

SCHOOLS — MAINTENANCE

1066. Hon RICK MAZZA to the Minister for Education and Training:

I refer to the 22 September 2019 media statement “Major maintenance blitz: New job-creating school package unveiled”, which announced a \$200 million maintenance package for all 789 public schools.

- (1) How will schools access the funding and what requirements do they need to meet?
- (2) Will regional schools in more need of refurbishment be given a priority for funding?
- (3) How was the job-creation estimate of 3 150, as cited in the media statement, calculated?
- (4) Are these new jobs or are they new contracts for existing tradespeople?
- (5) When will the maintenance blitz commence?

Hon SUE ELLERY replied:

I thank the honourable member for some notice of the question. I am glad that members are excited about the maintenance project, because I am.

Hon Simon O’Brien interjected.

Hon SUE ELLERY: Indeed, honourable member. The member might ask himself why that is.

Hon Jim Chown: You have been in government for two years and you’ve done nothing about it.

Hon SUE ELLERY: Is that right? Except of course —

The PRESIDENT: Order! Leader of the House, perhaps you can respond to the question and ignore all the unruly —

Hon Nick Goiran interjected.

The PRESIDENT: Order! When I am speaking, it will be a little bit like in my house: you do not get to speak. I want no unruly interjections. Let us hear from the Leader of the House with the response to the question she has been asked.

Hon Donna Faragher interjected.

The PRESIDENT: That goes for you, too, member—active listening.

Hon SUE ELLERY: I am really delighted to provide the member with an answer about the maintenance program. I will start by making the point that in the last full financial year of the previous government, its spend on school maintenance was \$117 million. In our last full financial year in 2018–19, our spend was \$128 million. We are adding an additional \$200 million to what we budgeted for school maintenance.

- (1) Every Western Australian public school will benefit from a \$200 million package to address high-priority maintenance works and create thousands of jobs for local workers. Every school will share in \$35 million to address maintenance items or identified minor works listed in building condition assessment reports. In an answer to a previous question I said that the funding comprised two subsequent packages of \$80 million or \$81 million; I think it is actually \$82.5 million each. The remaining \$165 million of funding is allocated to schools for other targeted maintenance works, upgrades or refurbishments. These works will include classroom refurbishments, electrical upgrades, roof replacements/refurbishments, traffic management works, the installation of solar panels, shade structures, repairs to playing surfaces, paths and carparks, and toilet refurbishments.
- (2) Funding has been allocated based on the maintenance needs identified in the schools’ building condition assessment reports and the type, age and number of enrolled students at the school. There is a 60–40 split between metropolitan and regional schools. The honourable member will find that he might have two schools with a similar number of students, but one school might be older than the other—for example, in neighbouring towns or within the same town. Those schools will be allocated different amounts of money because the allocation is based on what the building condition assessment report found was needed at that school.
- (3) The job-creation estimate is based on the expected labour component of the total maintenance package.
- (4) As I said earlier, under the previous government in its last financial year, \$117 million was allocated to maintenance in 2016–17. In the government’s last financial year in 2018–19, \$128 million was spent on maintenance. The \$200 million package is in addition to the normal maintenance spend, which will create new jobs.
- (5) Schools can start spending their allocations immediately. Targeted maintenance programs will be progressively rolled out over the remainder of 2019–20 and 2020–21.