

SCHOOL VOLUNTEER PROGRAM

Statement by Member for Mandurah

MR D.A. TEMPLEMAN (Mandurah) [4.49 pm]: I rise to support strongly the School Volunteer Program, which, as an organisation, provides high-quality mentoring support to many children and young people in schools throughout Western Australia. For over a decade this program has provided fantastic support to many schools and students and now operates in 260 schools in both regional areas and the metropolitan area. Currently, the Department of Education and Training provides nearly \$400 000 a year to the program, and previously it provided nearly \$80 000 for a seconded full-time equivalent department employee before that position was cut. The Minister for Education decided to review all grants from her department, including the funding of the School Volunteer Program. I accept the decision of the minister to review programs but believe that ongoing and increased funding to the School Volunteer Program is crucial. This program is a national showcase for mentoring programs in Australia. The hundreds of volunteers throughout Western Australia who help hundreds of students each week are making a real difference to their lives. I urge the minister to ensure that the School Volunteer Program's value is recognised through increased annual funding from the department for the next four years. I acknowledge and thank the dozens of School Volunteer Program volunteers who work with students in schools in my electorate and in the Mandurah area, which includes 10 Mandurah schools, for their outstanding community service, and hope that the program will continue.