



Moving On: The Transition of Year 7 to Secondary School





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**Moving On: The Transition of
Year 7 to Secondary School**



**THE PRESIDENT
LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL**

**THE SPEAKER
LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY**

MOVING ON: THE TRANSITION OF YEAR 7 TO SECONDARY SCHOOL

This report has been prepared for submission to Parliament under the provisions of section 25 of the *Auditor General Act 2006*.

Performance audits are an integral part of the overall audit program. They seek to provide Parliament with assessments of the effectiveness and efficiency of public sector programs and activities, and identify opportunities for improved performance.

The information provided through this approach will, I am sure, assist Parliament in better evaluating agency performance and enhance parliamentary decision-making to the benefit of all Western Australians.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'C. Murphy'.

COLIN MURPHY
AUDITOR GENERAL
14 May 2014

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Auditor General's Overview

Next year is going to be a very busy and challenging year in the education system. In 2015, the Australian Curriculum will be introduced, a new student centred funding model and one line budgets for all schools will be implemented and the half cohort of students will leave the system. At the same time, Year 7 will move to secondary school.



Moving Year 7 will bring around 18 000 additional students into secondary schools. There will be an additional 1 000 secondary teaching positions to be filled, permanent or temporary buildings at 46 schools, increased capacity in country high school hostels, and 46 new buses. All of this will cost around \$300 million and has to be in place on or before 2 February 2015.

Year 7 students will move to secondary school regardless of whether everything is in place and all schools are completely ready. A smooth transition will be the key to maximising the intended benefits. The intended benefits of moving Year 7 are educational. The Year 7 Australian Curriculum can be delivered more effectively with the specialist teachers and facilities in secondary schools which are also considered more appropriate for the social and emotional development of young adolescents.

The key elements of the move are, so far, on track and the project is forecast to be under budget. The good progress reflects DoE having a detailed Year 7 transition program with objectives, deliverables, and budgets in place which is regularly reported and monitored.

The focus now needs to shift to the individual school level where risks and challenges remain in terms of planning, recruitment and infrastructure. Doing so effectively should maximise the chances of a smooth transition for all the students, staff and parents involved.

Executive summary

Background

The Department of Education (DoE) manages the state's public school system, educating almost 284 000 students in 797 schools across Western Australia. In 2014 there are 17 672 Year 7 students enrolled in public schools, six per cent of all public school students.

In December 2011, the Government of Western Australia announced that Year 7 public school students would move to secondary schools in 2015. This will bring Western Australia's public schools in line with all Australian states and territories except South Australia, as well as most private schools in the state.

The decision to move Year 7 acknowledged that secondary school settings are more appropriate for young adolescents, both for their learning and their social and emotional development. The transition also coincides with the implementation of the Year 7 Australian Curriculum which DoE has determined can be more effectively delivered in secondary settings with specialist teachers and facilities.

DoE's objective in moving Year 7 is to provide students with the learning environments and facilities most appropriate for their curriculum needs and age levels. Providing school infrastructure and trained secondary school teachers are the two key elements to ensuring a smooth transition and delivering educational benefits.

Projecting student numbers, planning school infrastructure and workforce management are core business for DoE. What makes moving Year 7 different is the scale of these tasks. DoE estimates that there will be 18 050 Year 7 students in Western Australian public schools at the start of 2015. To accommodate them, additional permanent or temporary facilities are needed at 46 secondary schools. DoE estimated that moving Year 7 will require an additional 1 000 secondary teaching positions in 2015 and result in over 500 fewer primary school positions. As a result, primary teachers will need to be retrained so they can teach secondary students.

A total of \$340.7 million was originally approved to fund the transition of Year 7 students to secondary schools and made up of:

- \$265.1 million for the delivery of the capital works program to provide additional facilities at schools, plus \$13.5 million depreciation allowance for the new buildings
- \$32.3 million for the Public Transport Authority (PTA) to enhance school bus services
- \$22.4 million to retrain 525 primary school teachers to teach in secondary schools
- \$7.4 million for project management, Capital Works Implementation Team and the Department of Education Services.

DoE has established a strategic management project for the transition of Year 7 to secondary school. Each individual school is also required to prepare for the move of Year 7 students. This includes secondary schools managing their enrolments carefully to ensure that each can accommodate children from their local area, and developing their own plans and processes to make the transition for Year 7s as smooth as possible.

Moving Year 7 to secondary school not only coincides with the introduction of the Australian Curriculum but is happening in the context of a number of other changes in the education system. The half cohort of students¹ will leave the system at the end of 2014 thereby increasing student numbers in 2015. DoE will also implement a new student centred funding model and one line budgets for all schools, which will alter both funding levels and financial management in schools.

The move of Year 7 students to secondary school will happen regardless of whether everything is in place and all schools are completely ready. If all elements are not in place for a smooth transition, the expected educational benefits will be delayed. Not being fully prepared will result in disruption to both the Year 7 students and others as schools put in place temporary solutions for accommodation and teaching.

This audit assessed whether the DoE is on track to achieve a smooth transition of Year 7 to public secondary schools and will have the facilities and teachers to deliver full Year 7 National Curriculum from 2015.

Audit conclusion

DoE has taken appropriate steps to plan and prepare for the transition of Year 7 to secondary school. It has a detailed Year 7 transition program with objectives, deliverables, and budgets with regular reporting and monitoring. The key elements of the transition have, so far, progressed in line with plans and the project is forecast to be under budget.

Achieving a smooth transition of Year 7 to secondary school has required that DoE have a good understanding of the requirements and risks at a system level, which DoE has, and at the individual school level. School level planning is not yet complete, and depends on DoE providing timely information to schools on their budgets, allowing them to plan 2015 subjects, timetables and staffing.

Overall, based on current information, there will be sufficient secondary teachers to fill additional positions in 2015. But the scale of recruitment will be much higher than in normal years, increasing the risk that individual secondary schools will not be able to recruit enough trained teachers in the right learning areas. The risks to individual schools are not yet well understood because school level workforce planning has not yet been completed. DoE's focus and understanding of staffing needs must now shift from the whole-of-system level to the individual school level.

The infrastructure, accommodation and bus services to support Year 7 in secondary school are forecast to be ready in time. Initial delays in tendering pushed occupancy dates for new buildings at 11 schools back to January 2015. The risk of delays in occupancy are mitigated by schedule contingency on each project, but these schools are forecast to have around 3 000 Year 7 students in 2015, so any delays to occupancy would have significant impact.

Key findings

Planning and monitoring

DoE has put in place a comprehensive and detailed Year 7 transition program plan and has established 11 sub-projects each with their own objectives, deliverables, timelines and, where appropriate, budgets.

The Year 7 transition program and its sub-projects are subject to regular monitoring, reporting and governance oversight at working level, by senior management and the Minister. Key stakeholders are also satisfied with communication from DoE central office.

¹ From 2001, the age that children entered kindergarten was modified to be only those that turned four before 30 June. This meant that in 2001, only a half cohort of students was enrolled. This half cohort leaves the system at the end of 2014.

DoE's estimates of the infrastructure and workforce requirements to move Year 7 to secondary school appear to be soundly based, using Year 7 student enrolment projections (18 050 students in 2015) and school infrastructure audits. The average variation between the projected and actual Year 7 enrolments over the last three years is 1.6 per cent. This would represent a variance of 289 students for the 2015 projected enrolment. This is not a significant risk, particularly as it is spread across the state's 88 secondary schools and 63 district high schools.

Progress to date

To date, the key elements of the transition of Year 7 to secondary school have progressed largely in line with DoE's plans:

- DoE currently estimates it will need an additional 1 370 secondary school teachers in 2015. DoE's plans are for a total of 1 474 teachers to be available through its 'Switch' retraining program, through graduate teachers already in its employment pool but not yet working or graduating at the end of 2014, through part time teachers increasing to full time hours, and teachers returning from leave or moving back to the teaching profession. Teachers with comparable qualifications will also be sought from interstate and from overseas countries.
- Switch enables primary teachers to switch to secondary teaching and secondary teachers to expand the range of subjects they can teach. At April 2014, 372 out of a target of 453 teachers have enrolled in Switch. The remaining 81 are intended to go through short courses and graduate certificates, although these have not started. Information from DoE's recruitment system and from universities indicates that there will be at least the target 955 graduates and teachers not yet in employment in the supply pool.
- Despite initial delays in tendering and contracting, two projects have now been completed, with the remaining 27 permanent school building projects in progress and currently forecast to be complete for the start of the 2015 school year.

Six of the eight residential boarding colleges managed by the Country High School Hostels Authority (CHSHA) will have the capacity to meet the forecast additional demand from Year 7 students. There have been delays in providing additional accommodation at Merredin and Broome residential colleges and these works may not be completed by the start of the 2015 school year. CHSHA is evaluating various contingency plans for these colleges.

The PTA has ordered 46 new buses at a cost of \$24.3 million to meet a forecast 13 per cent increase in demand on metropolitan and regional town bus routes that carry secondary school students. Based on current delivery forecasts, the buses will be delivered by the start of the 2015 school year. PTA has also been allocated an additional \$8 million a year to operate the additional bus services.

The cost of new infrastructure to accommodate Year 7 students in secondary school is \$35.5 million below the original estimated cost of \$265 million. This is mainly due to design reviews conducted by the Department of Finance, Building Management and Works (BMW), refinement of design contingencies and favourable tendering results. This should reduce the overall cost of the Year 7 transition project.

Based on the 2013-14 rates of funding per student, the difference in recurrent costs between teaching Year 7 in secondary school rather than primary school is an estimated \$43 million a year. DoE identified the need for additional funding for these costs in its preparation for the 2013-14 State Budget. No additional funding was included in DoE's 2013-14 budget. DoE will accommodate the \$43 million within its allocated 2014-15 budget.

Remaining Risks

There are three significant risks that DoE must continue to focus on and manage over the next eight months. These relate to ensuring that changes and risks for individual schools are identified, understood and managed:

- Many schools, particularly some regional and large metropolitan schools, will face a challenge to recruit enough trained teachers in the right learning areas. School level workforce planning has not yet been completed, but the scale of recruitment is much higher than in normal years. Particular challenges are likely in learning areas such as maths, science and design and technology. DoE's workforce planning area monitors individual secondary schools to identify those having difficulty recruiting sufficient new teachers and may need to rapidly provide central staffing support to those schools that cannot recruit the teachers they need.
- To ensure a smooth transition, secondary schools will need timely information on their budgets so that they can determine the subjects they can run and the timetables, and can then recruit the appropriate mix of teachers. DoE plans to confirm 2015 secondary school budgets in June 2014. This reflects normal planning timeframes but, given the scale of the task schools face, the schools consider this more critical than in normal years. Delays in confirming budgets would delay individual school planning and increase the risk that the Year 7 transition will not go smoothly.
- Initial delays in tendering have pushed the planned occupancy date for 11 of the 29 secondary schools into January 2015. These 11 schools are forecast to have almost 3 000 Year 7 students in 2015, 16 per cent of all Year 7 students, so any delay in occupancy will have a significant impact. The risk of delays in occupancy is mitigated by a 90 day contingency period built into each building project. For four of the 11 schools some of this contingency has already been used. Going into a period where delays from inclement weather are more likely, BMW will need to closely monitor the remaining contingency.

Recommendations

DoE should ensure the timely completion of school level planning and identify individual secondary schools that will have difficulty recruiting sufficient new teachers and provide appropriate central support.

DoE and BMW should closely monitor Year 7 infrastructure projects that have planned occupancy dates in January 2015 or are considered to be high risk and, where necessary, establish alternative accommodation arrangements in case projects are delayed. Strategies to accelerate projects that look likely to be delayed should also be considered.

Agency Responses

Department of Education

The Department of Education welcomes the findings and recommendations of the Office of the Auditor General's (OAG) report and acknowledges the work of the OAG in taking the time to undertake the performance audit of the moving of Year 7 to secondary settings. Since the State Government's announcement on 8 December 2011, the Department has undertaken extensive planning and preparation to implement the transition.

The Department has developed a strong and responsive approach to project management and project governance. The project has an overall plan that is supported by 11 sub-project plans to ensure all areas of scope for successful implementation are covered. Quarterly project status reports are provided to the Department's Program Governance Group. These, along with monthly reports, are provided to the Department's Corporate Executive.

As 2015 approaches, the Department is cognisant of the need to stringently manage and review the timeframe for project deliverables, especially in relation to infrastructure and workforce. Where there is evidence of emerging risks, the Department will develop and implement strategies for mitigation.

In relation to infrastructure, the Department will continue working closely with Building Management and Works. In early May 2014, the Department will identify building projects that are at risk of late completion. The engagement of a critical construction pathway process and employment of accelerated works will be considered if required.

The Department is pleased to accept the findings and recommendations from the SOF and will use them to further refine the strategic plan to ensure a smooth transition of Year 7 students into secondary settings.

Department of Finance (Building Management and Works)

The Department of Finance is in general agreement with the findings and acknowledges the time imperatives in delivering this program of works for the commencement of the 2015 school year.

To date the Department is managing all projects within the time contingencies that have been built into the individual programs. For those projects considered most at risk the Department is closely monitoring progress including the use of independent time planning consultants to scrutinise builders' programs, identify any slippages and advise on the best approach for recovery of any program if required.

As at 1 May 2014, four projects have now been completed and all remaining projects are on schedule for completion progressively from now through to January 2015.

Audit focus and scope

This audit assessed whether DoE is on track to achieve a smooth transition of Year 7 to public secondary schools and deliver the full Year 7 National Curriculum from 2015. We had three main questions:

- Has DoE put in place an appropriate plan to ensure a smooth transition and minimise disruption for students, schools and teachers?
- Are Year 7 infrastructure projects on track to be completed by the start of the 2015 school year?
- Is DoE on schedule to provide the required number of trained teachers to teach Year 7 National Curriculum by 2015?

Our audit focused on DoE's management of the transition, the additional infrastructure required to teach Year 7 in secondary school (delivered by BMW) and measures DoE has taken to ensure there will be a sufficient supply pool to meet the additional demand for trained, specialist secondary teachers to teach Year 7 students.

We also reviewed the CHSHA's capacity to accommodate Year 7 students and the PTA's plans to provide additional bus services.

This audit did not evaluate the government's decision to move Year 7 to secondary school.

The audit was conducted in accordance with Australian Auditing and Assurance Standards.

DoE has taken appropriate steps to plan and prepare for the transition of Year 7 students to secondary school

Year 7 enrolment projections and infrastructure audits have provided a sound basis for workforce and infrastructure planning

Student enrolment projections are a key driver in setting school budgets and directing infrastructure and workforce planning. In planning the transition of Year 7 to secondary school, DoE has used the projected number of Year 7 students and individual infrastructure audits to estimate school funding, identify infrastructure requirements, and estimate the additional demand for secondary teachers for 2015. DoE's Year 7 enrolment projections have proved to be robust in previous years.

DoE's Year 7 enrolment, school infrastructure and workforce modelling forecasts have been calculated at a system level and have been discussed with individual schools. DoE estimates that 18 050 Year 7 students will attend public secondary schools in 2015. This projection is based on historical enrolment figures and trends, and incorporates the semester one, 2014 student census. DoE will continue to refine the projections up to the start of the 2015 school year.

DoE's forecasts of Year 7 student numbers have proved to be accurate in recent years. The average variation between the projected and actual number of Year 7 students over the last three years is 1.6 per cent. Using the 2015 projected enrolment this would represent a variance of 289 students. We do not believe this is a significant risk spread across the state's 88 secondary schools, 63 district high schools, DoE's Schools of Isolated and Distance Learning, education support schools, senior colleges, agriculture colleges, and primary or remote community schools with secondary students.

In 2011, DoE identified 29 schools that required additional capital works in order to accommodate all Year 7 students from their local intake area. DoE's modelling was based on:

- projected enrolments at each secondary school across the state and their local primary schools
- accommodation capacity of each secondary school
- current enrolments from local intake areas
- consideration of specialist programs including Gifted and Talented and approved specialist programs
- impact on new school sites, on the cost of future new schools, and on schools currently under development.

Since its initial modelling, DoE has conducted school planning audits, held meetings with principals of schools that require accommodation changes and projected enrolments have been updated based on 2012, 2013 and February 2014 school census data. As a result, 17 schools previously not identified for capital works required additional accommodation for Year 7 students. The requirement for these schools will be met by the provision of transportable classrooms in DoE's supplementary program.

DoE continues to monitor secondary enrolments in all schools and has updated its Year 7 projection following the February 2014 school census. Any school requiring further additional capacity to cater for their Year 7 cohort will be addressed through the deployment of transportable classrooms.

DoE has established a project to oversee the transition of Year 7 to secondary school

DoE has taken appropriate steps to prepare for the transition of Year 7 students to secondary school in 2015. It has established a strategic management project that encompasses the changes and deliverables required to achieve the successful transition. There is a clear governance structure and project progress is the subject of regular monitoring and reporting at working and senior management levels. This incorporates reporting from BMW on capital works projects.

The Year 7 project team manages the overall scope of the project, stakeholder relationships, system risks, costs and provides advice and support to schools regarding transition arrangements. The project team includes three senior staff including two senior consultant principals (primary and secondary) that provide support and communication with schools, stakeholder networks and regional offices.

Eleven sub-projects have been established, each with its own objectives, deliverables, timelines and, where appropriate, budgets:

- Year 7 Project Management
- Infrastructure
- Funding and Resourcing
- Workforce
- Statewide Services
- Legislation and Policy
- Statewide Delivery and Planning
- Regional and School Operations
- E-schooling and Schools of Isolated and Distance Education
- Professional Learning
- Communication and Stakeholder Management.

Year 7 implementation is subject to regular reporting and senior management oversight. Progress against project and sub-project plans is monitored by the department's Program Governance Group via quarterly project status reports which also go to DoE's Corporate Executive. Monthly briefings are also provided to the Minister for Education.

The focus of the project is now moving from a macro level to an integrated school by school level and DoE is responding to risks as they emerge. Sub-project deliverables and risks are being reviewed and updated, and over the coming months a school risk database will be used to identify and address specific issues at individual schools.

Key stakeholders are satisfied with the level of communication provided by DoE

Overall the school principals and other key stakeholders consulted in the audit have been satisfied with the level of communication with DoE central office. School principals also confirmed that DoE central office has listened to their concerns and has responded where necessary. This reflects DoE's focus on maintaining good communications with key stakeholders.

DoE has established a comprehensive and integrated communications and stakeholder management strategy to support the transition of Year 7 to secondary school. The Year 7 Project Team has maintained ongoing communication with professional and parent associations, central and regional office staff and school leaders through regular formal meetings and frequent informal contact.

This includes the following associations, unions and organisations:

- Western Australian Council of State School Organisations
- Western Australian Secondary Teaching Administrators' Association
- Western Australian Secondary School Executives Association
- Western Australian District High School Administrators' Association
- Western Australian Primary Principals' Association
- State School Teachers' Union of Western Australian
- Western Australian Education Support Principals' Association
- Isolated Children's Parents' Association of Australia.

A Year 7 intranet site for school and department staff has also been established and Year 7 information is provided for parents on the 'Schools and You' webpage.

Schools need timely information from DoE to complete their individual planning

For many secondary schools, planning for and successfully accommodating Year 7 is a significant task. Schools need to have timely information on their budgets in order to confirm 2015 subjects and timetables, and recruit the appropriate mix of teachers. DoE plan to confirm secondary school 2015 budgets in June 2014. Any delay will impact school planning processes, and increase the risk that individual secondary schools may not be ready for Year 7 by the start of the 2015 school year.

Ordinarily, secondary schools finalise planning six months prior to the start of the school year. This enables students to select courses of study and the schools to determine the appropriate mix of teachers to be recruited. For 2015, schools will have to plan to offer subjects for an extra year group of students and will be recruiting much higher numbers of teachers than normal, which in turn will take time. This makes timely information on resource allocation critical to school planning and to achieving a smooth transition.

A number of school principals that we interviewed felt that the biggest risk to the successful implementation of the Year 7 transition is uncertainty over 2015 school funding and its impact on their preparations. For some larger secondary schools such as Canning Vale College and Churchlands Senior High School, taking on Year 7 allied to broader growth in student numbers means they will need to recruit up to 40 new staff.

DoE plans to provide schools with budgets and information regarding the new funding model in June 2014 after the State Budget is brought down. Any delay in communicating funding allocations to schools will impact on school planning capacity, timetable construction and the recruitment of new teachers. It would also increase the risk that there will be disruption and the delivery of Year 7 curriculum will not be achieved from day one.

Secondary schools will also be dealing with a number of other changes that are being implemented for the 2015 school year. One principal we interviewed referred to 2015 as the 'perfect storm' because the movement of Year 7 students to secondary schools intersects with a number of other initiatives which have an impact on schools. These include:

- the introduction of a new student centred funding model and one line budgets in non-Independent Public Schools
- the introduction of the National Curriculum
- the exit of the half cohort which will increase Year 12 pupil numbers and require additional teaching hours
- the introduction of new Western Australian Certificate of Education and Vocational Education and Training requirements.

DoE will internally fund the additional \$43 million a year in recurrent costs required to teach Year 7 in secondary schools

DoE estimates that there will be increases in school costs for teaching Year 7 in secondary schools rather than in primary schools. Based on the 2013-14 funding arrangements the estimated differential between Year 7 primary and Year 8 secondary funding rates is approximately 30 per cent or a total of \$43 million a year. DoE will meet the increased cost from its allocated 2014-15 budget.

Differences in curriculum, modes of teaching and facilities mean that teaching a student in a secondary school setting costs more than in a primary setting. In 2013-14 the difference between the cost of teaching Year 7 students in primary schools and Year 8 students in secondary school was \$43 million. This is a point in time estimate based on the 2013-14 funding model. DoE is introducing a new funding model in 2015 and this may change the estimated additional recurrent funding amount for Year 7 in secondary school.

DoE identified the need for additional recurrent funding to cover the additional costs of teaching Year 7 in secondary school in its preparation for the 2013-14 State Budget process. No additional funds were included in DoE's 2013-14 budget. DoE has informed us that additional recurrent costs will be managed within its allocated 2014-15 budget. At the time of audit, the per-student funding based on DoE's new model was not confirmed. DoE's overall budget will be finalised in May 2014 as part of the State Budget process.

Moving Year 7 will have a relatively small impact on the sustainability of primary schools

Administrative structures and resource allocations for schools are based on the number of students attending the school. At the macro level, moving Year 7 will have a relatively small impact on the sustainability of primary schools.

All schools are provided with a classification category which is reviewed each year to ensure that appropriate structures and resources are provided to schools in accordance with their changing student enrolments. Although primary schools will lose Year 7 student funding, Year 7 is often the smallest cohort in government primary schools and their move to secondary schools is balanced by a general increase in the number of students enrolled in kindergarten to Year 6.

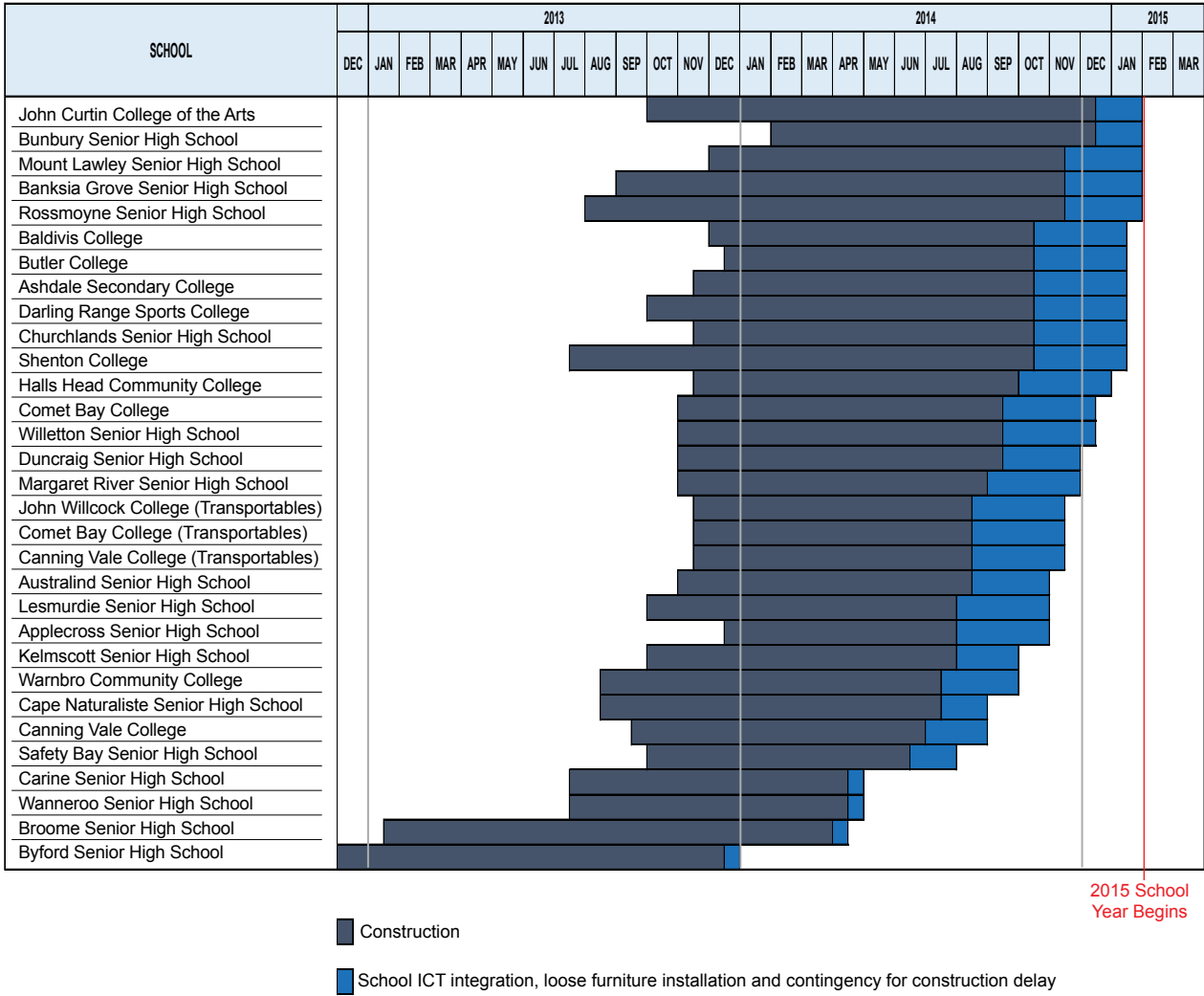
There are 33 primary schools that are flagged for possible reclassification in 2015. Twenty-five schools (76 per cent) are expected to increase their classification class and eight schools (24 per cent) are expected to be reclassified to a lower class. By comparison four primary schools were reclassified to a lower category in 2014.

Although the number of schools flagged for a possible reclassification to a lower category is double the number reclassified downwards in 2014, DoE has advised that they are generally a result of overall student enrolment decline rather than Year 7 being the single contributing factor.

Infrastructure, accommodation and bus services should be ready, but 11 building projects are at some risk

Initial tendering delays have increased project risk as occupancy for 11 of 29 building projects is now planned for early 2015

Based on progress to date against plans and current forecasts DoE and BMW expect all additional school infrastructure (classroom buildings, facilities and equipment) required to accommodate Year 7 students in secondary school to be ready by the start of the 2015 school year. However, initial delays in awarding tenders and starting construction have meant the planned occupancy date for 11 of the 29 projects has shifted into January, including four which are expected to be ready for use on 30 or 31 January, just days before the start of the school year (Figure 1). This increases the risk on these projects, but is mitigated in most cases by a 90 day contingency period built into each project by BMW.



Source: BMW

Figure 1: Year 7 Building Project Dashboard at 7 April 2014, in order of project estimated completion date

The contingency period is the time between when the building contractors are required to have the project complete, and the time the buildings are required to be handed over to DoE for occupation. While the majority of the contingency period is to allow for unexpected delays such as rain, there are processes that are required to be completed during this time. This includes the issuing of a certificate of occupancy, the fit-out of all loose furniture and connecting all information and technology and telephone equipment. BMW estimates that these processes can take up to three weeks, but it can be done quicker if required.

For seven of the 11 schools, the full 90 day contingency is still available. Some of the contingency period for John Curtin College of the Arts, Bunbury Senior High School, Mount Lawley Senior High School and Banksia Grove Senior High School has already been consumed with 50 days, 58 days, 77 days and 79 days remaining respectively. These are also the four schools that have planned occupancy closest to the start of the school year. Coming into a period of the year where weather initiated delays in construction are more common, DoE and BMW must continue to monitor progress and risk, enforce contract provisions and where necessary have strategies in place to accelerate building phases.

The 11 schools are expected to accommodate 2 937 Year 7 students in 2015 (Figure 2), 16 per cent of the total projected cohort of 18 050. DoE should also have plans in place for alternative accommodation for these students to minimise disruption. DoE has advised that from May 2014, principals of schools identified as being at risk of a late completion will be engaged in planning with DoE central office staff.

	School	Practical completion date	Occupancy date	Projected student numbers 2016	Projected Year 7 numbers 2016
1	John Curtin College of the Arts	12/12/2014	31/01/2015	1 374	230
2	Bunbury Senior High School	3/12/2014	30/01/2015	984	173
3	Mount Lawley Senior High School	14/11/2014	30/01/2015	1 585	240
4	Banksia Grove Senior High School	12/11/2014	30/01/2015	336	190
5	Rossmoyne Senior High School	27/10/2014	25/01/2015	2 148	295
6	Baldivis College	17/10/2014	15/01/2015	1 114	300
7	Butler College	17/10/2014	15/01/2015	1 252	347
8	Ashdale Secondary College	15/10/2014	13/01/2015	1 444	271
9	Darling Range Sports College	13/10/2014	11/01/2015	1 069	197
10	Churchlands Senior High School	10/10/2014	8/01/2015	2 152	400
11	Shenton College	9/10/2014	7/01/2015	1 646	294
	Total			15 104	2 937

Note: Banksia Grove is a new school rather than a school receiving additional infrastructure

Figure 2: Number of students that could be impacted by any significant delay in construction of additional Year 7 infrastructure

BMW has identified six projects as high risk. For these projects, BMW is addressing any delay in completion of projects by engaging a time planner to identify critical construction pathways and where necessary accelerate works. The six projects are:

- John Curtin College of the Arts, which has been delayed three months due to the discovery and disposal of asbestos fragments found on site
- Bunbury Senior High School, which was delayed because the project had to be retendered
- Mount Lawley Senior High School, which was delayed due to redesign
- Rossmoyne Senior High School, at risk due to a large project on heavily populated site

- Ashdale Secondary College, at risk due to large project, two buildings to be constructed on the opposite ends of a heavily populated site
- Churchlands Senior High School, at risk due to large project being constructed at the back of a heavily occupied school site.

The time planning consultants for these six projects meet with the builders on a monthly basis to agree on program status and provide a monthly report to BMW that:

- provides a status report against current builder's program
- identifies any potential slippages
- advises on the best approach for recovery of the program if required
- advises when or if acceleration, potentially requiring additional funding, is needed.

DoE's Year 7 supplementary program includes an additional 50 transportables (35 general learning areas and 15 specialist secondary facilities) for 17 other secondary schools. All the transportables have been ordered and are expected to be delivered before September 2014. Unless there is significant delay in the delivery schedule the transportables will be ready for the start of the 2015 school year.

The cost of additional school buildings for Year 7 students is expected to be \$35.5 million less than the original budget

Additional infrastructure to accommodate Year 7 students is expected to cost \$229.6 million (Figure 3), \$35.5 million below the original estimated cost. Savings have been made through BMW design reviews, refinement of design contingencies, favourable tendering results and BMW's normal process to award contracts to the lowest conforming tender. The original \$265.1 million budget allocation was reduced by \$35.5 million during the 2013-14 State Budget process.

BMW assisted DoE by engaging a cost planner and providing budget estimates for the individual projects based on DoE's schedules of accommodation and using estimated building costs. Schedules of accommodation and indicative budgets were prepared to support the program and \$265.1 million capital works funding was approved by Cabinet to provide additional facilities at secondary schools.

The scope of delivery included:

- Project Definition Plan for the program of works with details for the individual capital works projects
- design, procurement, construction, fit-out and commissioning of facilities for 29 secondary schools
- project management capital works projects at 29 schools
- provision of facilities for schools identified with accommodation shortfalls after monitoring of enrolments via the enrolment audit process.

Five per cent of the budgeted \$265.1 million was set aside as a contingency to address potential changes in scope as a result of demographic changes, increased enrolments and unforeseen site issues.

School	Original Estimated Total Cost (\$000)	Current Estimated Total Cost (\$000)	Variance (\$000)
Applecross Senior High School	\$2 400	\$4 821	-\$2 421
Ashdale Secondary School	\$21 200	\$15 601	\$5 599
Australind Senior High School	\$14 100	\$7 618	\$6 482
Baldivis College	\$13 500	\$6 700	\$6 800
Banksia Grove Senior High School	\$13 500	\$8 507	\$4 993
Broome Senior High School	\$7 200	\$7 801	-\$601
Bunbury Senior High School	\$5 000	\$5 000	\$0
Butler Senior High School	\$13 500	\$8 485	\$5 015
Byford Senior High School	\$5 600	\$5 200	\$400
Canning Vale Community College	\$6 200	\$5 030	\$1 170
Canning Vale Community College (Transportable)	\$700	\$2 296	\$1 596
Cape Naturaliste Senior High School	\$4 000	\$3 455	\$545
Carine Senior High School	\$3 000	\$5 009	-\$2 009
Churchlands Senior High School	\$10 600	\$10 352	\$248
Comet Bay College	\$10 600	\$7 225	\$3 375
Comet Bay College (Transportable)	\$450	\$1 351	-\$901
Darling Range Sports College	\$3 000	\$2 788	\$212
Dun Craig Senior High School	\$10 600	\$6 381	\$4 219
Halls Head Community College	\$10 600	\$8 937	\$1 663
John Curtin College of the Arts	\$13 400	\$10 027	\$3 373
John Willcock College (Transportable)	\$600	\$4 000	-\$3 400
Kelmscott Senior High School	\$6 200	\$4 846	\$1 354
Lesmurdie Senior High School	\$3 000	\$2 592	\$408
Margaret River Senior High School	\$3 300	\$4 171	-\$871
Mount Lawley Senior High School	\$10 600	\$8 504	\$2 096
Rossmoyne Senior High School	\$16 400	\$10 879	\$5 521
Safety Bay Senior High School	\$3 000	\$2 947	\$53
Shenton College	\$2 800	\$9 197	-\$6 397
Wanneroo Senior High School	\$6 200	\$4 340	\$1 860
Warnbro Community College	\$13 400	\$6 853	\$6 547
Willetton Senior High School	\$16 400	\$12 015	\$4 385
Sub Total	\$251 050	\$202 928	\$48 122
Staffing FTE		\$750	
Supplementary Program (additional general/specialist transportables and refurbishments of underutilised spaces at identified schools)		\$25 922	
Total Expected Cost		\$229 600	

Source: DoE

Figure 3: The estimated total cost of new school infrastructure to accommodate Year 7 students is under budget

New buildings to accommodate Year 7 will include facilities and equipment

The new buildings and transportables will include facilities and equipment. The Year 7 Project Definition Plan's scope of work confirms that the new classrooms and specialised learning areas, and transportables will include fit-out, and that fit-out was included in the original budget.

As the projects achieve practical completion DoE will install telephones, connect security lines back to their central monitoring stations and set up information technology. If the projects are completed on time DoE has confirmed that it has capacity to have the classrooms and specialist areas ready for the start of the school year. Any slippage in the occupancy date for the 11 schools currently scheduled for January 2015 increases the risk that DoE may not have them ready to use by the start of the 2015 school year.

Six of the eight residential colleges will accommodate Year 7 but there are delays to extra capacity in Merredin and Broome

The CHSHA is confident that six of eight residential boarding facilities will be able to meet the additional demands from Year 7 students and the departure of the half cohort, mainly from spare capacity. However, funding for additional accommodation for 24 students in Merredin and 44 in Broome residential colleges has not yet been approved and the extra capacity is unlikely to be ready in time for the 2015 school year. The CHSHA and the two colleges are working on contingency plans.

The CHSHA provides accommodation, care and services for isolated students in eight regional residential colleges. A boarding service in City Beach also provides for country students attending Perth Modern School. Any vacancies in the City Beach Residential College are filled by country students who are offered places in other metropolitan Gifted and Talented education programs.

Since 2013, residential colleges have managed their enrolments relative to their boarding capacity. This is to ensure they have places available in 2015 for Year 7 students who live closer to their residential college than any other. The CHSHA has also analysed the impact of moving Year 7 to secondary schools and has identified the extent of additions needed to accommodate Year 7 students.

The residential colleges in Albany, Narrogin, Moora, Northam, Esperance and Geraldton have spare capacity and are expected to be able to meet extra demand in 2015. Merredin and Broome residential colleges needed additional capacity to accommodate expected demand from Year 7s. The 2013 occupancy rates for each hostel are detailed in Figure 4.

CHSHA Enrolment Data at 28 February 2013			
Residential College	2013 Capacity	2013 Enrolment	2013 Occupancy
All colleges	829	584	70%
Albany	144	80	56%
Broome	72	51	71%
City Beach	68	60	88%
Esperance	90	75	83%
Geraldton *	96	89	93%
Merredin	48	47	98%
Narrogin	218	133	61%
Northam	43	19	44%
St James' Moora	50	30	60%

* Capacity at Geraldton Residential College in 2012 was 112 places. During the construction phase in 2013-14 the overall capacity was reduced to 96

Source: CHSHA

Figure 4: Occupancy Rates at Country High School Hostels

Increased capacity at Esperance and Geraldton has been met by the existing \$51.9 million Royalties for Regions funding to provide additions and upgrades to residential colleges across the state. Provision for Year 7 was taken into account in planning additional capacity in Esperance which was completed by the end of March 2014. Additions to Geraldton Residential College will ensure that it has enough places to provide for Year 7 in 2015. The works will add 16 new individual bedrooms to the girls' wing and upgrade of an old dormitory to create seven twin bedrooms, new common rooms, indoor activity rooms and refurbished staff accommodation. Work is expected to be completed by July 2014.

Merredin Residential College is currently at capacity and in 2015 demand for places is expected to increase. CHSHA had planned for a stage two building program which would increase the accommodation capacity from 48 to 72 places in readiness for the Year 7s in 2015. The decision regarding additional accommodation in Merredin is expected in the 2014-15 State Budget. A business case and Cabinet Submission for additional accommodation for Broome Residential College was also forwarded to Treasury on 31 March 2014.

There is a risk that additional capacity at Merredin and Broome residential colleges will not be ready by the start of the 2015 school year. CHSHA and the Merredin and Broome residential college managers are working on contingency plans to ensure all isolated students who are offered places can be accommodated.

The PTA has ordered 46 new buses for the 13 per cent increase in demand expected from Year 7 students going to secondary school

The PTA has estimated that moving Year 7 students will result in a 13 per cent increase in bus usage on the regional town and Transperth bus routes used by secondary school students. To meet this demand PTA has ordered 46 new buses for delivery this year at a cost of \$24.3 million. It will cost an additional \$8 million in recurrent expenditure to operate the services. The PTA does not anticipate any increase in demand on the 'orange' school bus service as a result of moving Year 7, as most entitled Year 7 students already use the service.

Secondary school students use the bus network to a significantly greater extent than primary students. This is partly a reflection of the greater distances generally travelled to secondary schools. It also reflects that unlike primary schools, many secondary schools are provided with specific school services.

Students are able to access transport to school through 'orange' school bus services, regional town bus services, Transperth network services and designated Transperth school services.

The PTA has analysed data from student Smartrider cards and has assessed supply and demand across the Perth metropolitan and regional bus services. It has estimated a 13 per cent increase on routes that are used by secondary school students and determined it needs 46 new buses, 36 in the Perth metropolitan area and 10 in regional towns.

In undertaking these calculations both the impact of increased enrolments, as a result of demographic factors, and the impact of relocation have been taken into account. The PTA has also estimated the additional kilometres likely to be travelled by the new buses.

The Department of Treasury and the PTA agreed that a 13 per cent increase in government student public transport usage as a result of the relocation of Year 7 was a reasonable planning assumption. The PTA has received \$24.3 million additional capital expenditure in 2014-15 to purchase the 46 additional buses and will receive \$8 million additional recurrent funding in 2014-15 and 2015-16.

The 46 new buses have been ordered on a variation to the PTA's contract with Volvo Group Australia. The PTA's bus delivery schedule confirms that the buses were ordered for delivery in 2014-15. The PTA has confirmed that the additional services will be in place to meet demand from the start of the 2015 school year.

Enough secondary teachers should be available in 2015, but staffing risks to individual schools remain unclear

Some schools are likely to struggle to recruit the right number of teachers despite the likely sufficient overall supply

DoE has undertaken strategic workforce planning to identify the demand for additional secondary school teachers in 2015, which it estimates at 1 370 teachers. DoE is confident, at a system level, that supply will meet demand. Current information indicates that 1 474 teachers will be available to fill the additional secondary school positions. Workforce planning for Year 7 transition is on budget and expected to cost \$22.4 million from 2013-14 to 2015-16.

Planning now needs to be conducted at the individual school level to identify any schools that may not be able to recruit sufficient trained teachers. DoE has begun this process. It is too soon to know for certain that every school will have trained secondary teachers to teach all Year 7 students in all subject areas from day one.

Although workforce planning for Year 7 will be business as usual, the size of the task is not. DoE had estimated that 1 000 additional secondary teaching positions would be required to teach Year 7 in secondary schools. This figure was based on 2014 staffing per student levels. The actual number of teachers required in 2015 will be dependent on the 2014-15 DoE budget and the number of students enrolled in Years 7 to 12 in 2015. Current planning, based on enrolment projections, budget forecasts, and historical employment trends and student subject choice, suggest that 1 370 secondary teaching positions will need to be filled in 2015, comprising of:

- 860 additional positions to meet the demand of the Year 7 move and exit of the half cohort
- 510 positions to replace secondary teachers expected to retire or resign prior to 2015.

Figure 5 details expected 2015 secondary teacher supply and demand by learning area. This information is subject to change, but forms the basis of DoE's current planning and indicates a supply of 1 474 teachers for the 1 370 additional positions. The likely demand per learning area is based on the current employment patterns of teachers in secondary schools and projected change due to the enrolment of Year 7 students.

DoE's supply source data is based on Switch enrolments, future planned graduate certificates and short courses, graduate and fixed term teacher pool data from the department's Recruitment Advertising Management System, leave data, part time employment data, redeployee data and information from universities.

Learning Area	Demand – number of additional teachers required for 2015	Supply – number of additional teachers available for 2015	Sources of additional teachers			
			Switch program	Graduate teachers in existing pool	Graduate teachers to graduate in December 2014	Other recruitment
English	237	237	60	120	30	27
Mathematics	237	237	125	60	30	22
Science	237	250	100	120	30	0
Society and Environment	237	270	50	170	50	0
Health and Physical Education	142	185	20	115	50	0
Arts (Music, Dance, Media)	119	119	10	68	30	11
Design and Technology (Manual Arts, Home Economics, Business Studies)	119	119	80	13	20	6
Languages other than English	24	34	0	24	10	0
Special Needs education	18	23	8	5	10	0
Total	1370	1474	453	695	260	66

Source: Adapted from DoE

Figure 5: Expected teacher supply and demand by learning area

Recruitment requirements are being discussed with regional and metropolitan schools to identify potential problem areas and DoE will use the school risk database to identify schools that are likely to struggle to recruit sufficient trained teachers to teach Year 7 students. Central office assistance will then be provided to help individual schools recruit staff. DoE anticipates that teachers currently working in rural secondary schools and metropolitan schools in low-socio-economic areas will seek employment in larger secondary schools. DoE expects any workforce shortages in 2015 will be in rural secondary schools.

DoE has strategies to meet the demand for additional secondary teachers and progress to date indicates these will be effective

DoE has established a number of workforce initiatives related to the Year 7 implementation to ensure there is a supply of trained secondary school teachers to meet the expected 1 370 positions that will need to be filled before the start of the 2015 school year. Current information indicates that these initiatives will provide 1 474 secondary school teachers for the start of 2015. Approximately 65 per cent (955) of those teachers will be graduates taking up their first teaching roles.

DoE will continue to monitor the situation and plans to:

- continue the Switch program
- work with universities to encourage graduates to work in public schools
- ensure secondary teachers take long service leave in 2014, not 2015
- retain secondary teachers displaced through the 2014 reduced teacher allocations in relief or other roles in the public system in 2014 so they are available in 2015
- finalise school-by-school supply and recruitment needs following the confirmation of the 2015 budget and school funding allocations
- encourage interstate and overseas teachers with comparable qualifications to apply for positions in Western Australian secondary schools.

Launched in June 2013, the Switch program offers an opportunity for primary teachers to switch to secondary teaching and secondary teachers to expand the range of subjects they can teach. DoE's target is for this program to provide 453 teachers in 2015. At April 2014, 829 teachers had expressed an interest (549 primary and 280 secondary teachers). Of these, 372 have been enrolled in training in graduate certificate courses in secondary science, English, social science and design and technology, special education and mathematics or in short courses in health and physical education. A graduate certificate takes six months full time, or 12 months part time if participants are working.

Assuming all those who have enrolled in Switch complete their courses, DoE will still need a further 81 teachers to enrol and complete the course before February 2015 to meet its target. There will also be another intake for the various graduate certificates in semester two, 2014, which will allow participants who study full time to complete the course before February 2015. DoE will also run short courses at four training providers, with the capacity for 40 to 50 teachers. These courses take six days and are targeted at teachers who already hold an undergraduate degree in the relevant subject area but had chosen to undertake a graduate diploma in primary teaching rather than secondary.

DoE estimates that graduates taking up their first teaching roles will account for up to 65 per cent (up to 955) of the secondary teachers available to fill additional positions in 2015. This is made up of nearly 700 graduate teachers who are currently awaiting placement in the graduate pool or fixed term teachers in their early years of teaching and 260 secondary teachers graduating in 2014. DoE advised that this is a conservative estimate and, based on the Department's customary market share, the number will most likely be more. DoE's rural teaching practicum program and visits to universities are in place to encourage graduate teachers to apply for vacancies in public schools.

The graduate teachers who take up positions in 2015 will have limited practical experience compared to those coming through the Switch program. Supporting and mentoring graduates is normal activity for schools and even though graduates are expected to fill up to 65 per cent of additional secondary teaching positions in 2015, this should not cause significant issues if they are spread across the system. However, a high proportion of graduates in an individual school could make it difficult for that school to provide sufficient support and mentoring.

The remaining teaching positions are expected to be filled by secondary teachers who are currently not employed or are on fixed term contracts or on leave. DoE plans to fill any remaining vacancies with overseas and interstate teachers. LinkedIn will be used as a strategy to encourage overseas teachers to apply for positions. The 'Teach in WA' app will be used as a strategy to encourage interstate, graduate and local teachers to apply for positions in Western Australian secondary schools.

DoE workforce planning will need to continue to monitor individual secondary schools to identify those schools that have difficulty recruiting new teachers and will need central office support.

Auditor General's Reports

REPORT NUMBER	2014 REPORTS	DATE TABLED
7	The Implementation and Initial Outcomes of the Suicide Prevention Strategy	7 May 2014
6	Audit Results Report – Annual 2013 Assurance Audits (Universities and state training providers – Other audits completed since 1 November 2013)	7 May 2014
5	Across Government Benchmarking Audits – Controls Over Purchasing Cards – Debtor Management – Timely Payment of Invoices	1 April 2014
4	Behaviour Management in Schools	19 March 2014
3	Opinion on ministerial decision not to provide information to Parliament about funding for some tourism events	18 March 2014
2	Charging Card Administration Fees	12 March 2014
1	Water Corporation: Management of Water Pipes	19 February 2014



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