

Division 24: Education Services, \$419 750 000 —

Ms L.L. Baker, Chairman.

Mr J.H.D. Day, Minister for Planning representing the Minister for Education.

Mr R. Strickland, Chief Executive Officer.

Mr J. Jurkowski, Acting Chief Financial Officer.

Mr D. Lloyd, Executive Director, Corporate Governance.

Mr M.R. Brown, Director, Education and Training Regulation.

Mr T. Werner, Director, Higher Education and Legislative Review.

Mr R.B. Miles, Director, Teacher Registration.

[Witnesses introduced.]

The CHAIRMAN: There are several questions. The first is from the member for Armadale.

Dr A.D. BUTI: I refer to paragraph (a) on page 297, which reads —

A review of existing funding for per capita grants to non-government schools will be undertaken as part of the 2014–15 Budget process.

Will that review be done by an independent body; and, secondly, what level of engagement has the Catholic Education Office and the Association of Independent Schools of Western Australia had up until now in the process of the review?

Mr J.H.D. DAY: I am advised that the review will be conducted by a working party comprising the Department of Education Services and Treasury. The Department of Education will report to the Minister for Education by January 2014. The Catholic Education Office and the Association of Independent Schools will be consulted extensively during the review. Nothing has been indicated that requires savings against current expenditure.

Mr M.P. MURRAY: I refer to “Other scholarships” on page 294. Have any cuts been made to Western Australian government-sponsored scholarships for higher education? If so, can the minister please name them?

Mr J.H.D. DAY: I can advise that five scholarships are awarded annually for students in Sarawak to complete their final year of studies at the Bentley campus of Curtin University; \$7 000 is provided to each student. Is that the program to which the member referred?

Mr M.P. MURRAY: I refer to scholarships in total.

Mr J.H.D. DAY: All of that at \$7 000 a student multiplied by five scholarships adds up to \$35 000. That amount continues in the forward estimates.

Ms A.R. MITCHELL: I refer to key effectiveness indicators on page 290, particularly the one that relates to the percentage of reviewed independent public schools that have met service and delivery agreement requirements. How are these schools benefited by the independent reviews? Can the minister provide specific examples?

[12.30 pm]

Mr J.H.D. DAY: The review is intended to integrate with the self-review that is undertaken by schools as a process to mutually inform both parties and to build the schools’ capacities for improvement. Although each public school has the same overall mission and goals, the circumstances in which they find themselves differ. The independent public schools initiative acknowledges the unique context of each school and requires schools to be accountable for their performance. I will ask Mr Strickland to add a bit more information on the process.

Mr R. Strickland: The reviews occur after the first three years. Each of these schools has a delivery and performance agreement for three years. They have a business plan and the review focuses on both of those. It looks at the improvements in student learning, the student learning environment and also how sustainable the changes being made are. The review is complementary to the review that the school itself does. Basically, our reviews go out and verify what the school’s review has shown. In that process they commend the school and the things that have been achieved over the previous three years; they affirm what the school itself has discovered in terms of the sorts of changes it believes it now needs to make; and they make recommendations where they see the review has not covered important things that the school should now focus on.

The appropriation was recommended.