

Sunshine Advocate

School fire Probe, Sunshine Technical School

23rd October 1974 Pages 1 & 3

SCHOOL FIRE PROBE!

ARSON Squad detectives are investigating the cause of a fire which destroyed a portable staff room at Sunshine Technical School on Monday night.

A classroom was also slightly damaged in the fire which began at 11.43 pm.

Damage could be as high as \$20,000. The school was unoccupied at the time.

Firemen from Sunshine, Footscray and Deer Park took only 15 minutes to bring the fire under control. But mopping up operations took nearly two hours.

School principal, Mr John Hennessy, said on Tuesday morning that classes were going on as usual. No pupils had to be sent home, he said.

CRUCIAL TIME

But, he said, the loss of the staff room would cause great inconvenience to teachers at a crucial time of the year.

Teachers' records and teaching materials were lost in the blaze.

Mr Hennessy said that Form 5 pupils had given their common room to the teachers to use as a temporary staff room.

The school comprises 40 portable classrooms and five major buildings.

There are about 800 pupils in the co-ed secondary section.

POTENTIAL TRAP

In the October 16 edition of the Advocate, we ran a story saying that the school could be a potential fire trap.

According to the Metropolitan Fire Brigade, more than 220 students could be trapped in the two-storey workshop building, and their only escape would be a 2.13-metre (7 ft) wide corridor lined with lockers.

● School fire danger — see page 3.

Game turned into

But city engineer will not, until us

School a fire danger - chief

"SUNSHINE council has a moral obligation to see that Sunshine technical school pupils obtain the same protection that would be required by the regulations for students in a private school", Sunshine's chief planner Mr J. Dalton told councillors.

Recently the Metropolitan Fire Brigade recommended that a thermal alarm system be fitted in the Junior school section, as well as additional fire extinguishers in the school generally.

Although Sunshine council has no authority over the school, councillors decided to write to the Education Minister Mr Thompson, asking that the fire brigades recommendations be implemented urgently.

Council also has decided to ask the fire brigade to inspect all schools in Sunshine