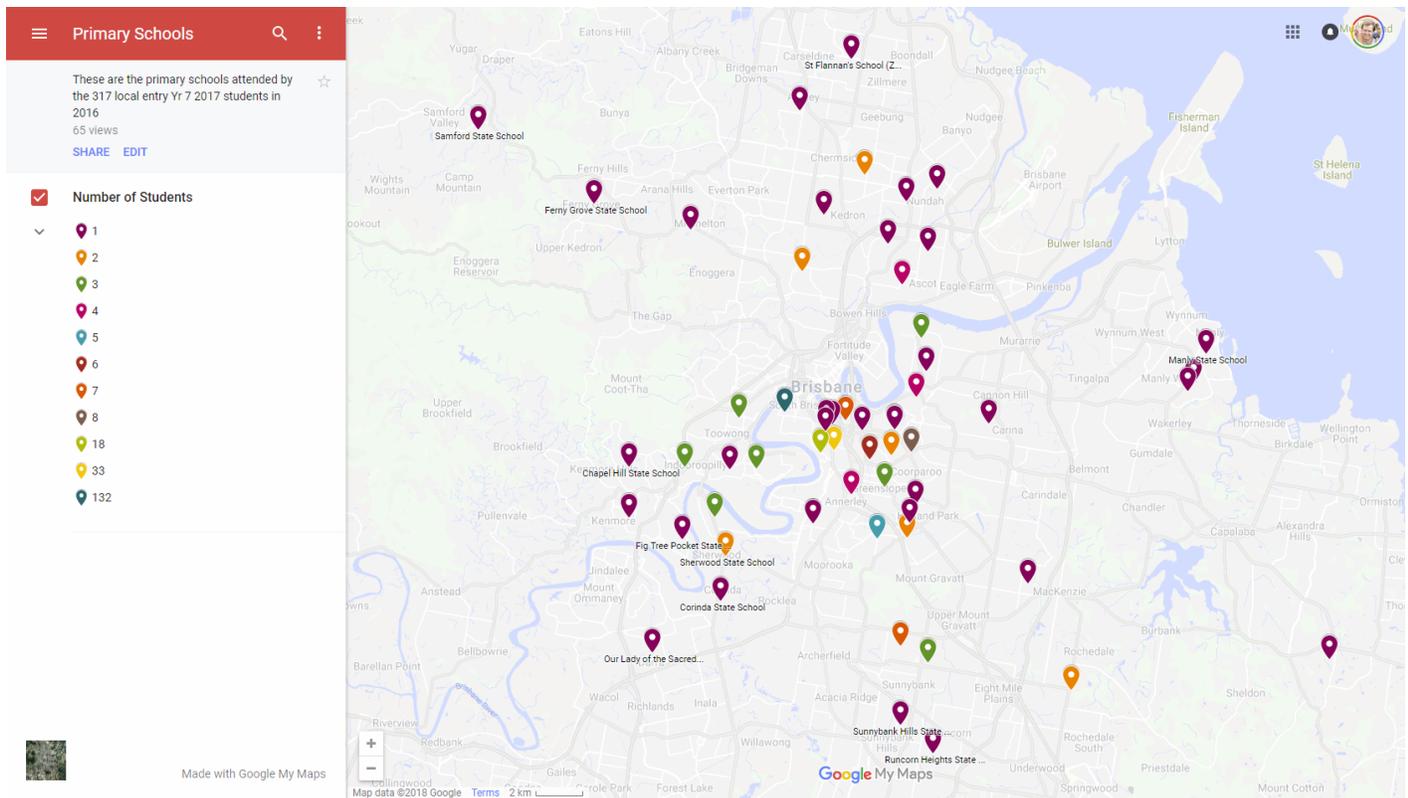


Figure 1 Primary Schools for students in the 2017 LOCAL INTAKE

Figure 1 shows the location of the primary school attended last year by 2017 **local** entry students. The colour codes indicate the number of **local** students who attended each school. All these “LOCAL” students who now attend BSHS attended a large number of primary schools most of which are well out of the BSHS’s catchment. While some of these would have lived in the BSHS catchment and attended primary school as out of catchment students, the additional information below indicates that that is unlikely to apply to many.

Figure 2 shows the current address of local (catchment entry) students enrolled at BSHS. The colour codes indicate the grade of the student living in that suburb. It is important to note that this data in Figure 2 only considers families who have informed the school that they have moved out of catchment. It is notable that many of the students have left the catchment as early as year 8: a clear indication that many were short-term catchment “residents”.

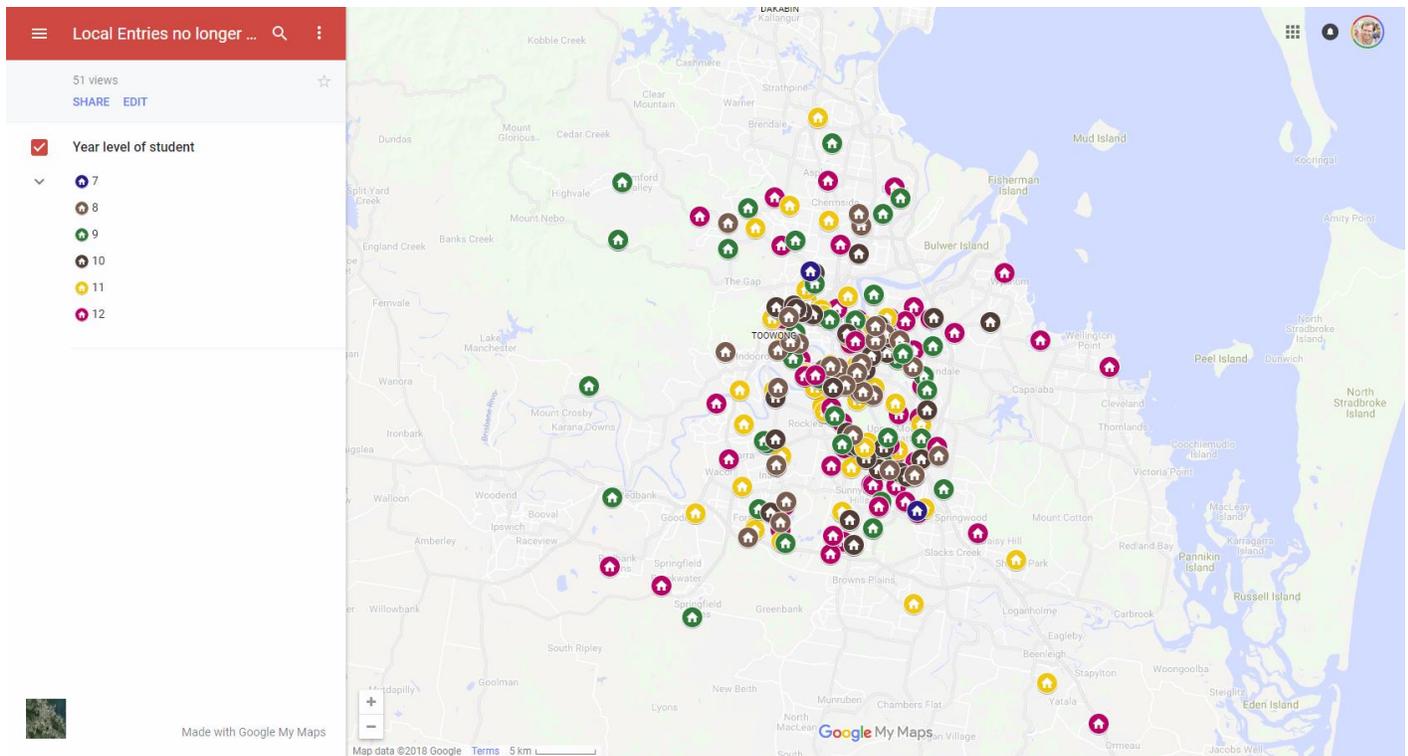


Figure 2 Local Entry students who no longer live in catchment

### 3 THE ICSSC CATCHMENT

The School believes that the ICSSC catchment outlined by the proposal is not a solution to the school's enrolment pressures.

The proposal to remove 25% of the land mass from the Dutton Park end of the catchment has never been supported by BSHS. This area represents well under 25% of the school's enrolment and an even lower percentage of projected growth according to Census and BCC population projections. The vast majority of that growth is predicted to occur in and around West End and South Brisbane, which will remain in the BSHS catchment under the Minister's proposal (see figure 3 below). The argument that the problem of BSHS's enrolment pressure is being caused by catchment growth urgently needs further consideration as the school's data suggests otherwise.

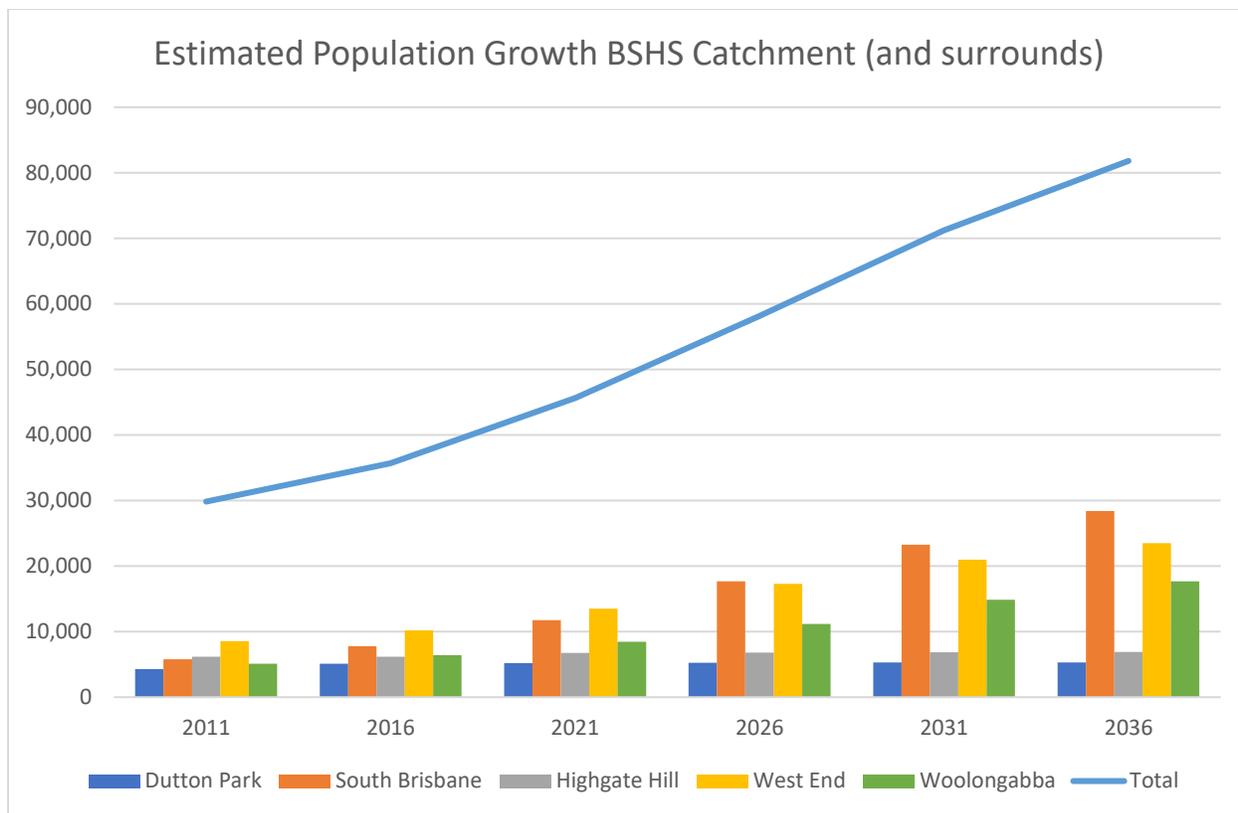


Figure 3 Estimated Population Growth in existing BSHS Catchment and surrounding suburbs (The two lowest growth areas within the existing catchment, Highgate Hill and Dutton Park, will fall within the new ICSSC Catchment and the area of predicted growth in Woolloongaba is outside the current BSHS Catchment)

The proposed reduction in the catchment will only cause heart-ache and concern for the formerly local residents who now find their houses are deemed “out of catchment”. People who temporarily move to the catchment will simply ensure they rent or buy within the new catchment boundaries.

## 4 IMMEDIATE NEEDS OF BSHS IN RELATION TO THIS MATTER

The BSHS community requests that the following solution be seriously considered by the Queensland Government. The school’s preference is implementation of an Enrolment Eligibility Plan (EEP). If the Government is not in favour of the school’s proposed solution, then the school suggests that any alternative solution satisfy the following criteria:

5. It is simple. BSHS wants to be able to manage its extraordinary demand with a mechanism that does not rely on having to question every local applicant about their residency. The school is concerned about the prospect of budgeting to employ more staff to assess (and perhaps undertake ongoing audits of) the current renting or ownership details of potential students. It is recognized that under such an arrangement, the notions of trust and community relationship building will be problematic.
6. It is front end. The school would like the simple mechanism to prevent the scale of “unusual” enrolment so that back-end measures are largely unnecessary.

7. It is enforceable. The current process severely limits the school's ability to manage enrolments. Where there is significant influx of enrolments and enrolments can come continuously, there is no hope of predicting the numbers of reserved place or which year level they will be in. Perversely, this means that schools can be forced over their enrolment limits without ability to properly plan. Where a school is at maximum capacity, this poses problems for classrooms, teachers and class sizes. It is then compounded by the need to continuously adjust classes, which causes disruption to learning and relationships
8. It is long-lasting. Any solution must provide a long-term fix rather than a short-term delay which lasts just a year or two.

#### 4.1 EEP - THE PROPOSED SOLUTION

This proposed solution would protect the right to enroll for people who genuinely live in the catchment and ensure that any additional capacity is filled in a transparent and equitable fashion. It is simple, addresses the problem at the front-end, is enforceable and long lasting.

The suggested changes would be:

1. Applications for local enrolment need to be lodged by May 31<sup>st</sup> in the year prior to commencement at BSHS.
2. Require that students enrolled under the local enrolment category remain resident in the catchment for the duration of their time at BSHS

To achieve this, we understand it would be necessary for the Queensland Government to make the following changes by gazette notice.

1. Transfer BSHS from a school operating under an Enrolment Management Plan (EMP) under Chapter 8, Part 3 of the *Education (General Provisions) Act 2006* (the Act) to an Enrolment Eligibility Plan (EEP) under Chapter 8, Part 4 of the Act.
2. Seek advice and if necessary legislate, or include provisions in the gazette EEP, to enshrine local entry as a defacto merit category.

## APPENDICIES

Under the currents rates of growth, Appendix 1 shows the impact of allowing people to continue to circumvent the legitimate process. The school will both lose merit entry within 5 years and by 2024 it will not be able to accommodate all local and “unusual” enrolments.

### APPENDIX 1 - PROJECTIONS

Assumptions:

1. Local population growth is 4.9% per annum. This is generous since the current projected growth of 10-19 year-olds is under 3% per annum however this is dependent on the timing of new development releases. The difference is not significant as it only alters projections by 3-4 students a year.
2. “Unusual” enrolments continue to grow at their current rate of up to 20% per annum.
3. Selected Entry will reduce to accommodate increases in local enrolment.
4. Projections do not take account of additional enrolments in years other than Year 7.

| <b>Scenario 1 – Do Nothing</b>   |              |                  |                 |              |  |                           |
|--|--------------|------------------|-----------------|--------------|--|---------------------------|
|  | <b>Local</b> | <b>“Unusual”</b> | <b>Selected</b> | <b>Total</b> |  | <b>Current Year Level</b> |
| <b>2018</b>  | 190          | 120              | 240             | 550          |  | 7                         |
| <b>2019</b>  | 200          | 144              | 206             | 550          |  | 6                         |
| <b>2020</b>  | 209          | 173              | 168             | 550          |  | 5                         |
| <b>2021</b>  | 220          | 207              | 123             | 550          |  | 4                         |
| <b>2022</b>  | 231          | 249              | 70              | 550          |  | 3                         |
| <b>2023</b>  | 242          | 299              | 11              | 550          | Selective enrolments end at this point.  | 2                         |
| <b>2024</b>  | 255          | 358              | 0               | 613          | It will be necessary to development a system to allocate positions to local and unusual applicants | 1                         |
| <b>2025</b>  | 267          | 430              | 0               | 697          |  | Prep                      |
| <b>2026</b>  | 281          | 516              | 0               | 797          |  |                           |
| <b>2027</b>  | 295          | 619              | 0               | 914          |  |                           |
| <b>Scenario 2 – Preferred option – implement EEP with local enrolment category</b> |              |                  |                 |              |  |                           |
|  | <b>Local</b> | <b>“Unusual”</b> | <b>Selected</b> | <b>Total</b> |  | <b>Current Year Level</b> |
| <b>2018</b>  | 190          | 120              | 240             | 550          |  | 7                         |
| <b>2019</b>  | 200          | 100              | 250             | 550          |  | 6                         |
| <b>2020</b>  | 209          | 91               | 250             | 550          |  | 5                         |
| <b>2021</b>  | 220          | 80               | 250             | 550          |  | 4                         |
| <b>2022</b>  | 231          | 69               | 250             | 550          |  | 3                         |
| <b>2023</b>  | 242          | 58               | 250             | 550          |  | 2                         |

|             |     |    |     |     |  |      |
|-------------|-----|----|-----|-----|--|------|
| <b>2024</b> | 255 | 45 | 250 | 550 |  | 1    |
| <b>2025</b> | 267 | 33 | 250 | 550 |  | Prep |
| <b>2026</b> | 281 | 19 | 250 | 550 |  |      |
| <b>2027</b> | 295 | 5  | 250 | 550 |  |      |
| <b>2028</b> | 309 | 0  | 241 | 550 |  |      |
| <b>2029</b> | 325 | 0  | 225 | 550 |  |      |
| <b>2030</b> | 341 | 0  | 209 | 550 |  |      |
| <b>2031</b> | 358 | 0  | 192 | 550 |  |      |
| <b>2032</b> | 376 | 0  | 174 | 550 |  |      |

## APPENDIX 2 – PAST STUDENTS ASSOC MODEL

The BSHS Past Students Association has proposed a model which requires a student seeking local entry to have attended either Dutton Park SS or West End SS in the prior year. However, BSHS are concerned that this would relocate the enrolment problem to the primary schools and Year 6.

