

Mr Mark McGowan; Mr Colin Barnett; Speaker; Mr John Day; Mr Bill Johnston; Mr Peter Watson; Dr Tony Buti; Ms Janine Freeman; Mr Nathan Morton; Dr Kim Hames; Mr Dave Kelly; Ms Eleni Evangel; Dr Mike Nahan; Mr Tony Krsticevic; Mr Chris Hatton; Mr Ben Wyatt

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION — BUDGET

Matter of Public Interest

THE SPEAKER (Mr M.W. Sutherland) informed the Assembly that he was in receipt within the prescribed time of a letter from the Leader of the Opposition seeking to debate a matter of public interest.

[In compliance with standing orders, at least five members rose in their places.]

MR M. McGOWAN (Rockingham — Leader of the Opposition) [3.00 pm]: I move —

That this house calls on the Barnett government to listen to the community of Western Australia and restore individual school budgets and not make further cuts to education in the 2014–15 state budget.

Today we saw a great demonstration by the people of Western Australia to show what they think about our education system.

Mr C.J. Barnett: It was a strike.

Mr M. McGOWAN: There again is the arrogance of the Premier in relation to that great outpouring of Western Australian concern about the education of our state's children. Is there anything more important than the education of our state's children? I went out there and I spoke to those parents, teachers, education aides and concerned citizens. I met lots of ordinary people from ordinary suburbs and communities around Western Australia who said what they believe, and that is that the fundamental priority of any state government should be the education of the children in our community. Our children have limited opportunities to defend themselves. They cannot vote, they do not have a voice and they do not have the opportunity to put their case, but today parents, families, teachers and staff from across Western Australia came and put the case on behalf of those children.

Mr C.J. Barnett: The Labor Party.

Mr M. McGOWAN: That is right; Labor was out there standing with those people, because they are good and decent people and they are doing what is right for their kids and their communities. I will tell members something: people are deeply offended by the Premier's attitude towards them. We saw it today in question time. Somehow the Premier has plucked out the figure that more than 3 000 teachers who were not at work today were not at the rally, yet I did not see him there. I did not see him there meeting people; instead he was cowardly hiding away under his desk in his office, afraid to go out there and meet with or face the people—cowardly, shockingly hiding away in his office. It was only just up there —

Point of Order

Mr C.J. BARNETT: I have a point of order.

The SPEAKER: The Premier.

Mr M. McGOWAN: This is not a point of order, and you know it!

Mr C.J. BARNETT: That was not only untrue, but also unparliamentary. Mr Speaker, I was not even in the building.

Mr D.J. Kelly interjected.

The SPEAKER: Thank you, member for Bassendean. I call you to order for the second time. Points of order are to be heard in silence. You know the rule in this house that you are not to bring other members into disrepute; Leader of the Opposition, I remind you of that.

Debate Resumed

Mr M. McGOWAN: There he was today, in question time, abusing the teachers of Western Australia —

Withdrawal of Remark

Mr J.H.D. DAY: The Leader of the Opposition referred to the Premier as being “cowardly” and I think he needs to withdraw that comment.

The SPEAKER: Okay. Leader of the Opposition, I have heard from the Acting Clerk that the word “coward” is held to be unparliamentary, so I would say that “cowardly” is also unparliamentary. Please withdraw that.

Mr W.J. JOHNSTON: What is the word?

The SPEAKER: “Cowardly”.

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Mr W.J. JOHNSTON: Yes, but how was the word used? As I heard it, the Leader of the Opposition said that the Premier acted cowardly; he did not say he was cowardly. He said that was his behaviour and there is a long history of the usage of the word in that manner.

Ms E. Evangel interjected.

The SPEAKER: Member for Perth, I formally call you to order for the first time today. The member for Cannington has raised a point of order. I heard the Leader of the Opposition say that the Premier was acting cowardly by hiding under his desk, so I ask him to withdraw that.

Mr M. McGOWAN: If that is your ruling, Mr Speaker, I withdraw.

Debate Resumed

Mr M. McGOWAN: This is from the Premier who runs in here and abuses people at a moment's notice. The Premier has a history of yelling and screaming abuse in this place. The Premier has done it today about our state's teachers. The Premier has impugned their motives and accused them of things without knowledge of the facts. That is exactly what he did in question time today. The Premier attacked parents across Western Australia who care about education. I want to read this out as I do not think it got sufficient attention at the time; it is from "Coffee with Colin" on 27 February this year. I advise the Premier not to have any more "Coffees with Colin" because every time he does, he makes a big mistake. This question was posed by a journalist —

PERTHNOW: But some parents would argue why are we spending money on Elizabeth Quay and a new stadium when we're cutting public education? What do you have to say about that?

PREMIER: What I'd say to you and people listening, (is) get a life.

Mr C.J. Barnett: That is right.

Mr M. McGOWAN: He says it once again; he says, "Get a life." The question was about parents across Western Australia who care about their children's education and the Premier tells them to get a life. How arrogant and disrespectful to parents who care about their children's education. Many of us in Western Australia are parents who care about our children —

Mr P.B. Watson interjected.

The SPEAKER: Member for Albany, you have been shouting out consistently now. I call you to order for the third time. I want to hear the Leader of the Opposition in silence.

Mr M. McGOWAN: All those teachers and parents at Parliament House and the tens of thousands across Western Australia who protested today need to know that the Premier of the state has said to them and repeats today in Parliament, "Get a life." That is what he thinks of them. As I said at the rally today, they have a life and their life is about their children, because they care deeply about their children; they care about what happens in the schools. The reason that this matter has received such attention from families and communities across Western Australia is that this is not a cut to the so-called fat cats in head office or to the bureaucrats in "Silver City" or to those areas of education that individual students do not see; this is a cut to individual schools across Western Australia. That is the difference. There are 800 public schools across Western Australia, from the centre of Perth to the most distant reaches of our state.

Mr P. Papalia interjected.

The SPEAKER: Member for Warnbro, I call you to order for the third time.

Point of Order

Mr P.B. WATSON: I do not know what he is called now—the member for Merredin —

Mr B.J. Grylls: Pilbara.

Mr P.B. WATSON: Pilbara, sorry. He was calling out to —

The SPEAKER: Member for Pilbara, I call you to order for the second time. I think that has sorted that out. If members want to talk, can they move back to their seat? I do not want to hear any shouting out from the member for Warnbro, the member for Murray–Wellington or the member for Pilbara. I want to hear the Leader of the Opposition.

Debate Resumed

Mr M. McGOWAN: This issue has received such prominence because these are cuts to individual schools and programs, the likes of which we have not seen before. I want to explain to members the evidence I have for

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saying that. This is what the director general of the Department of Education Sharyn O'Neill had to say on 7 October 2013 before the Education and Health Standing Committee. I know the director general well; she has been in the role since 2007. She has been in education for 30 years —

It is not easy to have people tighten their belts when schools have never before had to tighten their belts in that way ...

She is saying that this is the first time the cuts to education have ever been imposed in this way on individual schools. It is not at the head office level. It is not taking people out of those roles in head office; it is taking people, jobs, money and support out of individual schools. That is why we have 20 000 people across Western Australia showing up at these rallies to express their concerns. What we see from the government is a denigration of those people. We have the Minister for Education out there implying that what they are doing is illegal.

Mr C.J. Barnett: Unlawful.

Mr M. McGOWAN: It is the same thing. The Minister for Education is saying, in effect, that those parents expressing concern are engaging in criminal behaviour. That is what the Minister for Education, with the Premier, is saying. The other reason people are so upset about this issue is that the whole way through, they have been lied to by the government. At the start, when those cuts came out, the government said, "These aren't cuts; these are reforms." That was the first line. Then it ran the old chestnut, "Oh well, in absolute terms, the budget is going up." Therefore, the Premier argued that it is not actually a cut, when we all know that every year the budget in education goes up because it automatically goes up. Given the increase in the number of students, the increase in teachers' pay and inflation, of course it is going to go up. It has gone up every single year over the last 100 years; of course, it will go up. But within that, there are massive cuts to individual schools, which is what I was talking about before.

The first line was, "Oh, there's not a cut." The government gave in on that one after a little while. Then we heard the education minister's line. I am sure members will recall the celebrated line on 6PR radio, when he said, "There will be no job losses." He said that on the Thursday. Four days later, hundreds upon hundreds upon hundreds of jobs were lost in education. The people of Western Australia were lied to. Once again, we heard what the Premier said before the election. I will read it out to members again. He said it numerous times, but in September 2012, immediately before the election, he said —

I make it very clear that there are no cuts, proposed or planned, for staffing within the public sector—none at all ...

The Premier said that to the people of Western Australia before the election. He said it again after the election. Of course, now he says that we just need to move on from what was promised in the election campaign. He said last week, "Let's just move on. That was a year ago." Do members remember the Premier's comments about these things last week, when he said, "Why would we worry about what was promised in an election campaign? That was a year ago. Who would worry about that"? Only the people who voted based upon those commitments would worry about that. A lot of those people who were at the front of Parliament House today—those 20 000 Western Australians—would have voted for him on the back of the promises that he made and, once again, they were misled.

Let us look at what the cuts actually are. There is \$183 million over this calendar year. It is predicted that the amount will go up in each of the financial years from this point forward. It is \$183 million in one year. No doubt the government will argue that, in a \$4 billion budget, that is just a small part of the budget. But what does it do at a school level? It means larger class sizes. In the senior years, it means a loss of course offerings for those students who perhaps need those courses to score the best marks to go on to university or the like. It means a loss of aide time and support, in particular in those early years—kindergarten and preprimary. It means a loss to individual school budgets of the discretionary money that they spend on literacy and numeracy programs. We should remember that. They have discretionary money that they can devote to those children who are struggling in their schools for literacy and numeracy. In effect, it means that every single school across Western Australia will suffer as a consequence of these changes. Then we see the excuses. I want to run through two of them at least. First of all, the Premier referred to "the student-centred funding model". I am pretty sure all those students and parents would rather have a funding model that provides more money for literacy and numeracy than this so-called student-centred funding model, which just pulls money away from the schools.

Mr C.J. Barnett: It is the Gonski model.

Mr M. McGOWAN: Then the Premier runs the line, "It's Gonski focused."

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Mr C.J. Barnett: It is!

Mr M. McGOWAN: When the federal government provided Gonski money to Western Australia—\$31 million—he took \$25 million of it away immediately after in the midyear review. He should not come to us running this Gonski line after what he did to the Gonski model. Gonski was a national debate about maintaining levels of funding for education and the commonwealth increasing it. All he did was cut state money and then take out that \$31 million given by the commonwealth immediately after it was given in December last year. The other thing the Premier says is, “Oh well, we’ve got to live within our means. We’ve lost GST revenue and the like.” The Premier has had massive revenue increases every year that he has been in government. Yet, under this Premier, we have lost the AAA credit rating and the state’s debt levels have blown out by 700 per cent. We have had record revenue growth. However, the Premier blames the GST, and guess who signed the GST agreement? It was the Liberal Party at both state and federal government levels. Despite all that, the Premier needs to know—he should read the midyear review if he wants to find this out—that we have the highest levels of revenue per capita of any state in Australia. Despite all that, what does he concentrate on? Where does he go when looking to cut funding because of his own financial mismanagement? He goes straight to schoolchildren. They cannot vote; they cannot defend themselves. Those who are most needy—those children out in the remote communities who are losing 105 Aboriginal education officers—cannot vote. The Premier just rips the support away from those kids.

I want to close on that point. Those kids out there—I have been to numerous remote schools—rely upon those Aboriginal education officers. They are role models for employment and ways forward and offer guidance for those kids who often have very little. What does the Premier do? He rips away those supports. When we raise it in this place, he just pooh-poohs the issue. I challenge the Premier. He should go to the Dampier Peninsula or to some of the communities in the Kimberley and meet the people at those schools. Admittedly, many of them are on annual contracts. But he should meet them. They are losing their jobs. Those kids are losing their aide time. They are losing those role models. If the Premier wants to deal with some of the issues out there—perhaps the dysfunction or issues that confront those communities and those people—that is the way to do it. He should provide them with those role models; he should not rip them away.

MR C.J. BARNETT (Cottesloe — Premier) [3.18 pm]: It is all a bit rich for those who have been here for a while to hear those comments from a Leader of the Opposition who is a former education minister. People will remember the 2008 election. After months of delay, the then government was unable to settle a wages agreement with teachers. This government came in and increased teacher salaries by six per cent, which immediately brought stability and confidence to the education sector. Some members might also recall that when the Leader of the Opposition was education minister, at the start of the school year dozens of schoolteachers, if not up to a hundred or more, were not in front of classrooms. Year in, year out, the opposition could not staff our schools at the beginning of the school year. Since this government has come to power—first, Dr Elizabeth Constable was the education minister and now it is Hon Peter Collier—we have had teachers in front of every classroom throughout those years. That is commitment to education. I was an education minister quite a long time ago, but following a period during which there was a lot of controversy in the schools, I visited 600 schools. I made 600 school visits within a five-year period; there were 180 in one year. Other Liberal–National Party education ministers have done the same thing over the years. So the Leader of the Opposition should not come in here and try to lecture us.

Mr P. Papalia: I take it you went to a state school.

Mr C.J. BARNETT: I went to state schools; I am a product of the state school system.

Mr P. Papalia: So am I. That’s where my kids go, too.

Mr C.J. BARNETT: What is the member’s point?

Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER: Members! Thank you.

Mr C.J. BARNETT: I am a proud product of our state school system. I respect it and I have been part of it. I will quote a few figures. I am sure other members will say the same thing, but I want to make a more significant point. As we all know, and should be honest about, since this government has come into power spending on education has increased from \$2.8 billion to \$4.4 billion over a five-year period. That is an increase of \$1.6 billion, or 55 per cent. No-one can say that this government has been lax in funding education in this state. It is the most rapid and significant increase in history. During this government’s term, we have built 33 schools and 800 classrooms have been added to the public school system. This year alone, 75 capital works programs are underway in our government school system at a cost of \$538 million, targeted primarily at year 7 students going

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into high school. The figures I read out during question time show that the level of funding for government schools in this state is significant; it is thousands of dollars above that of other schools. State government funding for girls and boys in state government schools in Western Australia is \$18 731 per student, which is the highest of any state. The lowest is \$13 800 in Victoria. That is a difference of \$5 000 for every single boy and girl in a system that has well over 250 000 students. That is \$5 000 more per child in this state than in the lowest state, Victoria.

Members opposite cannot say that this government has in any way avoided or reduced spending in schools. Our student population is growing rapidly. Last year, from memory, we expected an additional 3 000 students, and something like 8 000 turned up on day one. Why? Because more people are coming to Western Australia from overseas and interstate than to any other state because the opportunities, the quality of life, the quality of health care and the quality of education is stronger and better in this state. All members opposite do is try to find ways to belittle, attack and undermine community confidence in government schools. That is what they do. That is their method.

I will not go into education assistants, because I am sure some of my colleagues will cover that area, other than to say that the numbers of education assistants increased from 4 500 to 7 500. That is way beyond what is the case in any other Australian state. No permanent education assistants have lost their jobs unless they chose to leave voluntarily.

Mr D.J. Kelly interjected.

Mr C.J. BARNETT: Yes, those on contracts in many cases were not renewed. They were not permanent employees. Eighty-five per cent of education assistants are permanent employees and they still have their jobs. Every child who qualifies for an education assistant—because of the condition of their health or disability, whatever it might be—has one. That has not changed.

I will talk about one other point. There are schools that have a high proportion of dysfunctional families, low socioeconomic groups, domestic violence, crime—a whole host of things. This government has committed to build 16 child and parent centres in the most vulnerable school and schoolchildren areas. Sixteen centres are underway. It costs a lot of money—they cost millions of dollars each. That will be for those children most at risk because of their family, or even lack of family, or the social environment in which they find themselves. We have not only committed on a macro level to fund teachers and schools, but also directed additional funding into those schools and those children who are most at risk. I am very proud of that, as are all members on this side of the house.

I will be interested to hear whether members opposite support this. In some areas, particularly in metropolitan areas, I do not think the choices for children in secondary education are adequate. That is not the fault of anyone; they are simply areas where, for whatever reason, modernisation has not taken place. There are other areas but the two areas that this government has identified are Fremantle and Armadale—both of which, if you like, are Labor strongholds; they are not Liberal or National Party seats. The Minister for Education and I visited secondary schools in the Fremantle area. We will return to Fremantle in a more public forum to discuss some of the options. The minister and I will also visit Armadale in the next couple of weeks or whenever it is —

Dr A.D. Buti: On 28 and 29 April.

Mr C.J. BARNETT: Okay. The Minister for Education and I will visit those schools in Armadale. I have visited most of them previously but that was some time ago. We will visit those schools. We will talk to the principals and then similarly we will have a wider, more public discussion. I hope that opposition members from the lower and upper houses actually have the courage to look at what are the best educational options, and what can be done to improve educational choices and opportunities in those areas. I remember a similar exercise took place around Belmont when I was the Minister for Education. To his great credit, Hon Eric Ripper—even though his own son was involved in one of the schools—actually stood in public forums and took part in a constructive rebuilding of secondary education. I hope that members opposite are prepared to do the same. There are no votes in it for us at all—they are Labor seats—but those children do not have the opportunity that they deserve.

Ms S.F. McGurk interjected.

The SPEAKER: Member for Fremantle, you can have a turn to talk later. I call you to order for the first time.

Mr C.J. BARNETT: When we go back, the member for Fremantle will be invited. She does not have to agree with me, but I hope she takes a constructive view rather than just comes out and criticises, because education is far more important than that. Look back at the history. It was the Liberal–National government that introduced kindergarten and preprimary for every boy and girl in every government school, in every Catholic school and in

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every independent school across the state and, as I said earlier, to this day no other state in Australia has matched that. The great advances in education have been led by this side of the house, not by the Labor side.

DR A.D. BUTI (Armadale) [3.26 pm]: It is very interesting that the Premier has lost his mojo. When there was a public rally about local content, to his credit he came out and addressed the audience, but he was nowhere to be seen today.

Mr C.J. Barnett: It was an unlawful strike—that is why.

Dr A.D. BUTI: Unlawful! These teachers, who are passionate and who will actually have their pay docked for not going to school today, have done that because they care about the quality of education in public schools. The Premier can say it is an unlawful strike and only a few thousand turned up, but how would he know that only 5 000 turned up? Is the person who counted 5 000 teachers today the same person who counted the number of 457 student visa holders for the budget? We know that was out by a factor of two or three! That is absolutely disgraceful, Premier. The Premier has complete contempt for people who stand up for the students and for the quality of public education in Western Australia.

Of course, the member for Forrestfield will stand and speak on education shortly, as he always does. He had better be careful, because if his electors find out that he supports a measure that cuts millions of dollars from his schools, he may be a one-termer. I actually like the member for Forrestfield because we are on a school committee in the Armadale region. I dare him to go to Cecil Andrews Senior High School today and repeat the speech that he is about to give, because he knows what the response will be. How absurd that \$183 million has been cut out of the education budget. Over \$2 million has been cut from the electorate of Armadale. It is okay for the Premier to say that he and the Minister for Education will visit Armadale at the end of April to talk about the quality of education in Armadale—I presume it is about Cecil Andrews and Armadale Senior High Schools. That might be fine, but what about all the primary schools that have been absolutely decimated? The Premier made the point that we should get out to our public schools—we do! We are told that they are struggling under this government's slash-and-burn policy. It is not reform. Do not dare get up, member for Forrestfield, and talk about reform. This has nothing to do with reform; it is slash and burn. The Premier spoke about the new funding model for next year, not this year. The architect of that reform, Richard Teese, has said it will be hard to engage in that reform if the government engages in a slash-and-burn program and cuts \$183 million from the education budget.

The Premier also mentioned that all the students with special needs are being catered for. I am actually on the committee of the Armadale Senior High School education support centre, and I can tell the Premier that his cuts are hurting. As a result of the cuts, some programs that the mainstream school used to provide to children in the special needs school are now no longer provided. Do not stand here and tell us that kids with special needs are being catered for. A child at another school in my electorate cannot feed or go to the toilet themselves. We would think they would have the assistance of an education aide five days a week; they have an education aide for three and a half days. Therefore, the teacher has to assist that student on the other one and a half days. The teacher has to leave the classroom when the student needs to go to the toilet. The Premier should not dare get up here and say that children with special needs are being catered for because under his program and his slash-and-burn policy, they are not being catered for. He should visit the schools. He should not tell us to do so. We get out there all the time. We are being told day in and day out that schools are struggling to cope with the Premier's slash-and-burn policy. It has nothing to do with reform.

The Premier said that at the beginning of the school year, every class had a teacher in front of it. Every class did have a teacher in front of it. They were large classes. But some classes did not even exist anymore. The member for Forrestfield would know Kelmscott Senior High School very well. It is considered to be the stellar high school in my electorate. The member for West Swan and I are graduates of Kelmscott Senior High School. As a result of these cuts, some courses in year 11 and 12 no longer exist. Kelmscott Senior High School, which is the biggest public school in the south east metropolitan area, is not offering any IT courses for year 11 and 12 students this year. No Australian tertiary admission rank subjects such as computer science, design, technical graphics and applied information technology are being offered at Kelmscott Senior High School.

What was that, Premier?

Mr C.J. Barnett: I'm not talking to you.

Dr A.D. BUTI: I could repeat the word that the Leader of the Opposition used but it might be considered unparliamentary.

Mr C.J. Barnett: How many children are in that school?

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Dr A.D. BUTI: There are 1 500 in Kelmscott, and courses are being cut in year 11 and 12. Many kids in this lower socioeconomic area do not have the pathway to get to university because of the government's cuts. Kelmscott Senior High School is not offering ATAR subjects.

Mr C.J. Barnett: I don't think you'll be invited because I don't think you'll be able to behave yourself.

Dr A.D. BUTI: The Premier says to the member for Fremantle that he will invite her, though she does not have to agree with him. I will not be invited because I dare to not agree with the Premier. I challenge the Premier any day, any time to have an education debate with me in Armadale.

Mr C.J. Barnett: It is not a debate; it is about remodelling Armadale's education.

Dr A.D. BUTI: The point is that the Premier has no idea about the quality of education. He has no idea of the damage he is doing to the students and to the quality of education in Western Australia. More than 5 000 teachers appeared out the front of Parliament House today because they are passionate about the quality of education in public schools in Western Australia.

MS J.M. FREEMAN (Mirrabooka) [3.33 pm]: One really has to be an April fool to cut funding at our schools and to deprive the education of kids and the wellbeing of our community. These workers, teachers, education assistants, support staff, parents and communities —

Ms E. Evangel interjected.

The SPEAKER: Member for Perth, I call you to order for the second time. I do not want people drowning out the other members.

Ms J.M. FREEMAN: I saw representatives out there today from some of the schools in the member for Perth's electorate whose funding was cut.

Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER: Member for Mandurah, earlier I told you that I had called you to order once. You have actually been called to order twice. I am going to exercise some latitude. Member for Willagee, I call you to order for the first time. You are drowning out the member for Mirrabooka.

Ms J.M. FREEMAN: Those workers, teachers, education assistants, support staff, parents and communities did not participate in the community day of action in their thousands because they are greedy. Western Australians want to maintain what they have.

Mr N.W. Morton: Did you write your speech?

Ms J.M. FREEMAN: I wrote it. I need to read it because I have a point to make and I want to make it.

Western Australians want to maintain what they have; they want to grow the potential of their kids, not undermine their development.

Let me tell members about Ms M, an inspirational teacher at one of the schools in Mirrabooka who works tirelessly on the music program. She was out there today. The music program ensures that all students feel engaged because they have been participating in a two-year-old school choir. It performed recently and got accolades at the recent Mirrabooka Harmony Day. Over the past two years this choir has grown to be an effective behaviour management tool, an educational instrument and a point of pride at the school. It is threatened as a result of these government cuts. What is worse is the proposed cuts to the music program. Ms M is beside herself, as students blossom in her music classes. One student, challenged by his culturally and linguistically diverse background and learning difficulties, has excelled in Ms M's music class, receiving his first ever A-grade mark. The pride and confidence that he has gained from his music studies and the pride that his parents have in him moves across to other learning areas. Under the massive cuts to this primary school of \$373 000 and more to come, this program looks set to be cut out or radically reduced. How is that good for kids?

The community day of action is about hope—hope born from anger that people who should know better will do better in the upcoming budget. This is not about pay and wanting more; this is about not wanting less in a time of growing student population. This is about not wanting less in a time of increasing state government income and revenue. The government is asking principals to do more with less and manage the most destructive changes to education in years at a time when it is also forcing them to take long service leave.

Point of Order

Extract from Hansard
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Mr N.W. MORTON: I did pass the comment that the member appeared to be reading her speech. She then admitted to reading her speech. I thought, under the standing orders, that it was not possible for the member to read her speech directly.

Ms E. Evangel interjected.

The SPEAKER: Thank you, member for Perth! I call you to order for the third time.

Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER: Member for Girrawheen, I call you to order for the third time. Member for Forrestfield, I am just going to ask you to let the member for Mirrabooka continue.

Withdrawal of Remark

Dr K.D. HAMES: I clearly heard the member for Bassendean say to the member for Forrestfield, “I can’t wait to read your suicide note.” That is absolutely totally inappropriate.

The SPEAKER: I never heard that. If you said that, member for Bassendean, I ask you to withdraw that.

Mr D.J. KELLY: I withdraw.

The SPEAKER: I have asked for points of order to be taken in silence—number one. Let us settle down and carry on.

Debate Resumed

Ms J.M. FREEMAN: As well as taxing schools for long service leave at \$600 a teacher and \$400 a support staff member each year because of the government’s failure to manage long service leave, it is directing school leaders to take their long service leave. While it rips out funds from schools, at the same time it is ripping out experience and expertise in a time of change, which undermines good management.

Point of Order

Ms E. EVANGEL: Personally, I do not get offended at somebody from the opposite side reading but the fact is that every time somebody on this side reads, even if it is a new member, we are called on a point of order. It would be appreciated if they practised what they preached.

The SPEAKER: That is not a point of order. I do not accept that point of order.

Debate Resumed

Ms J.M. FREEMAN: There are two schools in the local area that have had rolling principals and acting principals but at this time of uncertainty, the government has requested that these principals and other principals take long service leave to meet its quotas and bottom line budgets. This undermines the capacity of these schools to redevelop a strong culture. Teachers and administrators love their schools. They strive to do their best for their kids and build a community that they can be proud of. That is why they are taking action—because it matters to the WA community. It matters to Trinity, who came to Australia as a refugee and was assisted by ethnic assistants at her children’s school to settle them and to help them succeed in their education such that her eldest daughter is now a youth leader in the WA community. The ethnic education assistant was vital for Trinity to understand the issues around education. She gained confidence to become a valued member of her school board. Would this have happened without the vital work of the ethnic education assistant? She believes it would not.

Western Australia benefits from public education. That is why the community is fighting these cuts. The community knows what the government refuses to acknowledge—that all of society benefits when public education systems flourish and we lose when it is starved of vital resources. Schools such as Ballajura Community College has classes in areas designed as community corridors. I spoke to an Aboriginal education officer the other day who was told that she will have to be redeployed for one day a week. It is not tenable for her to go to another school as she is already at two. She is permanent, but now she has been told she should keep splitting her time. It is not tenable for her to work with students or to do her job at yet another school. The government should reinstate school funding in the budget. It is warranted. It is not about greed; it is about need.

DR M.D. NAHAN (Riverton — Treasurer) [3.40 pm]: I would like to make a few comments on this matter of public interest. This is April Fools’ Day, especially for members on the other side! For Labor members to criticise this government for not spending on public education is really a joke. I take members back to 2008 when we came into government. There was a lack of teachers at the front of classrooms. Teachers’ morale was at rock bottom. Teachers remember outcomes-based education—the disaster—the frequent changes of directors general, and the low pay. At that time, Western Australian teachers were amongst the lowest paid of all the states, despite high costs.

Mr Mark McGowan; Mr Colin Barnett; Speaker; Mr John Day; Mr Bill Johnston; Mr Peter Watson; Dr Tony Buti; Ms Janine Freeman; Mr Nathan Morton; Dr Kim Hames; Mr Dave Kelly; Ms Eleni Evangel; Dr Mike Nahan; Mr Tony Krsticevic; Mr Chris Hatton; Mr Ben Wyatt

[Interruption.]

The SPEAKER: Who has a mobile phone that is playing music? The music man from South Perth, switch it off, please.

Dr M.D. NAHAN: During the period of Labor governments from 2001 to 2008, the number of kids in the public education system declined by 15 000. There was a flight from the public education sector because of Labor. Under the Liberal–National government, all classrooms have teachers. We have increased the number of teachers dramatically and morale is high. They are the highest paid teachers in the country. The government has increased expenditure by 55 per cent, representing a 46 per cent increase in expenditure per student, which is nine per cent or more a year. As a result, this government has spent more on education than any other state has, and more than any other government in the history of this state. The government now spends 25 per cent more per student than the average of the other states, yet the opposition says we are cutting expenditure. Get real! The government has also undertaken a massive process of reform, with independent public schools. They are very popular and very successful. We will now have year 7s in high schools. The Labor government did not do that. It was advised to, but it piked out and did not do it. We introduced the new Western Australian Certificate of Education. We have a half-cohort going through high school in 2015. That is a massive reform.

Also, when we came into government, the quality of our schools had deteriorated from a lack of maintenance, repair and building works. This government has done those things. This year the government will spend \$539 million on capital expenditure in public schools. The Labor government cut expenditure on those things. Also, as the Premier said, we are introducing child and parent programs.

We have made some reductions in expenditure this year, but I might add that expenditure is going up by \$530 per student, and it is still going up. We will look at the forward estimates in the budget. We are going into a major process of reform—reorientating expenditure to the student rather than to the school and to need rather than to old programs. That is what a government does. Some people, but particularly those associated with the miscellaneous workers' union, are very angry about that. The government has introduced reform for education assistants, and for good reason: they were poorly allocated. We had an anaphylactic program that put teachers assistants into schools. That program was dissolved.

Mr P. Papalia interjected.

The SPEAKER: Member for Warnbro, you are on three calls. Do not tempt fate.

Dr M.D. NAHAN: We had an anaphylactic program to provide teachers assistants, but after discussions, the program was changed. They did not have that function anymore and we removed them if they were temporary. Also, the program for Aboriginal teaching assistants was badly allocated. It was allocated on class size rather than needs of students. We reallocated that program. However, every Aboriginal student who fits the criteria receives a teaching assistant. It is the same with disability services. We went out and not only massively expanded our investment in public schools but also allocated programs appropriately. That is good management.

To be honest, there might have been a lot of people at the rally, but they were mostly people like Joe McDonald—union people. I count our success on the fact that since we have been in government, 20 000 more children are in public schools than was the case when we started. There are 20 000 additional kids in public sector schools because of what this government has done. The Labor government lost 15 000 students and the Liberal–National government has gained 20 000 students—game, set, match.

MR A. KRSTICEVIC (Carine) [3.45 pm]: I want to state that we all know education is the most important and fundamental building block of society. It is the starting point for all of our futures and the future of this state. When the Leader of the Opposition stood up and asked whether there was anything more important than the education of our children, I could not —

Ms R. Saffioti interjected.

The SPEAKER: Member for West Swan, I do not want to hear any more about reading notes.

Mr A. KRSTICEVIC: I could not believe the words coming out of the mouth of the Leader of the Opposition. I asked myself, “Why didn’t he believe that when he was the Minister for Education and Training prior to 2008?” I remember when I was campaigning to be elected to this place in 2008 and I was going around to schools and that the teachers were saying that the now Leader of the Opposition was the worst education minister in the history of this state, and that the Labor Party had deserted schools and teachers.

Several members interjected.

Mr A. KRSTICEVIC: All the member for Bassendean cared about was being elected to Parliament. He did not care that our education system was being destroyed or that our teachers were the lowest paid in Australia or that

Mr Mark McGowan; Mr Colin Barnett; Speaker; Mr John Day; Mr Bill Johnston; Mr Peter Watson; Dr Tony Buti; Ms Janine Freeman; Mr Nathan Morton; Dr Kim Hames; Mr Dave Kelly; Ms Eleni Evangel; Dr Mike Nahan; Mr Tony Krsticevic; Mr Chris Hatton; Mr Ben Wyatt

schools were falling apart all over the place. All he cared about was getting rid of the former member for Bassendean so he could sit in his seat. He kept his mouth shut. He did nothing to help the teachers in the schools.

Mr D.A. Templeman interjected.

The SPEAKER: Member for Mandurah, I call you now to order for the third time.

Mr A. KRSTICEVIC: Let us not forget that prior to 2008, our teachers were the lowest paid in the country and their morale was at rock bottom. Our schools were falling apart. When my kids were at Lake Gwelup Primary School, I remember going to school meetings, when the member for Butler, who was then the member for Innaloo, promised a new school. That school was falling apart; it was an absolute disgrace. Did that community get a new school under a Labor government? No, it did not. The community got nothing! As a matter of fact, after the redistribution, the then member for Innaloo ran to stand for the new seat of Butler because he knew people in that electorate were disappointed with him. When I was elected, I took the new Minister for Education to that school.

Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER: Member for Wanneroo, I call you to order for the first time.

Mr A. KRSTICEVIC: I took the new Minister for Education out to Lake Gwelup Primary School and she was absolutely shocked that this school was falling apart. It was a disgrace. Members need to remember that prior to 2008, Western Australia was experiencing an economic boom—a once-in-a-lifetime economic boom. There were billion-dollar surpluses. When the election was held in 2008, the community could not name three things that the Labor government had done. Nobody in the community knew what Labor had achieved during that period. Schools were falling apart.

Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER: Member for Maylands, I call you to order for the first time. I am not going to have a heart attack member for Wanneroo, and I call you to order for the second time.

Mr A. KRSTICEVIC: As we have heard, there was a shortage of teachers in our schools. When the now Leader of the Opposition was Minister for Education in 2007, there was a shortage of 264 teachers. In 2008, the number was 110. Children were coming to school and they did not have teachers. Morale was low. What have we done since we came to government? Let us not forget the negotiations around the teachers' enterprise bargaining agreement that dragged out for 18 months. The Labor government did not want to do anything to help out teachers! They did not like the Leader of the Opposition when he was Minister for Education!

Mr M. McGowan: Can I ask a question?

Mr A. KRSTICEVIC: No, let me finish! I did not interrupt the Leader of the Opposition.

I know that students, teachers and parents were disappointed with the quality of things under the Labor government. What has this government done? We increased the number of chaplains from 250 to 600, and we now have 60 school psychologists. People must not forget that there was an increase in funding from \$2.8 billion to \$4.4 billion during our term of government. But when we came to government, there was a global financial crisis and things went downhill across the entire world. We managed to maintain our status despite the world economic outlook, and we managed to increase our budgets across the board during the most difficult times in our state's history. It was disappointing to me that prior to 2008, United Voice and other unions were not out there campaigning, protesting and saying, "We need to have our teachers looked after properly; we need to make sure schools are funded appropriately."

Mr D.J. Kelly: I think we were. Where were you?

Mr A. KRSTICEVIC: I was at the school; I was listening to the former member for Innaloo promising things, and he delivered nothing!

Several members interjected.

Mr A. KRSTICEVIC: We introduced independent public schools —

Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER: I do not want any shouting across the chamber; through the Chair, member for Carine.

Mr A. KRSTICEVIC: Let us also remember that the increase in the number of school students across the state equates to roughly half a student for each teacher. We have collective agreements with teachers, and at the primary school level student numbers in all classrooms are below the collective agreement number. The teachers have fewer students than they agreed to; we are not even asking them to meet that standard. The numbers are

Mr Mark McGowan; Mr Colin Barnett; Speaker; Mr John Day; Mr Bill Johnston; Mr Peter Watson; Dr Tony Buti; Ms Janine Freeman; Mr Nathan Morton; Dr Kim Hames; Mr Dave Kelly; Ms Eleni Evangel; Dr Mike Nahan; Mr Tony Krsticevic; Mr Chris Hatton; Mr Ben Wyatt

much lower in high schools as well. Student numbers are not growing beyond an unmanageable level, based on the agreement put together by the teachers. They know what they are talking about; they know what they are doing. It is important to take all those things into consideration.

I am not going to talk about the 55 per cent increase in the education budget since 2008. I am not going to talk about all the schools we built in this state, such as Lake Gwelup Primary School. Not long after I took the minister there, there was a brand-new school—thank God! So many schools are popping up around the state. Not only are our teachers the highest paid teachers and not only are our facilities being upgraded to an outstanding level, but also we are supporting teachers and listening to what they are saying. The opposition does not like to hear any of that. The opposition does not like to hear that we have invested so much money in our schools, despite the GFC in 2008 and onward. The former Labor government had billion-dollar surpluses and it did nothing! During the 2008 election when asked to name three things the Labor Party had done, even the schoolteachers could not name one thing! Nobody could!

Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER: Member for Victoria Park, I call you to order for the first time.

Mr A. KRSTICEVIC: As a parent I remember the issue of air cooling. I thought: why do parents have to raise all this money to put air cooling in the schools? That should be provided by the government, for God's sake; we are in one of the hottest places in the world. Guess what? We now have it in all our schools. We committed the money for it. The Labor government had billion-dollar surpluses and it did nothing for our schools. Schools were falling apart, students were sweltering in the heat, but Labor did not care. The teachers were the lowest paid, and they hated Labor. They told me in the street, as I am sure they did other members, "We are not voting for the Labor Party. We are Labor Party voters, but we are not voting for them. They are an absolute disgrace!"

Ms R. Saffioti interjected.

The SPEAKER: Member for West Swan, I call you now to order for the third time.

Mr A. KRSTICEVIC: To be honest, I am a little disappointed that some of the thousands of people who were outside Parliament are not sitting in the public gallery right now actually listening to the truth and being reminded of 2008 and prior, to really put things into perspective. What the Labor Party has done is an absolute disgrace, and it is very hypocritical of it to come into this place and condemn us on education after us having done an outstanding job on every single measure. If we are compared with any state in Australia, we are punching well above our weight. We value education and we have taken this seriously and will continue to. Yes, there has been a, I think, 1.5 per cent reduction in the budget, but at the end of the day what is the benchmark —

Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER: Member for Willagee, I call you to order for the second time.

Mr A. KRSTICEVIC: The Labor Party left us with a very low base, and we have increased that base by 55 per cent and will continue to increase spending. Under the old model, yes, there was, I think, an 8.8 per cent increase in student numbers during that 55 per cent increase in the budget. Let us put that into perspective. I know the Labor Party can all joke about it because it does not really care. So often the Labor Party comes into this place and raises issues but it does not really care or take them seriously. It is just trying to get cheap mileage from the media and it takes no pride.

Mr P.C. Tinley interjected.

The SPEAKER: Member for Willagee, I call you to order for the third time.

Mr A. KRSTICEVIC: I finish by saying that the Labor Party's record on education is a disgrace, and it should be ashamed of itself. I hope it has something more to contribute in the future.

MR N.W. MORTON (Forrestfield) [3.55 pm]: I am flattered that the member for Armadale spent three minutes of his matter of public interest address talking about me.

Dr A.D. Buti: You be honest!

The SPEAKER: Member for Armadale, I call you to order for the third time, and do not tempt fate.

Point of Order

Dr A.D. BUTI: Mr Speaker, could I just seek your clarification? If the member for Forrestfield directs something to me, do I not have a right to reply?

The SPEAKER: You do not have any right, member for Armadale.

Mr Mark McGowan; Mr Colin Barnett; Speaker; Mr John Day; Mr Bill Johnston; Mr Peter Watson; Dr Tony Buti; Ms Janine Freeman; Mr Nathan Morton; Dr Kim Hames; Mr Dave Kelly; Ms Eleni Evangel; Dr Mike Nahan; Mr Tony Krsticevic; Mr Chris Hatton; Mr Ben Wyatt

Debate Resumed

Several members interjected.

Mr N.W. MORTON: Excellent ruling, Mr Speaker!

I was flattered that the member for Armadale spent so much of his MPI address talking about me, although it should not have come as a surprise given that in his Address-in-Reply contribution in April of last year he referred to me as an outstanding educationalist—they were his words. I challenge the member for Armadale to have the political fortitude to stand by the reform that will take place in the Armadale education precinct.

Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER: Member for Armadale, you are on three calls—I will pretend I never heard that. Who is shouting out there?

Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER: Member for Forrestfield, continue. I do not want to hear anything more from anybody.

Point of Order

Mr P.B. WATSON: Could you ask the member to address the Chair instead of addressing members on this side?

The SPEAKER: Okay. Member for Forrestfield, address the Chair, please.

Mr N.W. MORTON: Duly noted.

Debate Resumed

Mr N.W. MORTON: There must be an election on; I seem to recall a similar union rally just before the federal election last September. I was in my parliamentary office today doing some work and was a bit distracted by what was going on outside. I looked out the window and lost count of the unions represented. I saw the Maritime Union of Australia, the Construction, Forestry, Mining and Energy Union, the Electrical Trades Union of Western Australia and so on, and was very impressed with the number of union members who marched their way up to the steps of Parliament this afternoon.

The MPI before us today asks that “this house calls on the Barnett government to listen to the community of Western Australia”. That is exactly what we have done. When we came to power in 2008 —

Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER: Member for Mandurah, you have been called to order and this is your 3.9 times.

Mr N.W. MORTON: This MPI refers to listening to the community, and that is exactly what we did. We listened to the community, and when we won government one of our first orders of business was to deal with the teachers’ enterprise bargaining agreement and remunerate them appropriately so that we could have teachers in every classroom across Western Australia, which, unfortunately, did not occur under the previous Labor administration. The member for Rockingham was the then Minister for Education, and in 2005 I seem to recall another rally directed at him as the then Minister for Tourism. It is interesting, members, that the Leader of the Opposition has form as shown by a question asked of him in question time on Rally Australia. Members may remember that fantastic event that used to occur here in Western Australia that no longer does. The member for Hillarys asked —

Was the minister the person who was peering through the half-closed shutters in the darkened Premier’s outer office during the demonstration?

The then Minister for Tourism—the now Leader of the Opposition—replied —

Last night. I did not think it was particularly productive to front a group of 200 very angry people.

What a great response! Really solid! Strong leadership there from the minister of the time. Fantastic! Then he has the gall to come into this place during question time and say that the Premier—the member for Cottesloe—is denigrating teachers. I think the denigration was in 2008 under the now Leader of the Opposition’s stewardship of the education portfolio. I move on.

Mr D.J. Kelly interjected.

The SPEAKER: Member for Bassendean!

Mr Mark McGowan; Mr Colin Barnett; Speaker; Mr John Day; Mr Bill Johnston; Mr Peter Watson; Dr Tony Buti; Ms Janine Freeman; Mr Nathan Morton; Dr Kim Hames; Mr Dave Kelly; Ms Eleni Evangel; Dr Mike Nahan; Mr Tony Krsticevic; Mr Chris Hatton; Mr Ben Wyatt

Mr N.W. MORTON: On this side of the chamber we realise that the most important resource in schools is teachers. That is why we made it a priority to ensure that they were properly remunerated, and today we have teachers in front of every classroom across the state.

I will just go through some figures on teachers' salaries.

Mr D.J. Kelly interjected.

The SPEAKER: Member for Bassendean, I call you to order for the third time.

Mr N.W. MORTON: A graduate teacher's salary is \$63 118. That is pretty good and is streets ahead of any other state. Four-year-trained teachers in Western Australia earn \$95,459 —

Ms J.M. Freeman: It is not about teacher salaries; it is about resources.

Mr N.W. MORTON: It is about resources. Our teachers are our most important resource. I have already made that point, member.

Four-year-trained teachers earn \$95 459. Again, we are rewarding the most important resource in our education system—our teachers. Senior teachers earn \$99 201. That is approximately 100 grand for a senior teacher in Western Australia, which, again, is streets ahead of any other state in Australia.

Ms J.M. Freeman interjected.

The SPEAKER: Member for Mirrabooka, I call you to order for the second time.

Mr N.W. MORTON: I will now allude to the funding per student in Western Australia, which has been mentioned by several other members. In Western Australia, the average spend per student is \$18 731. The closest state spend is South Australia, which spends \$16 323 per student. If I were calling this like a horse race, I would say we had just won by about four lengths—that is how far out in front we are when what we do in this jurisdiction is compared with other jurisdictions across Australia. To say that we are not adequately funding our schools in Western Australia is farcical.

A public school teachers' survey was compiled and put out by the State School Teachers' Union of WA with reference to the education budget. This issue was so important to the public at large and the teachers in the profession that out of a workforce of 21 000 teachers, 636 bothered to respond, which is about three per cent. Of the almost 800 principals across Western Australia, 23 principals responded. Of all the parents across Western Australia—I do not have the figure, but I imagine it is over half a million people—the huge overwhelming number of people who responded was?

Mr P. Abetz: Twenty-five.

Mr N.W. MORTON: Spot-on, member; it was 25. The member has read this report too; it makes for great reading. The union stated that the breadth of the response indicated a good snapshot of public education in Western Australia. My God, that is the tiniest camera in history!

What are we doing? We are moving towards a student-centred model of funding. It is based on and closely aligned with some of the principles of Gonski. It looks at Aboriginal and socially disadvantaged students and students for whom English is a second language, and takes into account remoteness and isolation. That is the model the government is moving towards. Members on this side of the chamber are extremely proud that we are introducing a model that will target funding to those most in need. Coupled with that—the Premier alluded to this—we are also introducing child and parent centres that will assist those kids in our community who are most at risk. That is a fantastic outcome.

In the time that I have left, I want to talk about some of the things that are happening in my electorate. The Minister for Education came to my electorate last week and we attended a parents and citizens and principals afternoon tea. The event was very well attended and we had a very constructive and cooperative conversation. The minister and I visited Darling Range Sports College to look at the capital works underway; Forrestfield Primary School, which is undergoing capital works; East Kenwick and Maida Vale Primary Schools.

I will conclude with this comment: it has been said today that funding for education in the budget has gone up from \$2.8 billion to \$4.4 billion, and I think that with one in four of Western Australia's tax dollars being spent on education, we owe it to the taxpayer to ensure efficiency and effectiveness.

MR C.D. HATTON (Balcatta) [4.05 pm]: I rise to speak against the opposition's motion that is negative, ill-informed and very indicative of where the opposition is at. This opposition does not have a relevant argument and certainly it has no relevant policies. Is the opposition so negative that it has forgotten that we live in a great state?

Mr Mark McGowan; Mr Colin Barnett; Speaker; Mr John Day; Mr Bill Johnston; Mr Peter Watson; Dr Tony Buti; Ms Janine Freeman; Mr Nathan Morton; Dr Kim Hames; Mr Dave Kelly; Ms Eleni Evangel; Dr Mike Nahan; Mr Tony Krsticevic; Mr Chris Hatton; Mr Ben Wyatt

The SPEAKER: Time, member.

[Government time expired.]

MR B.S. WYATT (Victoria Park) [4.06 pm]: I wanted to hear more from the member for Balcatta; honestly, I did! I am just going to start —

Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER: Members, Hansard has to transcribe this. I want to hear from the member for Victoria Park.

Mr B.S. WYATT: I know the Speaker wants to hear from me. I start by reflecting on the contribution of the member for Carine. I think the member was reading from the minister's contentious issues briefing note. Just a little word of advice: the bit down the bottom that states "other information" is not to be read out in the chamber. I want to quote the member for Carine's wonderful sentence that made the Treasurer turn around frantically. He said that education has had a "1.5 per cent reduction in the budget" and we have come off "a very low base." Member for Carine, the "other information" is not to be read out. They are just words of advice for the future. I think the Minister for Education might have pointed that out to the member for Carine when the minister distributed the briefing note to government members. I wanted to make that point early on, because it was a spark of honesty from the member for Carine—a spark of honesty! I think the member for Carine had better go back to his role as Whip, in which I really think the member excels!

We understand from today's debate that ultimately the government does not get what the protest was about. The member for Forrestfield got up and said that all our teachers are the highest paid in Australia. The member went through how much the teachers are paid, but ultimately that is not relevant. The protest—the government can dismiss it all as Labor Party hacks; I think the Treasurer said that they were all Joe McDonald's spins —

Mr N.W. Morton interjected.

The SPEAKER: Member for Forrestfield, you heard what I told the member for Armadale; I do not want shouting out across the chamber. I call you to order for the first time.

Mr B.S. WYATT: Ultimately, the reason there were so many parents and students out there is that there is broad community support for this protest and people want their school's budget to have a discretionary element. People want their school to be able to offer courses that the school budget may not necessarily directly provide for. That is what the protest is about. It is not about what teachers earn. That is why the community is so strongly in support of the protest, and members opposite all know that they are. I wrote down what the Premier said too; it was not as good as what the member for Carine said but it was interesting. The Premier was gloating about himself when he said, "We actually have the courage to look at the best educational model and these are changes that need to take place." Unfortunately, a year ago, there was no mention of this. A year ago, the Premier did not have the courage to tell Western Australians that these changes that need to take place mean that every single school in all electorates will have a real budget cut. Of course the government can talk about the increase in the overall education budget, but it is hiding the fact that there are more students and the schools are therefore getting real budget cuts.

Dr K.D. Hames: Per student.

Mr B.S. WYATT: Every single school, Minister for Health. Victoria Park Primary School, East Victoria Park Primary School, Kent Street Senior High School and all of the member for Forrestfield's schools are getting real budget cuts. The aggressive way in which the Premier and the government have dealt with this has been outrageous. I remember the very first leaked document across the front page of *The West Australian* stating that all the schools had outrageously large bank accounts. I remember that because principals from schools in my electorate called me as they were outraged at the suggestion that principals were sitting on vast wads of cash. The Premier never said when he leaked that document that those bank accounts also included money set aside for things such as school buses and school trips and excursions. He never mentioned any of that. He only said that it was a disgrace they were sitting on hundreds of millions of dollars and that the principals had better use their facilities better.

The Premier has been nothing but aggressive and threatening to parents and teachers. That has been the reality of the way he has handled this. Then the Premier came into this place and said, "At least we have the courage." Give me a break! The government has the courage once it sits through an election based on "fully funded, fully costed"—the great election lie of 2013. I think we all remember that. I do not recall the confession to the people of Western Australia that said, "Guess what? We're going to give you all this public transport, the stadium and Elizabeth Quay, but because they're fully costed and fully funded, we're going to have to cut your education budget to do it." I do not recall that part—do members opposite? No! That is why there is broad community

Extract from Hansard
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Mr Mark McGowan; Mr Colin Barnett; Speaker; Mr John Day; Mr Bill Johnston; Mr Peter Watson; Dr Tony Buti; Ms Janine Freeman; Mr Nathan Morton; Dr Kim Hames; Mr Dave Kelly; Ms Eleni Evangel; Dr Mike Nahan; Mr Tony Krsticevic; Mr Chris Hatton; Mr Ben Wyatt

support for the protest that took place out the front of Parliament House. Government members can come in here and disparage all those people and write them off as Labor Party hacks or stooges, but I tell them what: they all know that there is broad community support for that protest. There is broad community anger at what the government is doing, which is why these scurrilous little attempts to say, “Teachers are highly paid. It’s unlawful what they’re doing; it’s illegal—quasi-criminal conduct”, will blow up in the government’s face. I tell the backbench: get on top of your minister, get on top of —

Withdrawal of Remark

Mr C.J. BARNETT: Mr Speaker, I think to accuse, although in a general sense, members of this Parliament of quasi-criminal conduct is unparliamentary.

Several members interjected.

Mr C.J. BARNETT: Yes, you did!

The SPEAKER: I never heard that; carry on.

Debate Resumed

Mr B.S. WYATT: Members of the government backbench need to get on top of their Premier and their education minister because they know that they are getting the blowback in their community. Get up and sort it out!

Division

Question put and a division taken with the following result —

Ayes (19)

Ms L.L. Baker
Dr A.D. Buti
Mr R.H. Cook
Ms J.M. Freeman
Mr W.J. Johnston

Mr D.J. Kelly
Mr F.M. Logan
Mr M. McGowan
Ms S.F. McGurk
Mr M.P. Murray

Mr P. Papalia
Mr J.R. Quigley
Ms M.M. Quirk
Ms R. Saffioti
Mr C.J. Tallentire

Mr P.C. Tinley
Mr P.B. Watson
Mr B.S. Wyatt
Mr D.A. Templeman (*Teller*)

Noes (35)

Mr P. Abetz
Mr F.A. Alban
Mr C.J. Barnett
Mr I.C. Blayney
Mr I.M. Britza
Mr G.M. Castrilli
Mr M.J. Cowper
Ms M.J. Davies
Mr J.H.D. Day

Ms W.M. Duncan
Ms E. Evangel
Mr J.M. Francis
Mrs G.J. Godfrey
Mr B.J. Grylls
Dr K.D. Hames
Mrs L.M. Harvey
Mr C.D. Hatton
Mr A.P. Jacob

Dr G.G. Jacobs
Mr R.F. Johnson
Mr S.K. L’Estrange
Mr R.S. Love
Mr W.R. Marmion
Mr J.E. McGrath
Mr P.T. Miles
Ms A.R. Mitchell
Mr N.W. Morton

Dr M.D. Nahan
Mr D.C. Nalder
Mr J. Norberger
Mr D.T. Redman
Mr A.J. Simpson
Mr M.H. Taylor
Mr T.K. Waldron
Mr A. Krsticevic (*Teller*)

Pairs

Ms J. Farrer
Mrs M.H. Roberts

Mr V.A. Catania
Mr T.R. Buswell

Question thus negatived.