

## TEACHER REGISTRATION AMENDMENT BILL 2022

### *Second Reading*

Resumed from an earlier stage of the sitting.

**MR P.C. TINLEY (Willagee)** [2.47 pm]: I would like to resume my remarks about the Teacher Registration Amendment Bill 2022, which is before the house. In the first few minutes of my contribution, I opened by talking ethereally about the role of a teacher, the difficulty of being a teacher, being in the profession generally, and leadership at the front of the classroom, which, in my estimation, is one of the hardest forms of leadership that a person could ever undertake, outside of political party leadership.

Just before question time, I talked about how, in my personal experience, I have seen that good educational outcomes are possible under a tree. I was fortunate to be posted in Lebanon with the United Nations in the 1990s to oversee the ceasefire arrangements between Israel and Lebanon. The sort of activity that was undertaken to support the enduring education of the people in those villages and towns of southern Lebanon was quite breathtaking. The dedication of the teachers in that environment was very significant; they literally undertook classes under the olive trees and in the olive groves of Lebanon. Many of the students who participated in those ad hoc, makeshift classrooms and lessons made their way to Australia. In fact, I ran into one not so many years ago who recounted her experiences in Qaouzah, which is a town in southern Lebanon that I used to frequent as part of my patrolling duties in the United Nations. It is possible, although, in a modern society like Australia and Western Australia, it would require regard to a range of intersecting issues and the observance of regulations whose primary role is the preservation of children's safety. When we actually examine what teachers have to undertake to meet the standards required of a teacher, it really gives light to or underscores the sort of challenges that they have to face.

I had a look at the "Professional Standards for Teachers in Western Australia" as issued by the Teacher Registration Board, and it is not insignificant. For a teacher to abide by these standards is a very high bar. There are seven standards in three domains across the whole document and no less than 37 focus areas that a teacher must meet. Teachers who undertake their formal training will cover this sort of thing and, in the natural course of delivering the ordinary school curriculum, many of these focus areas would be attended to. The professional standards are quite significant. Standard 1 is knowing students and how they learn. Speaking from experience as a father of three boys and a girl, I have found that the difference between girls and boys in the education system is that girls can achieve a good education outcome in very difficult circumstances. Without oversimplifying the gender differences, they have a better capacity to focus on the outcomes they are trying to achieve. Boys, on the other hand, have a problem. Boys do not care what teachers know; they want to know that the teachers care about them. Boys want to be liked and they need to know that the teachers actually like them. My generalised experience as a parent is that when they feel that the teachers do not like them, their educational outcomes and attention to their education is distorted.

It is interesting to know which teachers resonate with kids. Parents of school-age children who have time to chat to them and find out why their child likes a particular teacher know that invariably it comes down to one common denominator, which is the teacher's capacity to understand and care for the child as a human. That is not covered in the professional standards alluded to, yet it is a basic human trait and the quality of good leadership. Good leaders know their team. They know what motivates them and what the intrinsic motivation is for each and every member of their team. Class size matters, and that is why it is important for teachers to have enough time, capacity and resources to spend time with the students who need it, not just the students who need the most attention, because those educational outcomes are significantly important. Knowing students and how they learn is an essential component of the foundation of being a good teacher.

The professional standards address six focus areas. They are understanding the physical, social and intellectual development and characteristics of students; understanding how students learn—that is a story in itself; demonstrating knowledge of students with diverse linguistic, cultural, religious and socio-economic backgrounds; understanding strategies for teaching Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students; understanding how to differentiate teaching to meet the specific learning needs of students across the full range of abilities; and understanding strategies to support full participation of students with disability. That set of focus areas alone is exhausting when contemplating the breadth of different circumstances for each child.

Members who visit the schools in their electorates will see the variations in the teaching quality and potentially the product they undertake to try to mould—the students. It is hard enough when a teacher is fighting socio-economic challenges as well as the normal challenges of curriculum delivery, with or without the requisite resources. Is it any wonder that we have kids falling through the cracks? Unfortunately, that is why the education system in Western Australia, Australia and most of the developed world has reverted to a mass style of education, which is absolutely needed if we are to have an industrial-weighted effort in getting enough students through to year 10 or 12 or some form of vocational training. However, many kids in many of our electorates are square pegs that do not fit in a round hole. We need a variety of opportunities and institutions for them to undertake their education, and we have to find them where we can. For example, North Lake Senior Campus is in my electorate. That was a former

general entry high school for many years but was repurposed many years ago into a year 11 and 12 retreat school, as we call it, whereby kids who do not fit into the system or have fallen out of it can achieve their Western Australian Certificate of Education or other qualification. I went to the North Lake Senior Campus graduation the night before last. It was quite an eye-opener to see the standard of kids. For many of them, English is their second language. They are either children of migrants or migrants themselves. Some of the students had separated from the school system too early and had come back. Generally, they were around 19 years old and above. The teaching style at North Lake is very interesting because it follows an adult teaching model. Everyone is on a first-name basis and the school promotes responsibility and respect. Teaching each and every one of those young adults as individuals is the prime driver of the school's curriculum and leadership. It is a very well led and very well regarded school for giving kids a second chance at achieving educational outcomes.

At the other end of the spectrum is Port School, which is not in my electorate but is of interest to me. It is in the member for Fremantle's electorate. That has made an outstanding contribution as a CARE school for kids who are genuinely challenged in the education system. It has achieved outstanding outcomes. The school has slowly grown over the years to now have about 120 students. When it was in my electorate, I was very happy to help it secure a public housing duplex property opposite the driveway at the entry of the school. The government decided that the duplex would be best used not as public housing but as support for the school. The school turned the premises into a creche and day care centre. Young mums who had unplanned pregnancies at a very young age could go to school and get an education. As the then local member, it was a very proud moment to achieve that outcome for the school so that those people were given that opportunity. It also enabled the school's curriculum to extend to child care, which afforded the opportunity for young mums with unplanned pregnancies in particular to access a range of parenting expertise that they would not otherwise have had. They were given not only the freedom to undertake the education they needed, but also the opportunity to be better informed about the sorts of choices they had as a mother to raise their child.

These are the sorts of variations that a mass education system must allow for to ensure that we provide for as many of our people as possible. As everyone in this place would attest to, without fault, I would say—if I could put words in everyone's mouth—if we could offer any one thing to any individual in our society, it would be a good education. Through that prism, education becomes a gateway to opportunities people would not otherwise have had. The mass education system did not work for me. I often met the scholars on their way home. That was the nature of my schooling life. I was in and out of the education system. When people ask me which school I went to, I tell them it was John Curtin, and when they ask me which program I did—whether it was drama, soccer or whatever—I tell them that it was not a college of the arts in those days. It was not a specialist school. It was a school you fought your way into and fought your way out of. The good days were when you remembered your mouthguard, because it was a particularly tough school in Fremantle in the 1970s. Generally, Fremantle back then was not the Fremantle we know today—the latte-sipping, chardonnay-drinking crew. There was not as much felt jewellery, let me put it that way.

**Mr M.J. Folkard** interjected.

**Mr P.C. TINLEY:** Exactly. There were the orange people; I remember them.

We talk about the successive generations being a bit weaker or softer. I do not know what people say about our children and their generation, but the reality is that they are far more robust in many ways. They are intellectually far more independent than I ever was and they are far less susceptible to peer pressure, although it still persists. My three boys have graduated and the oldest two are in their 20s. I asked them not long ago whether they ever saw fights at their school. They said no, apart from a few guys who had beefs with each other. I told them that there were fights every day at the school I went to. People were always squaring off against each other on the hockey field or on the way to the bus stop. That was ordinary. What a horrible, terrifying environment for certain kids. Maybe the robust kids could handle it, but it was a terrifying experience for the majority of children, and the bullying was rife. Bullying is not as rife these days, although it still needs to be attended to.

We should be grateful that the Western Australian education system is a very good system. We have Schools of the Air and the School of Isolated and Distance Education. They provide quality education. Under this legislation, we are making sure that we will attend to the changing nature of education. As we found during the COVID-19 pandemic, the nature of education has transformed to more of an online digital space. It is about providing education over distance. How many parents with the capacity have decided to make a midlife change, if you like, put the kids in the car, hook up the caravan and do a lap of the country? We now have a curriculum that can go with them and support them along the way. We also have people in the Department of Education who can help to supervise the curriculum on a learning-from-home basis. What a great opportunity to be able to take the kids around Australia and to not lose out on their educational experience, but enhance it through the delivery of an online curriculum and what goes past the car window.

The knowledge and practice aspects of the professional standards required under the Teacher Registration Board of WA are quite onerous and detailed. If a teacher who takes their job very seriously undertakes to meet the minimum

standards, let alone the maximum standards, required by the TRBWA, they should be lauded. Those sorts of people in our society deserve every effort and every aspect of our respect and support. We do it for police, we talk about it for nurses and we do it for teachers.

Finally, I will give a shout-out to school leadership. I talked about leadership at the front of the classroom being fundamentally important to good education outcomes and one of the toughest assignments a person can undertake. The school leadership is very, very important. If I were to critique the management of human resources within our schools and school leadership, one of the problems is this concept of acting principals, which is a blight on this education system. They prevent and hamstring the acting principal from really imposing themselves on that school. Several schools in my electorate have for over 18 months to two years shuffled one principal across to another school on the other side of the metropolitan area as coverage. The deputy principal who is left behind in an acting principal capacity does not have the full-throated authority to undertake management changes, not because they do not have the ideas or the will to do it, but because they do not want to make organisational leadership decisions when, at any moment, the substantive principal might come back and reverse those decisions. It is very much a challenge for the Western Australian education system to ensure the continuity that is required to support the institutional leadership on a school-by-school basis.

On that note, thank you very much for the opportunity to make a contribution to the debate on the Teacher Registration Amendment Bill 2022.

**MRS R.M.J. CLARKE (Murray–Wellington)** [3.02 pm]: I rise today to speak on the Teacher Registration Amendment Bill 2022. I want to acknowledge the members of Parliament who were teachers in their previous life before being elected. What an amazing role they had prior to becoming members of Parliament. I also acknowledge all the teachers of Western Australia for the amazing job that they do. They are the trainers of our future leaders. As members can see in our chamber, quite a few teachers have become leaders.

I have some amazing schools in my electorate. I engage frequently with most of the schools in my electorate. I also encourage my schools to come up to Parliament, have lunch and do a tour. All my state schools have taken up that offer. The Catholic and private school students in my electorate also come to Parliament as guests and do tours with the Parliamentary Education Office. Some of them actually have lunch with me. I want to talk about some of my schools.

Pinjarra Primary School is probably one of my biggest schools in the Shire of Murray. It has a fantastic Indigenous program. A whole classroom has been fitted out for Indigenous learning. They do cooking and language lessons. It has been painted inside and out with Indigenous features. It is an amazing school. I had the privilege of being on the school board during my last term in government. The school is engaging with its students and the community. As a member of Parliament, I went to my first graduation event at that school in 2017. I am really looking forward to next year's graduation at Pinjarra Senior High School—I will move onto Pinjarra Senior High School in a minute—because the students who graduated in 2017 from the primary school will be graduating from Pinjarra Senior High School next year in their brand new performing arts centre and gym. From the day I was elected as a member of Parliament, I have been trying to get this facility for this school that turned 100 years old last year. In 2020, during our COVID recovery period, I was able to make that commitment to the school, along with the Premier and the Minister for Education and Training. The work on the centre was meant to finish this year, but its opening has been delayed until February. I remember telling the students at Pinjarra Primary School at the end of 2017 that by the time they graduated from high school, I hoped they would have their own performing arts centre in which to hold their graduation ceremony. Next year, I will feel so proud to be able to stand up in front of that cohort and say, “Guess what? I promised this building to you and here you are.” That is something that I am very proud of.

I will move on to talk about Pinjarra Senior High School. I went to its large graduation event last night for many different types of students, including a set of twins. The twin sister was awarded dux and her twin brother achieved the highest marks for a VET pathway. It was almost like they were in different realms of education, but both had achieved high distinctions within their cohort. The guest speaker at the graduation night was Skipper, who is engaged to the Mayor of Mandurah, who gave such an inspiring speech. After she sat down, I congratulated her on her speech. She then told me that the guest speaker at her graduation was her now fiancé, who will be her husband next week.

A member interjected.

**Mrs R.M.J. CLARKE:** I know. There is a five-year age difference between the two of them. She said that she did not remember anything he said or that it was him giving the speech. It was not until later when she was talking to one of her friends that she discovered he was the guy who gave the speech at their graduation. It just goes to show that people can inspire others to do great things within schools.

North Dandalup Primary School also sits within the Shire of Murray. It is an environmentally friendly school that wins awards almost annually for being a waterwise, environmentally friendly school. It is a relatively small school with only 100 or so students. It works closely with Dwellingup Primary School, which, unfortunately, has fewer

than 40 students now. This year, the entire year 6 cohort from North Dandalup Primary School was planning to visit Parliament and have some lunch. Dwellingup Primary School has only two year 6 students, so I suggested that they visit with the other students to be part of a larger cohort. After that visit, both schools got together and decided that the two year 6 Dwellingup kids could go with the North Dandalup year 6 cohort on its year 6 camp to make it a nicer experience for the two year 6 Dwellingup kids. The thing that I love about regional schools is that they do not see boundaries; instead of saying, “That’s our school and that’s your school. You do your own thing”, they work collaboratively together and try to make it inclusive for everyone in the region. North Dandalup and Dwellingup Primary Schools are two beautiful schools that work very closely together.

Fairbridge College is also in my electorate. It is a special school for kids who really do not engage at mainstream schools. It has a massive program that enables kids to get certificates in all sorts of areas. When they graduate, the school tries to get work placements for them. In 2019, I took in one of the young ladies. She was about 18 years old and came into my office twice a week over about three months for work experience. She had had no work experience in the past and was totally disengaged from education. From getting her certificates and doing three months of work experience in my office, she went on to gain employment. I am very proud to say that she really has her life in order now. I think Fairbridge got her back on track.

In the Shire of Waroona, I have a district high school. For the metro members who may not know, district high schools go from kindergarten to year 10, and they have graduations at year 6 and year 10. I will be going to that school’s year 10 graduation in a couple of weeks. The students then decide where they want to go. They have the choice of Harvey Senior High School or Pinjarra Senior High School, or maybe a school in Mandurah. Again, it is a really lovely school. I find the year 6 graduation a bit strange because the students are not moving anywhere; they are just moving into another classroom within the school, but they still make the students feel very special about moving into the high school years.

We have some amazing schools within the Shire of Harvey, and I want to talk about Harvey Senior High School. Harvey Senior High School is not an ATAR school; it does not do any ATAR classes. A lot of the students who go there are doing certificates and vocational education and training, or they may go off and do apprenticeships. Harvey Senior High School has produced some amazing members of Parliament, who are in this house right now. The Deputy Speaker, the member for Dawesville and the amazing member for Collie–Preston all graduated from Harvey Senior High School. I think that is amazing. The member for Collie–Preston also went to Yarloop Primary School, and the member for Dawesville went to Harvey Primary School, another great school in my electorate.

**Mrs L.A. Munday:** And Harvey kindy.

**The DEPUTY SPEAKER:** I was actually head boy of Harvey Primary School.

**Mrs R.M.J. CLARKE:** You would have come to lunch with me in my day!

These regional schools are producing some amazing people, including three members of Parliament.

**Mr D.J. Kelly:** Yes, sure—amazing people!

**The DEPUTY SPEAKER:** That is enough out of you, minister. I will call you for the first time.

**Mrs R.M.J. CLARKE:** I have some other schools. Kingston Primary School and Parkfield Primary School, within the Australind area, are probably the two biggest schools within my electorate. Brunswick Junction Primary School holds a very special place in my heart. It is another very small school. On the day of the Queen’s condolence, when we shut Parliament down after 10 minutes of being in here, Brunswick primary was scheduled to come up here for lunch. It is really hard for Brunswick to get up here. The school had to do a whole lot of arranging to get its three year 6 students up here. I decided that I would have lunch with them, and they were able to witness the condolence motion for the Queen. They were sitting up in the Speaker’s gallery, and the official photo taken of all of us standing for the minute’s silence captured the three year 6 students and the principal. I have printed out those photos and will have them signed by the Premier, and I will present them to the three year 6 students. As I said to them, they have made history. Again, for a school like Brunswick, it is very special to come to Parliament. Most of the kids have not even been to Perth, let alone somewhere like Parliament.

As I said, I engage a lot with my schools. On Primary Principals Day—it actually took me two days because of the size of my electorate; I could not physically get to them all in one day—I went around to every single public school and presented the principals with a gift basket of chocolates, wine, biscuits, lollies and all sorts of things. I remember the administration staff and the deputy principals saying, “They will be shared because we all do the work.” The gift was really well received by the principals.

I have the student leaders from all my schools up here for lunches. Tomorrow I have the Waroona District High School student leaders from year 6 to year 10 coming up. I also do a lot of donations to my schools, including graduation prizes. A lot of families within my schools cannot afford to send their kids on year 6 camps, so I always

make donations to help those kids get to the camps. There are sports carnivals, and every year I donate Easter baskets for the schools' Easter raffles, and for Mother's Day and Father's Day.

In 2017, I had only just been elected and I came up with the idea of delivering Easter baskets to all the schools. I had employed only one staff member at that time, and my office was not even set up. We raced out and bought all these baskets, rang the schools and asked whether I could deliver them. When I rang Yarloop Primary School, I asked for the number of students. The 2016 bushfires had struck the year before, and it was uncertain whether there would be enough students for the school to open in 2017. The school told me there were 32 people, including teachers, when I rang prior to Easter. Instead of giving one Easter basket to that school, I bought Easter eggs for every single student and teacher. I figured they had been through a pretty rough time in 2016. I went there, and there was one year 1 student. She was tiny, and I had to kneel right down to see her. She came up to me and said, "This is probably going to be the only Easter egg I get this year." My heart broke, hearing that.

**Mrs L.A. Munday:** Did you give her all 32?

**Mrs R.M.J. CLARKE:** I wanted to! That connection with the kids makes them feel so special, and our teachers do it on a day-to-day basis.

I attend NAIDOC Week and I go to Anzac Day ceremonies at all these schools. It is the hard work of the teachers that makes these events happen. Most of my schools do not have P&Cs or parent participation. It is the teachers and the principals who do these things.

I have attended many graduations. I have been to the Austin Cove Baptist College year 12 graduation and the Australind Senior High School year 12 graduation. I went to the Pinjarra Senior High School graduation last night.

I look back on my own school years. I only went to year 10, and I will explain why. I was at school back in the 1970s, and we had careers advisers in year 7. My primary school went to year 7. When I have lunch or meet with the student leaders in my electorate, I say to them, "Have you thought about what you want to be when you leave school?" Probably 98 per cent of them have already figured out what they want to be. Then I ask the next question: "If you could be anything else in the world, other than what you think you want to be, what would it be?" Some kids pick the same job, but a lot of kids pick something that is actually very achievable but in their eyes seems like a pipedream.

I was asked the same two questions by my careers counsellor in year 7. I was 12 years old. I had really good grades and great attendance at school. I lived across the road from the school, so I could not really wag; mum and dad would see. This gentleman was probably in his late 50s, and he said to me, "You've got great grades. You're very attractive. You could probably be a hairdresser or a secretary. You'll probably get married really young and have a lot of babies, so you'll be a stay-at-home mum." Understand that this was the 1970s. This was how women were treated back then.

He then asked me, if I could be anything else in the world, what it would be. Probably a lot of members know that I am a bit of a political junkie and I have followed politics my whole life. My parents were political activists, and I grew up in a house in which politics was a huge thing. I did not know any different. I turned around and said, "I would love to be a member of Parliament." He laughed so hard that he fell off his chair. Here is this impressionable 12-year-old thinking, "Oh my gosh! He has just said I really cannot be a member of Parliament." Then he went on to say, "You're from a low socio-economic area. You're female. There's no way you'll ever be a member of Parliament." I remember running home in tears and telling my parents.

**Ms M.M. Quirk:** That was tactful of him, wasn't it!

**Mrs R.M.J. CLARKE:** Yes. My father went up to the school and gave him what for. That counsellor was not a very good role model. He is probably dead now, but I would love to have found him and said, "Hey, guess what! It may have taken me 40-odd years, but I became a member of Parliament." My take-out from that is to say to students to never give up on their dreams or career aspirations because they could get there one day. I did and I am standing here today before you all.

**Ms S.E. Winton:** Can I say something about the 1970s, because we are talking about teacher registration reform. In the 70s, if you were a female teacher and got married, you had to resign.

**Mrs R.M.J. CLARKE:** There you go.

Several members interjected.

**Mrs R.M.J. CLARKE:** That is right.

I am proud of the education I got. I went to Balga Primary School and Balga Senior High School. I tell my kids that I came from a low socio-economic area and that that should not stop them from fulfilling their life's dreams.

I believe that it is the teachers of today who will mould our kids. When I ask student leaders who they admire the most, whether it is a sports person, actor, musician or someone with a house, 90 per cent of them always name a teacher. That tells me that the teachers in my electorate of Murray-Wellington are the most outstanding teachers

who inspire their students to achieve big things and to achieve their dreams. I take my hat off to all teachers, because I believe that they are the trainers who will mould our future leaders. I commend this bill to the house.

**MR M.J. FOLKARD (Burns Beach)** [3.21 pm]: I have heard some magnificent contributions to the debate on the Teacher Registration Amendment Bill 2022. The number of teachers on this side of the house is inspiring.

**Ms S.E. Winton:** More than the total opposition.

**Mr M.J. FOLKARD:** There is that too. They could form a faction. Teachers are closely followed by lawyers, which I sort of —

**Mr T. Healy** interjected.

**Mr M.J. FOLKARD:** I rise not to particularise the changes in this bill, because I think that has been covered. Members have spoken at length and I will not go down the same road. In summary, though, it is good that the bill will modernise the Teacher Registration Board of WA. The provisions of the act are almost 20 years old and the changes are much needed for the board to perform its duties. My wife is registered with the board and my daughter is currently studying early childhood education at Edith Cowan University to become a teacher, and I hope that she graduates sooner rather than later. However, I will not talk anymore about that because everyone else has covered it. I am going to talk about some of the schools in my electorate and try to be brief.

We have in my electorate Burns Beach Primary School, which is absolutely fantastically led by Trudy Burke. It is the newest school in my electorate and was built as a result of a 2017 election commitment. But one thing that the school needs, because it is so new and fresh, is an education support centre. That school will have a new education support centre in the district, which is fantastic.

The next school in my electorate is Clarkson Community High School, ably led by Kristy Watson. It is a high school from year 7 to year 12 and is quite small when compared with the size of other schools in the metropolitan area. It has only about 400 students, but its strength is in its pastoral care and the way in which it looks after its kids. It has a small cohort of children, which is just a really good thing. Something people do not know about Clarkson Community High School is that it is the only school in the northern suburbs that has produced a Beazley medallist. Some other flash schools have not, but Clarkson Community High School has.

Clarkson Primary School is currently without a substantive principal because the last principal moved on to another job, but the school is well led by Sarah Chaloner. I am going there for its colour run on Friday. I will take my service dog with me to get covered in dye, I think. I shudder to think about that!

The next school in my electorate is Currambine Primary School, ably managed by Geoff Smith. At one stage that school had 18 demountable classrooms, but the number of them has significantly fallen away. When we were first elected, a couple of those demountables were so dated that they still had asbestos in them. We have managed to tidy that up and Geoff and his team are doing a fantastic job.

The next school is Francis Jordan Catholic School run by Chris Dunning. I have spoken in this place about this school before and its fantastic frog bog. It took me a while to get my head around what a frog bog is. That school has a little area in which it teaches its kids about our environment. I was very proud, as an election commitment, to make that work and it is brilliant.

The next school in my electorate is Kinross College and it is one of the last high schools that go from year 7 to year 10. It is really well led by Dale Beaton. I was told last night that Rod Buckenara who has been the long-term principal will be retiring at the end of the year. I hope to catch up with him before that happens. But Kinross College's biggest issue is its growing pains. It has about 800-odd kids and over time that number will grow, so we will have to look at that in due course.

The next school is Kinross Primary School, led by Therese Gorton. It is a school that just gets it. Nothing more needs to be said. Therese has a fantastic team there. It is close to Kinross College and there are great synergies between the schools, which is fantastic.

The next school in my electorate is a small school by the name of Mindarie Primary School, run by Principal Barbara Bromley. Barbara is a high-performing principal. I will leave it at that. The school's IT is cutting edge. Every time I go there, the school has all these software packages. When it comes to IT, the school gets it. I cannot say anything more than that.

Last night, I went to Mindarie Senior College's graduation night, where I watched some of the outstanding efforts of the kids. That school is so large that it had the graduation ceremony at the Perth Convention Centre. It has only year 11 and year 12 classes, but there are about 600-odd kids and the convention centre is the only facility where the school can hold its graduations, which I think is tragic. I was glad to learn that Jonathan Bromage, who was the acting principal, is now the substantive principal of that school. It was a great night and I thank him for the invitation.

The next school in my electorate is a private school, Peter Moyes Anglican Community School, ably led by Mr Ben Lomas. Ben is a lovely fella. I knew Peter Moyes. He was one of my principals at Christ Church Grammar School many years ago and I get a kick out of thinking that a school has been named after him.

The next school in my electorate is Quinns Beach Primary School. It is in the northern part of my electorate and run by Taylor Webb. Taylor is passionate about bringing other services into the school. Community coordination is key in that environment and I think that he is actually on the money. We need to be able to get allied health services to identify kids at a younger age with specific issues such as FASD and the like. It is a really trendsetting environment. I will watch the work that he is doing and encourage him as much as possible in the future.

John Nowicki is the principal at Quinns Rocks Primary School, which is one of the oldest schools in my electorate. It has been around for many years and its biggest issue is school maintenance. John would love to get photovoltaic panels at the school, but the problem is that the school roofs are so old that they will have to be replaced for that to happen. We will work with the minister to see how we can get that done.

Somerly Primary School is led by Zoe Hadley-Hawley and is one of the newest schools that I have in my electorate. Zoe came up through the ranks of the school. She was the deputy principal and had to deal with the COVID pandemic because the school did not have a substantive principal and she was acting in that role. I remember when she first took on the role, we had a storm in the northern corridor and three feet of water went through the school. She worked hard and organised staff and got everything cleaned. She is a good new principal and I wish her luck for every endeavour in the future.

Sam Fontaine is the principal at St Andrew's Catholic Primary School, a private school. Sam is just a good fella. I remember when I first had dealings with him, he was trying to find some funding so that he could introduce the dancing robots, a coding STEM activity, for his primary school. He dragged me down to the school one morning and, in front of his year 6 students, he said, "Come on, Mark. Come and have a look at this." He had these robots dancing across the quadrangle. It was more entertaining than seeing some of our colleagues in this place, but I will not say any more about that!

The last school is probably the one that means the most to me. Some people in this place may or may not know that I was illiterate when I left school. I probably would have been a student at Youth Futures Community School at Clarkson. I could tell members some funny stories, but time is against me. Richie Furber runs the school and deals with all the kids who fall through the cracks. He gets the kids, the battlers, the ones who have been thrown out of home and the ones who have fallen through the school education system. The work that he does is awe inspiring. I will not say the name of my young nephew, but he went through that school. He went from having no graduation certificate to having a certificate III. I sit in awe of the work that Youth Futures and other CARE schools do for the kids who are real battlers. I can assure members that had my education journey been done today, there is a fair chance that I would be in that environment. With that, I commend the bill to the house, and I thank members for their time.

**MS M.M. QUIRK (Landsdale)** [3.32 pm]: I do not intend to trespass on the chamber's time for too long with my contribution to debate on the Teacher Registration Amendment Bill 2022, but I did want to make the general observation that I am in awe of teachers. I recall a quote that I heard some time ago. It states —

You can learn many things from children. How much patience you have, for instance.

That is certainly the case. We are placing increasing demands on teachers such as a broadened curriculum, discipline issues and many distractions. Some would say that students these days have a shortened attention span, and I think it may well be that there are more distractions. Whatever it is, I assumed the relatively non-frenetic role of being a lawyer, but my mum was a teacher, and, certainly, over the years, I have had many teachers to whom I am very grateful.

This is graduation season, and we have heard from other members about year 12 students graduating. One of the absolute highlights of this job is to go along and see these young people, full of optimism, who have had great values and leadership skills inculcated in them, going out into the world, and the world is very much their oyster.

Last week, I went to two graduations. The first was at Ashdale Secondary College, and I want to congratulate Jacquie Bogunovich, who has just completed her first year as its principal. On these occasions, I usually thank three groups of people. First, I thank both the teachers and the administrative staff at the schools. They exhibit commitment above and beyond and are highly professional in how they go about their duties. Second, I thank the parents. It is very hard to get a good education unless a child has the enthusiasm, encouragement and full support of their parents, which is not always the case. That is the second group of people whom I especially acknowledge. Third, I thank the volunteers at the schools. They perform a range of roles from being on the P&C or the school board to working in the school canteen. At Ashdale Secondary College, for example, there is a STEM day for primary school students, and a lot of female mentors who work in the science, mining or research fields are enlisted for that. That is another role that volunteers take on. Those volunteers very much value-add to the school experience for those students.

The second graduation that I went to was at Kingsway Christian College, which had a small cohort. I think Ashdale had 260 year 12 students; Kingsway had around 100 year 12 students. One of the highlights of Kingsway's graduation is Principal Peter Burton's keynote address each year, which is well considered and shows a great reflection of the values that he seeks to instil in the students. I never leave one of those graduations without having felt that I have learnt something from the principal.

Those were the observations that I wanted to make about going to a graduation.

Using that very much hackneyed phrase, it takes a village to raise a child, it certainly takes many contributors to ensure that our children are educated so that they become fulfilled, happy, successful individuals. That said, I think there is a culture of blame in that during the eight hours of school time, teachers are supposed to be able to do everything that is required for that student, but some parents think that it is not their role to contribute to the other 16 hours of the day when students are not in school. I am very much saddened when I hear that parents are not participating in the education of their children or, although they might be time-poor, are not at least somehow being involved in the school. That is something that we need to encourage.

The final thing that I want to say relates to the announcement today from Loreto Nedlands Primary School. It is in the member for Nedlands' electorate, and it is the primary school that I went to. Loreto Nedlands Primary School announced today that it is closing, and there was an article in *The West Australian* about it. I drove past the school last year and remarked upon the fact that it is a pretty valuable bit of real estate. Even so, I should acknowledge that Loreto Nedlands Primary School began in 1931 and it will close at the end of 2023. The decision to close the school was made by the Province Council of Loreto Australia and South East Asia. It is the only Loreto institution in Western Australia, and the Loreto Ministries Board is very much looking to where it can assist to address disadvantage. I was fortunate when I was in Vietnam to visit a school in the south that Loreto nuns run, and I can understand that the board might feel that the work is more needed in those kinds of environments. At any rate, can I just say thank you very much, Loreto Nedlands Primary School. I only realised that this school was closing earlier today, so I am not able to cite any famous alumni. I lived across the road, so it was unfortunate that I was the kid who always had to stay behind to clean up or do other chores because the nuns knew that I did not have to catch a bus!

**MS C.M. ROWE (Belmont)** [3.39 pm]: I rise to make a contribution to the second reading debate on the Teacher Registration Amendment Bill 2022. I will start by acknowledging the work of the Minister for Education and Training in the other place. She has brought this really important bill to fruition and brought it to this house. This is a very serious and important bill, but, on a lighter note, I would like to take the opportunity, as other members have, to acknowledge the real privilege we have as members of Parliament, particularly at this time of year, in attending all the grade 6 graduation ceremonies. Last week, I attended the Belmont City College year 12 graduation. It is always such a special occasion for not only the students, but also the families. I was sitting next to the principal, and one of the teachers who had been there for, I think, 20 years, leant in and said to me, "This is a really special occasion for so many of our students because oftentimes they are the first person in their family to actually graduate from high school." It takes a village to get some of these kids through high school, so I just want to acknowledge that.

The schools in my electorate are not dissimilar to so many other schools across our great state in that they have the most tremendous and dedicated teaching staff that I have ever had the privilege of seeing in action. That is truly commendable. Teaching is absolutely a vocation; teachers dedicate their lives to the welfare of the students before them, and that is evident every time I set foot in any of my local schools. I was at Cloverdale Primary School just last week for an assembly, and then I was at Carlisle Primary School for a fun run. The teachers are thoroughly dedicated, and that is just so clear when you see the responses from the kids. They feel safe in that environment, and they are absolutely getting the best education possible.

With regard to my own education experience, I am originally from Victoria and went to a school called Braemar College. I probably was not always the easiest kid to teach, but the subjects I particularly liked were English and English literature. I had a really great English teacher who was very indulgent. She actually was not meant to be my year 12 teacher; I took it upon myself to walk into her class and sit down in the front row. She said, "Cassie, you've made a mistake. I'm not your year 12 English teacher." I said, "I know, but I want you to be, so I'm not leaving." She said, "Look, if this is your way of brown-nosing, it's not going to work. I'm going to be even harder on you." I said, "That's fine. I welcome that, because you're clearly the best English teacher in the school." She was truly transformational, but I am absolutely devastated because, clearly, my memory is failing—I am 42!—and I cannot remember her name. But she really instilled a love of literature that persists to this day, and that was transformational.

I also had a wonderful teacher who came over to Western Australia for my wedding in 2010. We always called her "Bu". She was my Indonesian teacher, and Rhonda Davies is her name. We called her Bu because that is the Indonesian word for mother. Although I was dreadful at Indonesian, she definitely took me under her wing and behaved how one would expect a mum to behave. She was a fantastic mentor and it was remarkable in the



environment of a pretty strict school to have an adult and senior teacher talk to me like I was an adult. That was very empowering for a young woman in the 90s. She had a lasting, indelible impact.

I note also as the parent of two young school-age daughters that I have seen how transformational teachers can be in terms of their direct impact on children. I think I am very, very lucky that we have wonderful teachers at all the schools in my electorate. The teachers at Notre Dame Catholic Primary School, where my two girls go, are incredible. When my eldest daughter, Bobbie, started kindergarten, she was so shy that the teachers remarked at the end of the school year, “Bobbie has said a few words this term.” I laugh with the kindy teachers when I see them, because Bobbie now can talk under water; I do not know where she gets that from! But I think that is largely attributable to the fact that she has had wonderful teachers who have really invested in bringing her out of her shell, finding her strengths and helping her to find her way, and that is fantastic.

Before I get into the more serious elements of the bill before us, I would like to take the opportunity, in light of the fact that Friday is World Teachers’ Day, to thank all the teachers, not just in Belmont, but right across WA. They work very hard, and I would also like to acknowledge, from a parent’s point of view, that I get messages on my phone through the school system app, Seesaw. The teachers are sending messages at 7.00 am, or late in the evening, or, indeed, even on weekends. The member for Landsdale touched on the fact that there are a lot of expectations and pressures placed on teachers these days to always be available. I feel for them, because it is a very demanding job. They have to stand in front of classes often of 25 to 30 kids, all day, keep their attention, educate them and keep them engaged. That would be thoroughly exhausting. They work very hard to provide such comprehensive and engaging material for all kids across WA, so I give a huge shout-out to all the teachers in Belmont. I would like to acknowledge that we are very lucky that all our schools across WA have wonderful teachers.

I would like to highlight why we see education as being so important. It can have the potential to change the trajectory of a person’s life. That was very eloquently expressed by John F. Kennedy when he said —

Let us think of education as the means of developing our greatest abilities, because in each of us there is a private hope and dream which, fulfilled, can be translated into benefit for everyone and greater strength for our Nation. One person can make a difference, and everyone should try.

Our teachers are the embodiment of that. They try to elicit the best from our kids. I know that some members have had pretty traumatic experiences in which teachers, unfortunately, tried to squash their dreams—inadvertently, I am sure. I think these days teachers are 100 per cent there to be the champions for our kids, and, hopefully, the parents are as well. I know that in our school system, the teachers are the biggest supporters of the kids in front of them, every single day.

I turn now to the Teacher Registration Amendment Bill 2022. It is a really important piece of legislation that the Minister for Education and Training has brought to this place. There are many consequential changes being made to the Teacher Registration Act 2012, but the one I would like to highlight in my remaining 10 minutes is the strengthening of the powers of the board to respond to matters of child safety involving teachers. Before I continue, at this juncture I would like to acknowledge that the vast and overwhelming majority of teachers are truly fantastic, and that only a minuscule minority of teachers has been responsible for inappropriate behaviour when dealing with children.

The changes proposed in this bill are consistent with the recommendations of the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse. Many harrowing, traumatic and disgraceful stories were brought to light during the royal commission process and the voices of victims were finally listened to in a really meaningful way. It is really crucial for the safety of our children that we adopt the recommendations of the royal commission. It is also an important aspect of the healing process for victims of child sexual abuse. It demonstrates in no uncertain terms that we hear them, we believe them and we are committed to protecting future generations from the indecent acts victims were subjected to and the trauma that they have had to suffer as a result. Survivors of abuse are often the loudest advocates for change. They do not want anyone to go through the pain and trauma that abusers inflicted upon them.

In May this year, abuse survivor Kerri Collins gave evidence to the Commission of Inquiry into the Tasmanian Government’s Responses to Child Sexual Abuse in Institutional Settings. Her story is one that will shock any reader. It demonstrates the need for systemic change in all jurisdictions right across Australia. In the late 1980s, Kerri was abused by a teacher at her primary school when she was only seven years old. A few years later, Ms Collins disclosed the abuse to a new school counsellor, along with three other girls who were abused by the same teacher. Thankfully, the counsellor, the class teacher, family and Ms Collins’s parents all believed the girls. Despite the support that the girls received, these complaints went nowhere. The principal and other teachers made it clear that they did not believe Ms Collins and the other three complainants. In addition, Ms Collins never received any indication of what happened to the complaint that she made to the police at the time. Years later, whilst she was attending university in the early 2000s, Ms Collins discovered that her abuser was still teaching. Understandably, it turned her life upside down and caused her to become depressed and suicidal as she relived the trauma she went through as a child. She

made a statement to the police about the abuse, along with the other three victims, and her abuser was finally charged. A committal hearing was held and she received a summons to give evidence at the trial. Just when she thought she was going to see her abuser face justice, the rug was completely pulled out from underneath her again. Someone from the prosecutor's office called her to tell her that the trial was not going ahead. She was given absolutely no explanation of why the trial would not go ahead. She said —

“I was furious, I was upset, I was angry. I just couldn't fathom how it could go through that process and get to that point for one person to be judge, jury and decide that that's not going to go ahead. I just didn't understand that.”

I can understand that this would have completely derailed her whole life when it happened, and then to think that it was finally going to be dealt with and it was not would be absolutely re-traumatising.

Kerri made a complaint about her abuser to the Teachers Registration Board Tasmania. Her mother wrote a letter to the board and they sought legal advice from a private lawyer. Ms Collins was advised that there was nothing else she could do. After more time had passed, Ms Collins wrote to the minister, prompting a review of the registration board's complaints process. In 2018, Ms Collins was contacted by the police about her abuser. Another person had made a disclosure about the same perpetrator as part of the federal royal commission. Unfortunately, again, this case went nowhere, although Ms Collins later heard that the abuser was on suspension. Ms Collins's decision to give evidence to the commission is brave for many reasons. I cannot imagine how difficult it must have been for her to speak openly about the abuse that she suffered and the trauma that she endured as a result.

After already being let down on multiple occasions over a really extended period of time, I truly admire the determination of Ms Collins to seek justice and then advocate for changes to the system that had not supported her because she did not want to see what had happened to her happen to children. It clearly should not take 30 years and a multitude of survivors coming forward before an abusive teacher is suspended. It is quite appalling to think that complaints were made by several students but that teacher was allowed to continue interacting with children for three decades. It is also hard to process the likelihood that there were so many more victims of this one abusive teacher, and it had been allowed to occur due to the inaction of institutions after the initial complaints that were made back in the 1980s. I am just using this one example but it is not simply anecdotal. Sadly, it is one of many cases. It is not an isolated case. The royal commission shone a light on many instances of abuse. Thankfully, victims were able to come forward, share their stories and feel heard. I think that was part of them feeling like justice was done, potentially. This is why the adoption of the recommendations made by the royal commission is really vital. It will protect children and save lives. Hopefully, it will change the trajectory for other children, so they do not go through the trauma that Ms Collins went through.

Several key changes will be made to the act through this bill to assist the board deal with these disciplinary matters involving teachers. The bill provides that interim orders can be made if the board believes, on reasonable grounds, that a teacher poses a risk to students and that the suspension is necessary in order to protect students. The current requirement for interim orders is that the board must believe that the teacher poses an imminent risk. This is a very narrow requirement. That is part of the issue that has impeded the capacity of the board to suspend teachers in the past. The change means that the board will be able to suspend a teacher's registration. If they are not employed as a teacher at the time, the matter will go before the board. This will remove the possibility of the teacher avoiding suspension and subsequently attaining employment in which they could pose a risk to further students.

The purpose of this legislation is to protect abuse victims and prevent abusive teachers from having access to students. The board's capacity to suspend or cancel a teacher's registration is a powerful mechanism that can be employed to prevent an abuser from having access to potential victims.

[Member's time extended.]

**Ms C.M. ROWE:** Kerri Collins's moving testimony to the commission of inquiry into the Tasmanian government's response to the federal royal commission, as I mentioned, should be of real concern to all jurisdictions because of the time that took to see the light of day. It demonstrates how inadequate reporting and investigative processes can allow abusive teachers to maintain employment and access vulnerable children. That is quite terrifying. The teacher who abused Ms Collins continued in employment for decades. It is difficult to know how many vulnerable students they had access to over that time and potentially how many children were abused.

Governments across Australia have a very clear responsibility to act in response to the volume and severity of abuse that has been uncovered in recent times. As many victims seek justice through the courts, we must act to ensure that perpetrators are not able to continue their abuse due to inaction, neglect or gaps in legislation, which I think is one that we are able to address in our role as members of Parliament. Those levers available to us. The Teacher Registration Amendment Bill forms part of our commitment to the implementation of the recommendations of the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse. I am proud to be speaking on this legislation as a member of a government that works really hard to protect some of our state's most vulnerable

**Extract from *Hansard***

[ASSEMBLY — Wednesday, 26 October 2022]

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Mr Peter Tinley; Mrs Robyn Clarke; Mr Mark Folkard; Ms Margaret Quirk; Ms Cassandra Rowe

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people. Instances of serious misconduct and their mishandling by relevant authorities are hugely damaging to victims. These instances also undermine the confidence of parents in their child's school, teachers and the education system more broadly. It is incumbent on government to ensure that the process of reporting and investigating serious misconduct is effective and protects the victims. Many cases came to light during the royal commission that demonstrated clearly that not enough protection mechanisms were in place. I really hope that this legislation will be an important mechanism to ensure that future abuse does not occur or go the way of Ms Collins's case, which took decades for justice to be obtained. This bill is wonderful.

**Mr T.J. Healy:** How many schools do you have?

**Ms C.M. ROWE:** I have many schools in my electorate, and I am very much looking forward to continuing to work really closely with all the schools in my electorate. The graduation season is upon us, which is an exciting time for all my schools. I cannot wait to get to all the graduations.

Debate adjourned, pursuant to standing orders.