

AUGUSTA PRIMARY SCHOOL - STAFF

357. Hon BARRY HOUSE to the Minister for Education and Training:

- (1) Is the minister aware that the Augusta Primary School has experienced at least 11 changes of principal over the past 10 years?
- (2) Is the minister concerned about the lack of continuity and disruption caused to students, staff and the community as a result of these and other continual changes?
- (3) Is the minister also aware that approximately 30 students, who under normal circumstances would have attended the Augusta Primary School, have elected to attend other schools in the area as a result of this situation?
- (4) What action will be taken to ensure more stability in staffing within the school?

Hon LJILJANNA RAVLICH replied:

I thank the member for some notice of this question.

- (1) Yes. I am advised that the school has had at least 11 changes of principal in that period.
- (2) Yes. The Department of Education and Training is committed to providing quality leadership in schools across all areas of Western Australia. However, principals may be promoted to other positions or take leave entitlements or sick leave. This means that personnel with the appropriate skills and experience are required to act in higher positions. While the department's preference is for the substantive appointment of principals to schools for a set period, that is not always possible.
- (3) School records indicate that only two families with a total of eight students have left the school in the past year.

Hon Barry House interjected.

Hon LJILJANNA RAVLICH: I think it is a fair point. The member is trying to indicate that there has been some sort of a flood from the school, when in fact the school records indicate that only two families, with a total of eight students, have left the school in the past year. There is no information to support the claim of higher numbers electing to attend other schools.

- (4) An acting principal with extensive experience in leading small rural primary schools has been appointed to the school. He has tenure until the end of this year, with a possible extension for a further six months, if necessary. This will ensure continuity in this period.