

PERTH MODERN SCHOOL - MUSIC PROGRAM

1155. Hon LOUISE PRATT to the Minister for Education and Training:

Will the minister provide further detail regarding the future of the music program at Perth Modern School?

Hon LJILJANNA RAVLICH replied:

I thank Hon Louise Pratt for asking this very good question. I am advised that there was a gathering outside Parliament House today by students and teachers from Perth Modern School's music program. I understand also that the Liberal Party announced today that it is the Liberal Party's policy to reverse this government's policy commitment to return Perth Modern School to its former status as a fully selective academic entry school. I want to know whether that is correct.

Hon Peter Collier: That is totally wrong.

Hon LJILJANNA RAVLICH: As I understand it, this is what Hon Peter Collier said -

Several members interjected.

The PRESIDENT: Order members! This is one of the difficulties when questions are asked and answers are given in a particular way, because it invites debate, and cross-chamber interjections result. I do not want to mention the names of members who are involved in those cross-chamber interjections, but they prevent question time from being orderly. The Minister for Education and Training has been asked a question by Hon Louise Pratt, and I am sure she is answering it.

Hon LJILJANNA RAVLICH: I am advised that Hon Peter Collier also told the gathering that the government is destroying the music program at Perth Modern School. I hope that he does not believe that to be the case.

Hon Peter Collier: It is the case.

Hon LJILJANNA RAVLICH: He is playing his signature tune. He was misleading the gathering and he was being wilfully ignorant of the facts. Which part of a "fully selective academic entry" does he not understand? I note the President's comments on members not inviting interjections. On more than one occasion the member has been very loose with the truth.

The PRESIDENT: Order, Minister for Education and Training! That is not the sort of language we use in this house. It may be used elsewhere, but it is not used in the Legislative Council.

Hon LJILJANNA RAVLICH: I am pleased to advise that the fully selective academic entry process has also resulted in a record enrolment for the gifted and talented music program. The music program at Perth Modern is growing and it will be stronger than ever. The President may be aware that there is a very positive correlation between the academic performance of very talented and able students and their participation in music and their ability to perform at very high levels. I also put on record that the enrolment of 110 students in the year 8 music program for 2007 has exceeded all previous year 8 cohorts at the school. The music program is not dying; it is growing. I ask the member to get his facts right.