

YEARS 11 AND 12, IMPLEMENTATION OF NEW COURSES OF STUDY

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

I refer to the State School Teachers' Union of WA "Log of Claims 2006". Does the minister support the call from the State School Teachers' Union of WA for "an agreed extension of time lines for the implementation of new courses of study into the post compulsory years 11 and 12?"

Hon LJILJANNA RAVLICH replied:

I thank the member for some notice of this question.

I have not seen the log of claims; however, I have no doubt that I have a copy in my office. I have not moved into formal negotiations with the State School Teachers' Union of WA.

Hon Barry House: The department is already in negotiations.

Hon LJILJANNA RAVLICH: It is; however, I have not met personally with the members of the union about its log of claims. In any event, I would not be in a position to comment on those negotiations. Having said that -

Hon Barry House: They tell me that you have not talked to them for ages.

Hon Simon O'Brien: They should be so lucky!

Hon LJILJANNA RAVLICH: I am inclined to agree with the member!

I am sure we will be talking, because that is the nature of negotiations. I have made the government's position on the implementation time lines very clear and nothing will sway me on that issue. I have clearly stated on the public record that my first priority is the benefit of students. That has to be my first priority. The simple fact is that I will not sacrifice the opportunities of another generation or cohort of students because the State School Teachers' Union of WA wants to flex its muscles on this matter or on any other matter. The simple fact is that the education system must continue to operate on a day-to-day basis. The implementation of the three new courses of study is in the best interests of Western Australian students. It will provide opportunities across a number of subject areas, particularly as we move into the 2007 and 2008 implementation phase, because students will be given a range of opportunities that they have never had before. Quite frankly, when we enter the negotiations, the government will have a divergent view about this matter. However, there is no doubt that the government and I, as the minister, will be firm on the implementation time lines. There will be no delaying of the time lines.