

KALBARRI DISTRICT HIGH SCHOOL, OUTDOOR RECREATIONAL AREAS

**409. Mr J.P.D. EDWARDS to the Minister for Education:**

I refer the minister to his admission during the estimates committee that his Government has not provided adequate funding for school maintenance in the coming financial year.

- (1) What action has the minister taken to address the lack of outdoor recreational areas at Kalbarri District High School, as the current situation gives students only a very limited area in which to participate in sporting activities?
- (2) What action has the minister taken to alleviate the unsatisfactory situation whereby senior female students are forced to use the limited toilet facilities in the junior section of the school?
- (3) Will the minister please inform the House whether any funding has been allocated to alleviate this highly unsatisfactory situation?

**Mr A.J. CARPENTER replied:**

- (1)-(3) I thank the member for Greenough for the question. I appreciate the member's genuine interest. The member has raised with me issues in his electorate, and I think he would admit that most of the time, if not every time, he raises issues with me he gets a pretty positive response, does he not?

Mr J.P.D. Edwards: They want it fixed.

Mr A.J. CARPENTER: He gets a positive response, does he not? He does. I just got a nod. He gets a positive response. The situation in Kalbarri -

Mr B.J. Grylls: Why don't you give yourself a round of applause!

Mr A.J. CARPENTER: If the member wants to offer that, feel free. It is not something that is often offered back to him.

I want to clear up one thing. I said during the estimates that we are not putting enough money into maintenance in our schools. We are not. We have a major problem with maintenance in government schools. In almost every school in Western Australia there is a backlog of maintenance. I went on to say why that is the case. I personally underestimated how much of a backlog there was in maintenance. Part of the discipline that we had in opposition was that when we made commitments about what we would do in government, we made sure that we would be able to afford them, unlike the then Government, which was spending money like it was going out of fashion and making all sorts of commitments with no funding for them whatsoever. We put into our policy that we would increase maintenance by \$10 million over four years. In fact, I think we have put something like \$20 million extra into maintenance. However, it has not been enough. The stock is old. It is declining. It was under-funded for eight years. Yes, the member for Darling Range raised the issue of maintenance, and I told him that I agreed with him that we needed more money. I am constantly in discussion trying to get more money put into maintenance. The issue the member for Greenough has raised is not about maintenance; it is about capital improvement, and there is a situation at Kalbarri District High School that requires attention. Within budgetary limitations, I am doing my best to meet the requirements of all the schools in Western Australia, including the one in Kalbarri. We cannot do what the previous Government did, which was to promise hundreds of millions of dollars of expenditure when there was no money to spend. We cannot do that! That is the difference between responsible government and indolent, useless, lazy government. That is the difference between doing things properly and making a helluva mess. We will not make a helluva a mess. I will manage the education budget properly. When we have the money to meet all the requirements we will work through them systematically, and the Kalbarri school will be on the list.