

Legislative Council
Hansard
Wednesday 20 May 2026

[excerpt...]

The President, **Mr Farrell**, took the Chair at 11 a.m., acknowledged the Traditional People and read Prayers.

QUESTIONS

Policy on Corporate Sponsorship in Tasmanian Schools

Ms WEBB question to MINISTER for EDUCATION, Ms PALMER

[2.52 p.m.]

My question again relates to departmental policy regarding corporate sector involvement with our schools. Minister, you're aware of a recent report posted by *The Tasman Gazette* on its digital platform stating that aquaculture company Tassal is covering the costs for student photo packs at Tasman District School. This is effectively sponsorship of school processes. Minister, who authorised this corporate sponsorship of all school photo packs? Will there be any company branding or promotional material of any kind included with the sponsored school photo packs? Can you clarify whether this sponsorship or arrangement is consistent with current departmental policies, including the partnering with external organisations procedure, and the sponsorship and commercial arrangement for education settings procedure, or any other relevant departmental policy, and if so, how?

Were families provided the option to opt out from having their school photos provided by Tassal? Can you guarantee that no student or families were blocked from engaging with the school photo process because they did not wish to have or be associated with Tassal paid products? Lastly, minister, if the Tasman Peninsula Marine Protection Group or the Neighbours of Fish Farms Tasmania wished to offer similar school assistance, how would they go about doing so?

ANSWER

I thank the member for Nelson for her questions.

I am aware that a local media outlet has reported on a one-off donation made by Tassal to Tasman District School which allowed all students to receive a standard school photo pack at no cost to families. The donation was made to address historically low numbers of families opting to receive school photos due to the costs involved.

I'm aware that principals are delegated the authority to accept donations and sponsorships where they are assessed as appropriate, lawful and consistent with departmental guidelines. I'm advised that Tasman District School's decision to accept the donation from Tassal was in line with the Department for Education, Children and Young People (DECYP) advice on financial sponsorships of schools. The donation did not involve any conditions, endorsement, or ongoing arrangement.

I'm advised there was no company branding, advertising or promotional material

included with the student photo packs.

I'm advised the donation is consistent with all relevant departmental policies. DECYP guidelines clearly outline categories of organisations and activities that schools must not engage with, including: political parties; tobacco companies; gaming venues; alcohol or firearms promotion; organisations encouraging unhealthy food choices; religious organisations; unregistered charities; or activities that breach the Code of Conduct. TASSAL does not fall within any prohibited category. The donation did not involve curriculum influence, data collection, commercial promotion or any form of contractual obligation.

The school advised families of the donation and invited them to contact the school if they had any questions or concerns. No families raised objections or concerns, and no students were excluded from the process on any basis. Families were not required to engage with TASSAL, nor were they required to endorse or associate with the company in any way.

Any external organisation wishing to provide assistance to a school may approach the school principal directly. All offers of support are considered on a case-by-case basis and assessed by the school against departmental policies to ensure they are appropriate.