

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION — CONTRACTS

497. Dr A.D. BUTI to the Premier:

I have a supplementary question. The Premier has admitted previously that there will be an increase in the ratio of students to teachers in our schools. Will that result in worse education outcomes for Western Australian students?

Mr C.J. BARNETT: Will an increase from 13.15 students per teacher to 13.53 students per teacher, which is an increase of 0.38 or just over one-third —

Mr D.J. Kelly: Minus the education assistants as well.

The SPEAKER: Member for Bassendean, I call you to order for the first time!

Mr C.J. BARNETT: The question is: will that have an effect on the quality of education? In my view, no, it will not. It is a very small change in the ratio. Indeed, I think the reforms that are taking place more broadly in education are far more important and far more positive. This reform is long overdue. All these questions emphasise that the mob opposite are incapable of fundamental reform.