

SCHOOLS — CAPITAL WORKS PROJECTS

672. Mr F.A. ALBAN to the Minister for Education:

Students learning in the twenty-first century need the facilities to keep up with this high-tech society. Can the minister please update the house on the Liberal–National government’s capital works projects that will enhance modern teaching and learning?

Dr E. CONSTABLE replied:

I thank the member for Swan Hills for his question. I note that last Friday a second stage of Ellenbrook Secondary College, in his electorate, was opened. We then went to Bullsbrook District High School where the first sod was turned for the new buildings and improvements there. It is a major commitment of this government. As members would know, we want to ensure that, wherever possible, we have state-of-the-art learning facilities. One of the pressures on government always is, and has been for some time, and will continue to be, the growth of the metropolitan area and the need to ensure we provide schools in growth areas. Both Ellenbrook and Bullsbrook are good examples of areas with enormous population growth. We need to make sure the schools are in good shape. The opening of stage 2 at Ellenbrook comprised a \$22 million facility. We particularly looked at the specialist science rooms, the design and technology, and information technology facilities, which are of course second to none, being brand new. These will also make a real difference to students’ learning in the Ellenbrook area in years to come. It is interesting to note that the first group of year 12 students will graduate this year. They have been the trailblazers for all who will come after them. Also in stage 2 at Ellenbrook are eight new classrooms—woodwork technology, graphics, and design and planning. Everything one would hope to see in an up-to-date and modern high school is there.

Mr B.S. Wyatt: Is there any room for year 7s?

Dr E. CONSTABLE: We will see, won’t we?

The rooms in the new stage 2 will all be air-cooled by the end of this year ready for the beginning of next year. Bullsbrook District High School is an amazing school, which has 800 students. It has grown rapidly with the land developments in that area. Even though the school has grown and has that number of students, it is interesting that it is still considered a semi-rural area. People have reasonably large plots of land compared with those in the metropolitan area. A \$23.6 million upgrade is planned there. It certainly marks a new chapter in the life of that school and follows on from a rebuild of the primary section of the school. The primary section opened 60 years ago and I am pleased to note that some of the old buildings are being refurbished. Therefore, some of the original buildings will be maintained while state-of-the-art new buildings are built as well. It will include an eight-classroom teaching block, shared spaces, a sports hall, a material and technology block and science facilities. Again, these will be up-to-date facilities for a school in a rapidly growing area. It is also worth noting that the information technology in the refurbished area will be second to none.

At the beginning of next year, we will see four new primary schools open. Piara Waters, Meadow Springs, Malvern Springs and Aveley Primary Schools are on course for the start of next year. All those schools will have the latest in computer technology, fibre-optic cabling, wireless networks and interactive whiteboards. I think the task of government is to make sure that we not only build new schools in new areas where they are obviously needed with the growth in population, but also, at the same time, look to improve the facilities in existing schools. That is the reason why I have instituted a program to provide interactive whiteboards in classrooms. I am looking to speed that up because interactive whiteboards are a major new focus in schools for teaching and for learning.

At the beginning of next year, we will also see stage 2 of Ashdale Secondary College and Atwell College completed. They are on track for the beginning of next year as well, so this government continues to provide the best of facilities for our schools.