

# Media Release

John Kaye MLC

Greens NSW MP

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## **Firth's passing visit to Hurlstone High no excuse for farm sell-off**

NSW Education Minister Verity Firth spent only 45 minutes touring Hurlstone Agricultural High School's farm this morning, according to Greens NSW MP John Kaye.

Dr Kaye said: "The Rees government is planning to slice off up to 140 ha of the South Western Sydney school's land and sell it as surplus.

"This will decimate the school's 115 ha farm, leaving it with as little as 1.8 ha to teach agriculture to the 965 students who attend the school.

"The Department of Education is claiming the land is surplus, yet it is currently fully stocked in order to teach Sydney day students and rural and regional boarders about farm practices.

"Minister Firth's fleeting 45 minute tour would do little to inform her of the needs of the school and the importance of a full-sized farm.

"In her brief tour this morning, she would not have been able to develop an informed opinion to counter the push for the sale coming from middle level bureaucrats in her department.

"While it a positive step for Ms Firth to visit the school, she needs to spend time with teachers, students, parents and alumni to fully understand the impacts of the proposed sell-off.

"At a time when the average age of farmers is almost 60 years and rising, Hurlstone is one of only three public schools in NSW with a functional farm and boarding facilities.

"The Minister needs to put aside more than 45 minutes to become informed about the consequences of vandalising this crucial public education facility," Dr Kaye said.

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