

Chair; Mr Sean L'Estrange; Mr Paul Papalia; Mrs Liza Harvey; Mr Peter Rundle; Ms Cassandra Rowe; Mr  
Reece Whitby; Ms Emily Hamilton

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**Division 23: Education, \$4 746 518 000 —**

Ms J.M. Freeman, Chair.

Mr P. Papalia, Minister for Tourism representing the Minister for Education and Training.

Ms S. O'Neill, Director General.

Ms J. McGrath, Deputy Director General, Education Business Services.

Mr S. Baxter, Acting Deputy Director General, Public Schools.

Mr L. Hale, Executive Director, Statewide Services.

Mr D. Stewart, Executive Director, Workforce.

Mr P. Titmanis, Executive Director, Strategic Initiatives and Performance.

Mr J. Fischer, Executive Director, Infrastructure.

Mr J. Peckitt, Executive Director, Finance and Commercial Services.

Ms J. Healy, Acting Executive Director, School Curriculum and Standards.

[Witnesses introduced.]

**The CHAIR:** Good morning, everyone. First, I recognise the traditional owners of the land on which we meet, the Whadjuk people of the Noongar nation.

This estimates committee will be reported by Hansard. The daily proof *Hansard* will be available the following day. It is the intention of the Chair to ensure that as many questions as possible are asked and answered and that both questions and answers are short and to the point. The estimates committee's consideration of the estimates will be restricted to discussion of those items for which a vote of money is proposed in the consolidated account. Questions must be clearly related to a page number, item, program or amount in the current division. Members should give these details in preface to their question. If a division or a service is the responsibility of more than one minister, a minister shall be examined only in relation to their portfolio responsibilities.

The minister may agree to provide supplementary information to the committee rather than asking that the question be put on notice for the next sitting week. I ask the minister to clearly indicate what supplementary information he agrees to provide and I will then allocate a reference number. If supplementary information is to be provided, I seek the minister's cooperation in ensuring that it is delivered to the principal clerk by Friday, 1 June 2018. I caution members that if a minister asks that a matter be put on notice, it is up to the member to lodge the question on notice through the online questions system.

I give the call to the member for Churchlands.

**Mr S.K. L'ESTRANGE:** I refer to page 299 of budget paper No 2 and the third dot point under the subheading "Secondary Schools" that states —

Planning is continuing and construction will commence for Inner City College at Kitchener Park in Subiaco.

Can the minister confirm that the new school being built at Kitchener Park in Subiaco will not have capacity to expand beyond 2 000 students?

**Mr P. PAPALIA:** I might have Mr Fischer respond to that question.

**Mr J. Fischer:** The school is being built for a capacity of 2 000 students. It will not have capacity for transportables, which we would normally provide at a new school.

**Mr S.K. L'ESTRANGE:** Can the minister, or one of the minister's advisers through the minister, confirm the maximum number of students that the Kitchener Park school in Subiaco with demountables would be able to house?

**Mr P. PAPALIA:** I am not sure that that is something that would be normally available immediately to the department. Most schools have capacity in the form of land available for additional accommodation in demountables or potentially the construction of other buildings. I assume that the same is true of this particular site. Right now, it is being constructed for 2 000 students—to which the member referred—and has additional capacity as indicated.

**Mr S.K. L'ESTRANGE:** Minister, yes, further capacity has been indicated. The adviser indicated to us that they have a template for how many demountables at a school site is the norm. What is that template?

**Mr P. PAPALIA:** I do not think that that is what Mr Fischer said. He said that space is available for additional—no, he is saying there is no space.

**Mr S.K. L'ESTRANGE:** I will take that to mean that it is the case that there will be 2 000 students. Given that the Minister for Planning has approved the gazetting of the Subiaco redevelopment scheme and related development policies that will make housing in Subiaco East R80, which is high-density group dwellings and apartments, can the minister advise what the government's plan is to educate local children once the new school is at capacity? If the government has a plan, can the minister outline this plan?

**Mr P. PAPALIA:** Member, new schools are built in growing areas all the time and the department has a rolling plan for providing additional capacity in anticipation of schools being required. That is true of my electorate; it is true of any electorate in the state. Right now, I am aware that the member for Baldivis has an additional high school being built in his electorate. As capacity is identified as being required, the department moves in advance of that to provide that capacity.

**Mr S.K. L'ESTRANGE:** Given that we have the strategic plan for this school in Subiaco and that rezoning around the school will be for higher density dwellings, it is highly likely that the school will reach its capacity within a decade. I simply ask: what is the plan for children in that area and surrounding areas to go to high school if that school is at capacity?

**Mr P. PAPALIA:** I am informed that the modelling indicates that the population of the school will reach around 1 600 students in 2026. That leaves additional capacity. As the member indicated, the capacity of that school will be 2 000 students. However, the process for building capacity, or building schools, in the state remains unchanged from when the member was in office. As the department identifies need, in advance of that need, it projects additional builds as necessary, and governments respond. That is the same process that has been undertaken for the last several decades, I would imagine. As I indicated, there is more than enough capacity in the period that the member is anticipating.

**Mr S.K. L'ESTRANGE:** Given the future planning that the department is always accustomed to doing that the minister referred to, can he provide details on the City Beach high school site? What does the government plan to do with this site?

**Mr P. PAPALIA:** No, not at this stage.

**Mrs L.M. HARVEY:** The population forecasts done in 2014, which started this process, indicated that by 2026 there would be an additional 2 860 children aged 10 years to 19 years in the areas of Scarborough, Doubleview and Innaloo. Where is it anticipated that these children will be accommodated for high school?

**Mr P. PAPALIA:** I think the member is referring to old modelling. In 2014, we were still at the tail end of the boom that had drawn significant numbers of people to the state. The member may recall that at that time a lot of really outrageous projections were made for population growth in the state. Subsequently, there has been a significant tapering off, or reduction, in the number of people coming to the state, so I do not think those particular statistics are relevant.

[9.10 am]

**Mrs L.M. HARVEY:** Could the Department of Education then provide what the revised forecasts are for the population growth in those suburbs for 10 to 19-year-olds?

**Mr P. PAPALIA:** I think the member is going to have to put that one on notice because we are still working on revised modelling for the current population growth to reflect more realistically the numbers coming into the state.

**Mrs L.M. HARVEY:** When is it anticipated that revised modelling will be available?

**Mr P. PAPALIA:** In the case of the census for this year, the student population is revised annually. If the member puts the question on notice, my advisers will give her the answer as soon as they have the numbers.

**Mrs L.M. HARVEY:** That modelling also predicted that for the suburbs of Perth city, West Leederville, Wembley, Mt Hawthorn and North Perth, we would need to accommodate an additional 4 310 children. The minister can see that with nearly 7 000 additional 10 to 19-year-olds anticipated by 2026, providing additional capacity of 2 000 in Subiaco is not going to cut the mustard. That is the concern of my constituency.

**Mr P. PAPALIA:** As I indicated earlier, the department's modelling for this school is to have 1 600 students by about 2026. The observation I made earlier remains relevant and the modelling the member has referred to is dated.

**Mrs L.M. HARVEY:** Could the department provide us with what the anticipated enrolments will be for Churchlands Senior High School, Shenton College and Balcatta Senior High School by 2026?

**Mr P. PAPALIA:** Yes, member. I have the modelling at the moment. As I indicated, the figures will be refined based on the current census. They may change subject to what the rate of growth has been as opposed to what was projected to be when these were developed—which schools was the member after?

**Mrs L.M. HARVEY:** Churchlands Senior High School, Shenton College and Balcatta Senior High School.

**Extract from Hansard**

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**Mr P. PAPALIA:** I do not have figures for Balcatta. For 2026, Churchlands is anticipated to have 2 320 students and Shenton will have 2 450, but I have not got Balcatta's figures. I have Mount Lawley Senior High School's figures, if the member wants that.

**Mrs L.M. HARVEY:** Yes, if the member has the figures for Mount Lawley Senior High School and Carine Senior High School as well.

**Mr P. PAPALIA:** I have not got Carine's figures. I have Mt Lawley's figure, which is 1 839.

**Mrs L.M. HARVEY:** Could I request by supplementary information the enrolment predictions for Balcatta Senior High School and Carine Senior High School for 2026?

**Mr P. PAPALIA:** I undertake for the minister to provide to the member by way of supplementary information, the projections or the modelling for school populations in 2026 at Balcatta Senior High School and Carine Senior High School.

[*Supplementary Information No B1.*]

**Mr S.K. L'ESTRANGE:** I have a follow-on question.

**The CHAIR:** I remind the member that the question was about City Beach, so is it a follow-on question from the City Beach question?

**Mr S.K. L'ESTRANGE:** Yes. Given reports that another secondary school will need to be built within a decade of the Kitchener Park school opening, will the government commit to retaining the City Beach high school site for future education purposes?

**Mr P. PAPALIA:** No, member. The department, the minister and the government are constantly assessing and analysing the requirements. The department projects requirements for future school builds and advises the government. That process is ongoing, as it was under the previous government. There has been no change to that process. I understand that the member is not happy that there was a commitment by the government to build an inner-city school as opposed to what his government planned to do. That was a change of policy and it was an election commitment. We went to the election with a commitment to do something different from what the previous government was going to do.

**Mr S.K. L'ESTRANGE:** This has nothing to do with my emotions, minister—whether I am happy or unhappy; this is absolutely based on population numbers of students in the area. All that we on this side of the chamber are asking is for the minister or his advisers to give us an answer on how they will deal with an increased student population in the western suburbs and whether they will reserve the existing City Beach high school site, which has a building on it that was designed as a school and can be used as a school when the population at the Kitchener Park school reaches 2 000. All we are asking is whether the government will retain that site for future education purposes should the need arise with the growing population.

**Mr P. PAPALIA:** I would never accuse the member of being emotional or demonstrating any degree of empathy for any particular subject. As I indicated, I am not going to guarantee or indicate the future use of that site because that is part of the process, which is ongoing. It is a normal part of the process that government and the department undertakes, as it did when the member was in office. I remind the member that under his government, there was a long period of reflection before a last-minute announcement about that site was made by the previous minister. It is just part of the process. We went to the election with a different position from that of the previous government. We are delivering on that commitment, and that is what I can guarantee.

**Mr S.K. L'ESTRANGE:** I am not asking about what the former government did, and neither am I judging its decision on Kitchener Park. I am simply asking the question: once the Kitchener Park school is full, what is the government's plan to educate children in the western suburbs?

**Mr P. PAPALIA:** Member, in exactly the same fashion as has been the case for several governments—if not all governments in living memory—the department assesses requirements for future builds utilising the latest projections, census data and indications of population shifts, and projects the requirement in advance. It then advises government. Government responds and schools are built as required in advance of the requirement—nothing has changed; nothing is different. A strategic asset plan identifies that need and it is then reflected in the budget that anticipates the need to invest in new schools.

**Mr P.J. RUNDLE:** I refer to the table on page 301 of volume 2 of the *Budget Statements* under the line item "Carnarvon Community College". I note an additional funding component from royalties for region to the tune of \$12 million, which has led to an overall cut to this project of \$13.2 million from the previous budget. What is the

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explanation for the 30 per cent drop between the budgeted \$38.55 million, which is contained in the original business case prepared between May and October 2016, and the current figure?

**Mr P. PAPALIA:** When I look at the line item that the member referred to—“Carnarvon Community College”—and the table headings of estimated total cost figure, the estimated expenditure to 30 June 2018 and estimated expenditure in 2017–18, I am not sure what numbers the member is referring to. What is the total to which the member is referring?

[9.20 am]

**Mr P.J. RUNDLE:** The overall project budget has dropped from \$38.5 million; it has dropped by \$13 million. If the minister likes, he can refer to page 173 of budget paper No 3 as well, which is the royalties for regions expenditure. That indicates a total of \$25.4 million. The total project cost has supposedly dropped by \$13.2 million, which has been recognised by the minister.

**Mr P. PAPALIA:** I am informed that the actual tender pricing, or the indications of cost as a consequence of the tender, is far lower than anticipated in the original budget. This is reflecting the tenders.

**Mr P.J. RUNDLE:** Has the scope of the project changed in any way between the 2016 project—that is, the subject of the business case—and the current project under construction?

**Mr P. PAPALIA:** No; I am informed that is not the case. It must be a much more competitive environment or something out there because we have received tenders that are far better than the anticipated cost in the original scope that the member was referring to.

**Mr P.J. RUNDLE:** If there have been no changes to the scope or size, what errors were made in the original business case to so grossly overestimate the project cost?

**Mr P. PAPALIA:** I think it is a bit harsh to suggest that it is an error. There is a changing climate in the economy, particularly in regional areas, and sometimes regional areas have specific issues associated with constraints on builds and costs of builds and demand, and ebbs and flows might suggest that a greater cost was anticipated than realised. That is a good thing. I would have thought that the member would be celebrating that the state and the taxpayer are benefiting from a shifting environment that has resulted in a delivery of the same product and project for a significantly lower price. I think that is a reason for celebration and I look forward to the member joining with me in commending the department on achieving such an outcome.

**Mr P.J. RUNDLE:** I must say that this would be the first and only project I have heard of in the last few years that has had a —

**The CHAIR:** That is a statement, member. Do you have a question?

**Mrs L.M. HARVEY:** Can the minister categorically confirm that there has been no change to the original scope of works for the Carnarvon Senior High School build?

**Mr P. PAPALIA:** I am informed that there is no change in the scope of works. It is a tremendous outcome that the anticipated cost is far in excess of what the actual cost looks like it is going to be. That is a reason for celebration and we should commend those involved for achieving that outcome.

**Mr P.J. RUNDLE:** On what date or over what period did the Department of Education become aware of the reduced cost for the project?

**Mr P. PAPALIA:** The allocation was made in the budget that the member was referring to. I am informed that construction commenced in January and I assume that sometime last year in advance of the contract being signed it became clear that there was a significantly lower cost associated with it. That is a good thing. There is nowhere for the member to go here. He is not going to find the cloud on the silver lining on this one. This is a good thing.

**Mr P.J. RUNDLE:** How have any changes been communicated to the college or the community?

**Mr P. PAPALIA:** Which changes?

**Mr P.J. RUNDLE:** I am referring to the changes in the costs—the celebration that the member was referring to.

**Mr P. PAPALIA:** I reckon we should have a morning tea to celebrate and perhaps we could even invite the local member to fly up from his residence in Perth to attend.

**The CHAIR:** Minister, that is a statement.

**Mr P. PAPALIA:** They could celebrate the fact that there has been a significant saving for the taxpayer in delivering the same scale of project in the building.

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**Mr P.J. RUNDLE:** I understand that the college and community representatives made a number of sensible suggestions during the consultation process for stage 3. Some were related to Carnarvon's climate—for example, solar panels to save on power costs, climate control for the gymnasium space and shading for outdoor areas—as well as additional music storage space. All of these were firmly rejected by the Department of Education representatives as unable to be accommodated within the existing budget, which was said to be tight. Given the apparent savings on the project, this is not true.

**The CHAIR:** That is not a question, member. Let us go to a question.

**Mr P.J. RUNDLE:** Will these sensible requests now be accommodated?

**Mr P. PAPALIA:** Can I respond?

**The CHAIR:** Yes, absolutely, minister.

**Mr P. PAPALIA:** As is often the case, the member reflects the attitude of the National Party to budget process. It is incredible that he still persists in the assumption that whenever a saving or contribution from additional source, such as the federal government, towards cost is achieved, the member expects the government to spend up every single cent of saving that has been delivered.

**The CHAIR:** Minister, come back to the question.

**Mr P. PAPALIA:** Forty thousand million dollars' worth of debt is the reason that we cannot do that.

**Mr S.K. L'ESTRANGE:** This is an estimates hearing.

**The CHAIR:** Member for Churchlands, I am perfectly capable.

**Mr P. PAPALIA:** If the member for Roe wants a lecture every time he raises this topic, I will do that. I am quite happy to engage in that sort of discussion.

**Mr S.K. L'ESTRANGE:** You are outrageous!

**Mr P. PAPALIA:** You are outrageous!

**The CHAIR:** Minister, answer the question; stay to the question. It is early in the morning. You have a couple of hours to go.

**Mr P. PAPALIA:** Every single year there was 6.4 per cent public sector growth —

**The CHAIR:** Minister! We have almost done eight minutes on this question. If it goes to 10, I am going to move onto the next question.

**Mr P.J. RUNDLE:** I have got only one more.

**The CHAIR:** Make the question a question, member for Roe.

**Mr P.J. RUNDLE:** Given that stage 2 of the project was dogged by some defects and given some of those defects were unnoticed —

**The CHAIR:** Ask a question.

**Mr P.J. RUNDLE:** Given those failures of inspection, what improvement will be made to the government's inspection regime for stage 3 to ensure value for taxpayers' money?

**Mr P. PAPALIA:** When was stage 2 delivered?

**Mr P.J. RUNDLE:** The defects in stage 2 were things such as toilets being plumbed into the earth.

**Mr P. PAPALIA:** When? What year?

**Mr P.J. RUNDLE:** I understand it was in 2016–17.

**Mr P. PAPALIA:** Not that it is relevant, but I would say we have a far more efficient and responsible government in power now than the one that was in office at that time, so the suggestion that there may be some continuation of the problems experienced under the previous government is questionable. I do not think there is any point assuming that any of the circumstances extant at that time remain relevant.

**The CHAIR:** We have done almost 10 minutes on this question, so I am going to move on. Member for Churchlands.

**Mr S.K. L'ESTRANGE:** I refer to the third dot point on page 293 of budget paper No 2, which states —

An independent evaluation of the student-centred funding model for public schools started at the beginning of 2018.

**Extract from Hansard**

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Who are the members of the panel conducting the evaluation?

**Mr P. PAPALIA:** I am informed that the University of Victoria and the consultants the Nous Group have been engaged to undertake that work.

**Mr S.K. L'ESTRANGE:** So, it is not a panel of government people?

**Mr P. PAPALIA:** It is an independent process.

[9.30 am]

**Mr S.K. L'ESTRANGE:** How much is budgeted for the conduct of the evaluation?

**Mr P. PAPALIA:** I am informed that \$350 000 has been allocated.

**Mr S.K. L'ESTRANGE:** When is the evaluation expected to be completed?

**Mr P. PAPALIA:** I am informed that the preliminary report will be presented in July.

**Mr S.K. L'ESTRANGE:** Given the existing changes to the per student funding model that have taken place, what is the department doing to assist schools that have had their budgets significantly impacted by the changes already?

**Mr P. PAPALIA:** The responsibility for single-line budget management lies with the principal, under the process established under the previous government, but the schools can apply to a budget review committee in the event that they feel there is some issue. Their concerns are assessed, and they can potentially receive additional funding. I can confirm that some additional funding has been allocated. As at 24 April this year, the committee has provided budget adjustments for eight schools, totalling \$1.354 million.

**Mrs L.M. HARVEY:** Which schools are those?

**Mr P. PAPALIA:** The schools are Butler College, Central Midlands Senior High School, Dardanup Primary School—I grew up not far from there—Kinross College, Moorditj Noongar Community College, Rivergums Primary School, Southern Grove Primary School and Woodbridge Primary School.

**Mrs L.M. HARVEY:** I would suspect that a large number of schools might be applying through the budget review committee. How many schools made application to that committee for additional funds and were knocked back?

**Mr P. PAPALIA:** Two schools additional to the list applied but were not approved.

**Mrs L.M. HARVEY:** What schools were those?

**Mr P. PAPALIA:** One was Churchlands Senior High School and the other was Hopetoun Primary School.

**Mr S.K. L'ESTRANGE:** What amounts did those two schools seek?

**Mr P. PAPALIA:** I am informed that the Churchlands application was for \$750 000, and I do not know what the Hopetoun application was.

**Mr S.K. L'ESTRANGE:** What response has been given to Churchlands Senior High School to achieve that \$750 000 need?

**Mr P. PAPALIA:** The decision was made to reject the application. I understand that it was made for additional support to maintain a balanced budget due to fewer students at census than projected. The determination was that the school was capable of dealing with that without additional funding. I understand the school had significant funding available in its bank balance. Hopetoun has an issue with the principal being away, and it will receive additional support from the goldfields regional office.

**Mrs L.M. HARVEY:** This is a new topic. I refer to the fifth dot point on page 292 of budget paper No 2, under the heading “Significant Issues Impacting the Agency”, which begins —

With issues in the community often spilling into schools, the safety of students and staff in public schools remains a focus.

What resources are being provided to schools to try to deal with the violence that is becoming increasingly prevalent in our high schools, particularly violence towards teachers?

**Mr P. PAPALIA:** I will ask the director general to respond to that question.

**Ms S. O'Neill:** A range of strategies have already been put in place in schools to deal with problematic behaviour. As the member would know, most kids behave well every day, but we have a small handful of students whose behaviour is a concern for us. On top of all the things that we do in the area of positive behaviour and intervention, a couple of weeks ago we started to roll out the Keeping Our Workplace Safe program, under which representatives from every school will come in for additional training, and they will go back on a train-the-trainer model to give

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professional learning for people at school sites. In that professional learning we will look at classroom management strategies, programs that we already have in place and more. We want to make that more visible. We will be talking to staff about their responsibilities under the legislation and under duty of care, and the kind of authority that they have to maintain good order. The Keeping Our Workplace Safe program involves an injection of funding for the next short period, additional to that which we already provide. As the member knows, psychological services are available to support schools in dealing with children with particularly high-end behavioural needs problems. As the member will remember, we have previously redesigned our whole approach, and we now invest in the school of behaviour, a coordinated approach across the state, and we are investing more than \$26 million across the state, with outreach as well. It is multilevel, so we are putting more emphasis and more support at the school level. We have an outreach service, and the member might remember that we opened the Midland Learning Academy for a small group of children with particularly problematic behaviours, and we have the engagement centres. We have all the strategies that the member might already be familiar with, and then recently, in addition to that, more than \$1 million has been allocated for additional professional learning for staff. We are also involved, as a department, in the government's Target 120 approach, under which we will work with individual students across government and across agencies.

**Mrs L.M. HARVEY:** Is the department anticipating or looking at putting security guards into any schools that have particularly intense problems?

**Mr P. PAPALIA:** I am informed that the department has no plan generically across the agency to employ security guards. On occasion it has done so in response to specific requirements.

**Mrs L.M. HARVEY:** How many schools have had security agents allocated to them?

**Mr P. PAPALIA:** I am informed that it is very rare. The director general does not have that information to hand, but she indicates that security guards have been used at a school on only one occasion this year.

[9.40 am]

**Mrs L.M. HARVEY:** Can I request that information by way of supplementary information?

**Mr P. PAPALIA:** I am not sure about that. I am not inclined, on behalf of the minister, to reveal the schools, but the member may want something like the number of occasions or how often they have been employed in a financial year or something like that, and it could potentially indicate timing. I do not think it is in the interests of the public or the particular school communities to name specific schools.

**Mrs L.M. HARVEY:** I will take the supplementary information that the minister is willing to provide. Could I request by way of supplementary information the number of occasions that security guards have been allocated to schools for each month of the calendar year 2017 and the year to date for 2018?

**Mr P. PAPALIA:** I undertake to provide by way of supplementary information the number of occasions and which month —

**Mrs L.M. HARVEY:** Just a month-by-month assessment.

**Mr P. PAPALIA:** I will provide the number of occasions and in which month security guards were employed by the Department of Education for the calendar year 2017 and the year to date for 2018.

[*Supplementary Information No B2.*]

**Mr P. PAPALIA:** The information I will provide the member, because it is available to the director general ultimately, is for when central office has funded those occasions.

**The CHAIR:** Minister, just for clarity, can you just go through your supplementary information again? It is supplementary information B2.

**Mr P. PAPALIA:** We are just not sure whether they would be able to identify that. I undertake to provide by way of supplementary information to the member the occasions on which security guards have been employed within the Department of Education on a month-by-month basis for the calendar year 2017 and the year to date for 2018.

**Mrs L.M. HARVEY:** Just so I can understand this, the department will fund security guards —

**Mr P. PAPALIA:** It is okay; they will include all of them.

**Mrs L.M. HARVEY:** Are the schools empowered to employ security guards as well?

**Mr P. PAPALIA:** It is done through a contract, so they will be able to find out whether anybody has used them.

**Mrs L.M. HARVEY:** Does the department keep track of when weapons—knives and other such things—have been seized from children or from visitors to the schools?

**Mr P. PAPALIA:** Yes.

**Mrs L.M. HARVEY:** Could I also have provided by way of supplementary information the number of weapons seizures that have taken place for each month of the calendar year?

**Mr P. PAPALIA:** Yes.

**The CHAIR:** Minister, would you outline what you will provide by way of supplementary information, please?

**Mr P. PAPALIA:** Can I ask the member for a bit more clarity around the question, because I am informed that sometimes people call a stick or a rock a weapon? Is the member specifically referring to knives and weapons of that nature?

**Mrs L.M. HARVEY:** I would like some information on the number of seizures of weapons that have occurred in schools for each month. Obviously, if a brick has been used as a weapon, it would be included as a seizure. It could be a knife or a stick or whatever it is that has been brought into our schools to try to perpetrate violence or that has been used in our schools to perpetrate violence.

**Mr P. PAPALIA:** Rather than group them together into some sort of generic weapons category, which would be deceptive and not necessarily helpful, I would prefer it if it were something specific. Is the member talking about a blade or something of that nature?

**Mrs L.M. HARVEY:** To get specific then —

**Mr P. PAPALIA:** A kid could pick something up to hand and it could be deemed a weapon at that point, but it might not be a weapon that has been brought onto the school premises; it could be just a rock in the school ground.

**Mrs L.M. HARVEY:** Could I get by way of supplementary information the number of seizures of weapons—such as knives, tyre levers or anything that would not ordinarily be found at school—that have been brought onto a school premises that could be used to perpetrate violence?

**Mr P. PAPALIA:** I undertake to provide to the member for the calendar year 2017 —

**Mrs L.M. HARVEY:** And the year to date?

**Mr P. PAPALIA:** — and the year to date for 2018 the total number of weapons—such as knives, tyre levers and things that would not normally be found on the school premises—brought onto school grounds.

[*Supplementary Information No B3.*]

**Mrs L.M. HARVEY:** Is a catalogue of those kept? Are they photographed?

**Mr P. PAPALIA:** I am told that it is just reported. The critical incident reporting includes things of that nature. They do not keep photos or things of that nature.

**Mrs L.M. HARVEY:** But when weapons like that are seized on school property, are they turned over to the police? What happens to them?

**Mr P. PAPALIA:** As the member will be aware, once the police become involved and it is a police investigation, clearly things of that nature would become part of the investigation and would be the responsibility of the police to secure. In the event that it is not a police investigation, I assume that that is not the case.

**Mrs L.M. HARVEY:** I know that I am labouring the point, but it is an issue that has been raised with me. Going back to the department's training and initiatives to try to support teachers, do teachers and other employees at the school get specific training on how to defend themselves? For example, I know that police provide specific training to pharmacy employees so that they can defend themselves if they are involved in a robbery and they are given information on what to do should that happen. Do teachers receive that training?

**Mr P. PAPALIA:** I am going to ask the director general to answer that.

**Ms S. O'Neill:** The department provides to schools de-escalation training and professional learning of a similar nature, which is really more about, in a moment when children are either misbehaving or being aggressive, how to de-escalate that incident. We have not provided to date and we do not provide self-defence training, although some schools have undertaken that themselves, but we have not provided it at a system level. Right now the minister is giving thought to a range of policy matters in this area, because we have seen in the media recently at least an increased reporting of more aggressive events. Some of the matters that the member is raising are really front of mind for us. We are working closely with police. In fact, the professional learning that I referred to previously, which will be provided right around the state, is being done conjointly with police representation. The matters that the member raises are important for us. Certainly, for most schools this has not been, is not and remains not, an issue, but in some schools we have seen an increase.

Although we do not have plans to generically run the sort of training that the member referred to, but perhaps how to deal with an aggressive community member, child or parent for that matter, we are giving thought to how we might skill our people, even just to be aware of the situations in which that sort of tension and aggression is escalating in the first instance. These occasions are rare in schools. Unfortunately, we have seen some of those moments when people have brought something into school and it is usually as a result of a problem that has occurred outside school that then gets played inside school. The matter of policy is something for the minister to talk about. We are discussing how best we prepare our staff to manage all students, and from time to time more difficult students who most often are involved with other support, including other agencies. As I referred to before, we are working on Target 120. We are in deep collaboration with other agencies around specific children.

[9.50 am]

**Mrs L.M. HARVEY:** Further to this, how many teachers and Department of Education staff have been injured as a result of these sorts of activities?

**Mr P. PAPALIA:** The information that is available is not refined to the extent that the member is asking. I am pretty certain that I understand where she is going with the specific question. The data that is retained relates to any type of assault and includes those assaults committed by students with disabilities that happen on a quite regular basis just as a consequence of their management. If the member is talking about injury, a whole spectrum of types of injuries can occur. The workers' compensation scheme is always responsible for dealing with these situations post the incident. The agency does not have specific granular-type detail on those incidents to answer the member's question.

**The CHAIR:** Members, we have been on this line of questioning for almost 20 minutes. Is there a further question?

**Mrs L.M. HARVEY:** The minister has now spoken of workers' compensation. I am not talking about an individual with disabilities managing an injury, for example, or someone having a seizure and injuring a teacher and the teacher managing that; I am talking about students who are violent who come to school and assault a teacher. I would have thought that the department would keep that detail separate from other injuries. It is great that a person can lodge a workers' compensation claim for that, if it is an injury, but should some other form of compensation be given to those individuals rather than workers' comp or are other payments made to those teachers if they are injured?

**Mr P. PAPALIA:** The process and the support provided to teachers in the circumstances the member is referring to remain unchanged from when she was in government. The workers' compensation system is responsible for supporting people who have been injured in the workplace. With respect to the nature of the injury, despite the member's suggestion that it is a simple thing to define an assault and separate it from other types of injuries sustained as a consequence of student interaction with a teacher, I do not think that is necessarily an easy thing to do all the time. I am familiar with schools in my electorate, for instance, when some children, as a result of the nature of their condition, can inadvertently or unintentionally assault somebody. That happens. Teachers can be injured as a consequence of those sorts of interactions. I am informed that there is not the sort of granularity that the member is hoping for with respect to separating injuries as a consequence of an assault with a weapon or whatever circumstance the member is referring to. I am also informed that the incidents are not always necessarily reported but the staff may then go through the workers' compensation system to achieve some sort of compensation as a consequence of the impact. It may be something that they do not deem worthy of reporting to the department.

**The CHAIR:** Members, we are now at 20 minutes. The member for Roe has been waiting very patiently. The standing orders do state that the questions and answers should be short. Member for Scarborough, you have asked an additional 10 questions to your first question, so this is the last one.

**Mrs L.M. HARVEY:** The director general said that a small number of these sorts of assaults occur in schools. To back up that claim, is the department considering separating injuries that result from a violent incident with a student as opposed to other injuries against teachers and staff at the school? That would seem to be the logical thing to do—to separate them to prove that a small number of these incidents occur in schools. Will the department undertake to change the way that these incidents are recorded to back up that claim that they are very rare?

**Mr P. PAPALIA:** It is interesting that it has become the logical thing to do now, noting that a short time ago the member was in office and she was associated with a training portfolio, which had that level of responsibility, and it was not logical at that time evidently or for the previous eight and a half years. To what end? The agency is already responding to the potential threat from this type of incident, as the member heard from the director general. A range of measures is in place to respond and support the education department staff to threats of this nature. They already understand that they might be anticipating a very small number of incidents. I am not sure what benefit is to be achieved from adding additional workload and separating that type of incident. It may be possible. I will ask the director general to perhaps respond more fulsomely.

[10.00 am]

**Ms S. O'Neill:** When an event such as the member is referring to happens, the school is expected to lodge an online incident notification system. That has always enabled us to get a quick response. When there is an event like this, the online notification system brings a report in very quickly. On that basis, we are able to provide support directly either to an individual or to the school. At that point, if it is alleged that the staff member has been assaulted or, indeed, has been assaulted, it is up to an individual whether they approach the police to report the assault. We support them and give them guidance in that respect. We also immediately offer them medical assistance. A school can take the person away to receive medical assistance. Counselling is also available for the individual and their families. Quite a wraparound service is provided. Obviously, workers' compensation is available to them and, with that in mind, as the minister said, various claims can be made for injury, and the categories do not specify "physical assault as a result of a weapon". We are interested in supporting any employee of ours who is injured for any reason—violence or otherwise. We want to ensure the individuals, staff members and students around them get the immediate help they need and follow-up help if they are impacted by an event such as this. My comment was anecdotal regarding the numbers of violent assaults as a result of weapons being brought to school, which is what the member referred to. Obviously, a greater number of assaults are included in that category, which the member did not refer to—for example, in an education support setting when a child flails their arms and someone is injured. I am not talking about that. When I referred to a small number, I meant anecdotally and regarding violent incidents in which weapons have been brought to school. I can talk about that with some confidence because each and every one of those cases comes to the attention of people in my office and support is given appropriately.

**Mr P.J. RUNDLE:** I refer to the heading "Establishment, Operation and Maintenance of Residential Colleges" on page 298 of budget paper No 2 and note that the total number of employees falls by one position from 114 to 113. Can the minister explain this difference given the closure of Moora Residential College?

**Mr P. PAPALIA:** Is the member suggesting that there should be a significantly higher reduction as a consequence?

**Mr P.J. RUNDLE:** Given the government's forecast closure of Moora Residential College, I assumed that there would be a larger reduction in the number of employees.

**Mr P. PAPALIA:** The hostel has not shut yet, so the staff are still required.

**Mr P.J. RUNDLE:** No, I am talking about the 2018–19 year in which the number of positions drops by only one.

**Mr P. PAPALIA:** It is a net figure. At the time of framing the budget, there were already six vacancies across residential hostel establishments and with the closure of Moora Residential College next year, there will be a reduction of seven positions, which will have a net impact of one position halfway through the financial year.

**Mr P.J. RUNDLE:** The minister is saying the number of positions will be reduced by one. Can the minister outline the savings that will be attributable to the closure of the college?

**Mr P. PAPALIA:** Is the member getting at the entire savings? At least \$8.7 million will be saved by not having to restore the hostel to a safe working condition and, subsequently, the ongoing operating costs associated with the annual operation of the facility. If the member is talking about the number of full-time equivalent positions, there is a net impact of one at the moment because there were six vacancies. I am informed that the net impact is \$378 000 due to the reduction in FTE. That is the net impact. If we were to remove seven positions from the entire total and assume that the other positions were already filled, I imagine it would be significantly more.

**Mr S.K. L'ESTRANGE:** The second dot point on page 292 under significant issues impacting the agency states, in part —

Areas for budget reductions in the Department were identified for 2018–19 and beyond.

Can the minister list all the areas that were identified for budget reduction?

**Mr P. PAPALIA:** That was last year's budget and the forward estimates continue in accordance with last year's budget. These savings measures were announced last year and were subject to a significant amount of focus at the time.

**Mr S.K. L'ESTRANGE:** Given that the sentence appears in this budget, which states that areas for budget reductions in the department were identified for "2018–19 and beyond", and given that some members of the community and the Parliament may not know what has been identified for budget reductions, and in the interest of gold-standard transparency, can the minister please list those areas and the amounts of the reductions for each area?

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**Mr P. PAPALIA:** I do not have to list them; they are already listed on page 291 of volume 1 of the *Budget Statements*. If the member goes to the table under spending changes at the bottom of the page, he will see that a significant number of items are listed. If the member looks through the forward estimates, he can identify for himself, in a rolled-gold standard of transparency, the list of all the issues to which he has referred. They are listed in the budget, as they were last year.

**Mr S.K. L'ESTRANGE:** Maybe the minister can assist me to read the budget more carefully. Can the minister show me where Herdsman Lake Wildlife Centre is listed in this budget?

**Mr P. PAPALIA:** If the member is going to pretend that he has not already interrogated this issue significantly for a prolonged period with a borderline boring level of focus last year, subsequent to last year's budget, then he is really stretching our friendship. That issue has been canvassed, as have a significant number of others relating to what I would call "school camps", what he might call "camp schools" and what I would call "hostels" and what he might call "colleges". These issues were canvassed for a significant period in great detail. I do not think the member will add anything by pursuing it in this estimates process.

**Mr S.K. L'ESTRANGE:** Although I appreciate the minister's advice, I am trying to clarify this: I asked the minister to list all the things that apply to the statement "Areas for budget reductions in the Department were identified for 2018–19 and beyond". The minister said they are all listed in the budget —

**The CHAIR:** What is your question?

**Mr S.K. L'ESTRANGE:** I am asking whether anything is not listed in the budget that relates to that second dot point.

[10.10 am]

**Mr P. PAPALIA:** No, because this issue has already been well and truly canvassed, as I said, in questions in not only the lower house, but also the upper house. Should the member wish to interrogate the matter further, I refer him to question without notice 143 asked in the upper house by Hon Donna Faragher to the Minister for Education and Training, which was responded to at 5.09 pm on 10 April this year. The information in relation to that question without notice provides the sort of detail that the member for Churchlands is asking for. A comprehensive list and pages of stuff were incorporated in that answer. I also refer the member for Churchlands to question without notice 198 on 8 May 2018, again asked by Hon Donna Faragher. It again focuses on detail associated with the sort of stuff the member is after. There has been more than adequate provision of information and detail regarding the question the member is asking. I do not believe anything more needs to be provided.

**Mr S.K. L'ESTRANGE:** Can the minister confirm, because this is an Assembly estimates hearing and I appreciate that questions have been asked in the other place, whether he will provide a list for the Assembly to answer my question?

**Mr P. PAPALIA:** No. It is a Parliament. I do not know how the member's party works, but we actually talk to each other in our party, regardless of which house we sit in. I know Liberal Party members are free range in the upper house and that the Leader of the Opposition has little control over what his parliamentary colleagues in the upper house do, say or pursue, but I think that the member is more than capable of going to the upper house *Hansard*, googling the numbers that I have given him and finding the responses provided on both occasions. I reckon that that is more than adequate provision of information for lower house estimates. If the member really wants me to, it has been suggested that I could read out the answers, but I do not want to inflict that on anyone.

**Mr P.J. RUNDLE:** I refer to agricultural colleges at the top of page 308. What is the structure that surrounds the delivery of education to agricultural colleges?

**Mr P. PAPALIA:** I will ask the director general to respond.

**Ms S. O'Neill:** The overall structure is that we have agricultural colleges, which the member is aware of, and they have councils or boards at the local level. They have some responsibility and oversight. At the corporate level, the executive director of statewide services has responsibility for agricultural education, and he is sitting behind me here. Under that structure is an assistant executive director and then a director, each of whom have responsibility in line for the oversight of agricultural colleges. Then there are staff members in that area who work directly with the agricultural colleges and then make connection, obviously, to the schools on the ground, all of which I understand are independent public schools and, so, operate certainly under that guise as well.

**Mr P.J. RUNDLE:** Has the original director's role been replaced?

**Mr P. PAPALIA:** I will ask the director general to respond.

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**Ms S. O'Neill:** Historically, there was a director of agricultural education. With the advent of independent public schools, whereby they make those governance decisions for themselves, the director of agricultural education position is no longer there, but there are people in statewide services who have responsibility for supporting agricultural schools.

**Mr P.J. RUNDLE:** If that position has been replaced, as you say, how does the department manage agricultural education? Are you comfortable with the way it is being managed under the new structure?

**Mr P. PAPALIA:** Is the member asking the minister or the director general?

**Mr P.J. RUNDLE:** I ask the minister, and may need to ask the director general to reply.

**Mr P. PAPALIA:** I will ask the director general to respond.

**Ms S. O'Neill:** Yes, I am comfortable. As they are independent public schools with their own boards, the governance in place is appropriate. Obviously, all the checks and balances are in place through the ordinary governance procedures—audit, if you like—the oversight that we have of budgets; the work we do with them for staffing. The quality assurance procedures that give me the confidence for all public schools are the same quality assurance processes that give me confidence over the agricultural colleges. In addition, the principals of those colleges, as the member is aware, are expert in their field. They are able to get direct support when they need it from not only each other but also statewide services. I am confident that they are well supported. I am confident that they have the appropriate expertise to undertake their roles and I believe our quality assurance processes will bring forward any issues and trends as they emerge.

**Mr P. PAPALIA:** Some of them even get to become members of Parliament and lead political parties.

**Mr P.J. RUNDLE:** Given the 20 per cent skimming, as I call it, of the agricultural trust fund, have any of the ag colleges asked for any additional money for the purchase of equipment and so forth?

**Mr P. PAPALIA:** The member knows that that is a bit of a cheeky question, because the agricultural colleges are fully funded for their operations. Their operations are in the Education budget and are fully funded from the department. The member knows that on occasion that trust is drawn upon to augment equipment replacements or additional investments of that nature, and the trust does not operate in the same way as a normal trust. It is a fund, essentially, that can be drawn upon, and it has never be fully drawn down and I do not anticipate that it will be. I expect that even with the contribution that has been called for from the department or from the government, there is more than adequate funding to meet the occasional requirements that in the past were addressed through that fund.

**The CHAIR:** That was your final further question.

**Mr P.J. RUNDLE:** I did not really get the answer. Have any of the ag colleges asked for additional money?

**Mr P. PAPALIA:** No.

**Mrs L.M. HARVEY:** The fifth dot point from the bottom of page 292, under “Significant Issues Impacting the Agency”, is about resilience, emotional regulation and the behaviour of children. Bullying in schools is a really big issue, particularly cyberbullying, which exists as a result of mobile phone usage. I know a lot of private schools are now considering banning mobile phones at school because of issues that come from not only bullying but also violent incidents, which we referred to previously, that are recorded and transmitted on mobile phones to help perpetrate, if you like, and endorse that behaviour. I am wondering whether, as part of the policies that the department is putting together, the department is considering banning mobile phones in schools?

**Mr P. PAPALIA:** I will ask the director general to respond in a minute, but I make the observation that plenty of private schools do not ban mobile phones, as evidenced by the recently significant incident at Hale School, I think, that was filmed and broadcast on social media. I ask the director general to respond.

[10.20 am]

**Ms S. O'Neill:** It is a vexed question. Some of our schools have tried to ban mobile phones, with varying degrees of success. I understand why some people might want mobile phones banned. Some of the issues around that include that parents want their children to have phones on the way to school and on the way home from school. Issues relate to the collection and storage of phones. Schools are really busy places; some of the schools in the member's area are huge, so there is an issue around the capacity to be able to manage the collection of one phone, let alone the multiple phones that some children seem to have. There is just a practical issue about how they go about that. We are in close contact and work with people like the eSafety Commissioner. The ministerial council is looking at cyberbullying and the use of social media in relation to that. We are also working with Donna Cross from the Telethon Kids Institute. There are different schools of thought. A major school of thought is that children have to be taught how to use mobile phones and social media appropriately, so that has been a big focus of our work. There is nothing inherently problematic with phones themselves; it is how they are used. We have come

more from a prevention perspective, largely across the department. We are doing a lot of work in that respect. We do not have a policy about mobile phones being removed from students. We would prefer at this point to have that as a case-by-case consideration for schools. For some schools this is not an issue, but for others it is, so it is very hard for us to really have a policy position that covers 809 schools and their particular contexts. To date, the policy position is that we would leave that to principals and their school boards and councils to decide, but the principle underlying all that work is prevention, good use of social media, healthy use of social media, and dealing with bullying as it arises.

**Mrs L.M. HARVEY:** Just further to that and this dot point, how many schools have actually attempted to ban mobile phones?

**Mr P. PAPALIA:** I am informed that the central office does not collect that information.

**Mrs L.M. HARVEY:** Further to this dot point about mental health issues for our children, how many school psychologists does the Department of Education currently employ across the network for primary schools and high schools?

**Mr P. PAPALIA:** I am told there are 336.9 full-time equivalents.

**Mrs L.M. HARVEY:** Is there a breakdown between metropolitan and regional psychologists?

**Mr P. PAPALIA:** I undertake to provide to the member through supplementary information a breakdown of the distribution of school psychologists. Actually, rather than doing that, I am told that we have the information region by region. Would that do?

**Mrs L.M. HARVEY:** I was actually going to ask if we could have it by school district, yes.

**Mr P. PAPALIA:** How about we just read it out? In fact, I will ask the director general to read it out and then we can have it on record.

**Ms S. O'Neill:** In the goldfields region, as at 3 May, FTE 13.5, headcount 15; Kimberley school psychologists, same date—I will just use the same construction—FTE 15.41, headcount 16; this does not include casuals. School psychologists in the midwest, 13.63 FTE, 15 headcount; north metropolitan, 132.7 FTE, 168 headcount; Pilbara, FTE 15.86, headcount 17; south metropolitan, 109.97 FTE, headcount 137—there are quite a few part-timers, I think, in there; south west, 35.06 FTE, headcount 44; and, wheatbelt, FTE 12.9 and headcount 14.

That might not tally exactly with the overall number given because they might be slightly different pay dates, but the one I gave the member was for May.

**Mrs L.M. HARVEY:** Thank you.

**The CHAIR:** At this stage I have been asked whether we can have a five-minute break until 10.30. The minister needs a comfort break.

**Mr P. PAPALIA:** I am old!

**The CHAIR:** Yes, you had that coffee!

*Meeting suspended from 10.26 to 10.33 am*

**The CHAIR:** I give the call to the member for Roe.

**Mr P.J. RUNDLE:** I refer to page 301 of budget paper No 2 and the line item “City Beach Residential College”, which is two-thirds of the way down the page. What have student numbers at the college been over the past five years?

**Mr P. PAPALIA:** The number of students at City Beach hostel in 2014 was 57; in 2017, it was 54; in 2016, it was 56; in 2017, it was 52; and in 2018, it is 52.

**Mr P.J. RUNDLE:** What are the future projections for the college?

**Mr P. PAPALIA:** As the member has heard, the numbers are fairly stable, so it is a bit difficult to anticipate. It would be subject to fluctuations in the event. Maybe if there is a really good season this year, there might be more children going to private schools rather than to the state school system, but, that aside, it looks to be a pretty stable number of around 54 to 56 students.

**Mr P.J. RUNDLE:** Given the figure of \$5 million in the 2018–19 budget estimates, what are the additions and improvements in relation to that figure going to be?

**Mr P. PAPALIA:** I might ask Mr Fischer to respond to that question.

**Extract from Hansard**

[ASSEMBLY ESTIMATES COMMITTEE B — Tuesday, 22 May 2018]

p96c-114a

Chair; Mr Sean L'Estrange; Mr Paul Papalia; Mrs Liza Harvey; Mr Peter Rundle; Ms Cassandra Rowe; Mr Reece Whitby; Ms Emily Hamilton

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**Mr J. Fischer:** The total budget for City Beach Residential College is \$6.4 million and work has already commenced. It provides for additional admin and recreational areas for the college. The member might know that some of the cafeteria areas, or the dining areas, are currently located at City Beach high school, and that is being developed back at the residential college.

**Mrs L.M. HARVEY:** The outcomes and key effectiveness indicators on pages 294 and 295 refer to years 5, 7 and 9 students achieving the national minimum standards. I am interested to know how many schools trialled NAPLAN Online this year.

**Mr P. PAPALIA:** It was 273 schools.

**Mrs L.M. HARVEY:** Did any of the schools that were to do NAPLAN Online end up being unable to complete the tests because of internet issues?

**Mr P. PAPALIA:** One school started off online and then went to paper completion. It was Adam Road Primary School in Bunbury. It was due to wi-fi issues, apparently.

**Mrs L.M. HARVEY:** Only one school that intended to did not complete NAPLAN Online because of a wi-fi issue.

**Mr P. PAPALIA:** The process is still underway, so it may change, but I am told that at this time. NAPLAN is over a range of years and that was a primary school test that was interrupted. Sorry, the process takes time and 73 per cent of schools have completed it, but some are still doing it.

**Mrs L.M. HARVEY:** So, 33 per cent of the schools have completed —

**Mr P. PAPALIA:** No, 73 per cent have completed it. I might get the director general to explain the detail.

**Ms S. O'Neill:** Just to make sure that we have all the detail, it is across a couple of weeks, but as of 21 May, 73 per cent of the total NAPLAN Online sessions had been completed. Schools might be doing it over a period of time, so 73 per cent of all these sessions have been completed successfully, with 27 per cent of the assessments still being done during this week. We receive a day-by-day update from the people who run the total project nationally and also through the School Curriculum and Standards Authority, which is the testing authority in the state that has oversight. When there are problems, people will ring in and get assistance, but it is a pretty fantastic outcome to have only one school that had to revert to paper. SCSA and the department had in place that contingency plan that if something was problematic in terms of their wi-fi—remembering that we are still learning through this process—they would be able to revert to paper and pencil based on the principal's advice and in discussion with the testing authority so that there would be no disadvantage to any student. That is a pretty good outcome. Most of those are public schools and I think a handful of them are private schools. We work with all our schools to ensure that they have the capacity to undertake the testing using wi-fi. It will be interesting for us to go through what the issue at this school was—we have done that—to ensure that it is okay for the rest of the testing period and to learn from any of those occasions for when we go full scale over the next couple of years.

[10.40 am]

**Mrs L.M. HARVEY:** When is it intended that NAPLAN will go 100 per cent on line?

**Ms S. O'Neill:** Most public schools will be online by 2019, and all schools are required to by 2020.

**Mr P.J. RUNDLE:** I refer to the table on page 308 of the *Budget Statements* with the heading “Net Appropriation Determination” and the line item “Physical Education Camp School Receipts”—about four lines from the top. How many of these camp schools will be taken over by private providers?

**Mr P. PAPALIA:** The process is still underway but I understand it is anticipated that all of them will, with the exception of the Broome Camp School because that has been retained.

**Mr P.J. RUNDLE:** Will the Department of Education have oversight of the operation of the camp schools when they are taken over?

**Mr P. PAPALIA:** When the member refers to “oversight”, what does he mean? They are not schools. This is a misnomer. I do not know how many people in the chamber attended one when they were in school but I did when I was a kid and there was no school stuff going on. There was a lot of fun by the way of outdoor education and that sort of stuff and getting away from school. The reality is that they are camp sites. I share the view that what goes on at those sites is not core education department activity, but it is a valuable activity and can be delivered by the private sector through the management of those sites in the same way that many other similar private sector-operated venues provide a service to the education department and the private sector right now. The director general wants to give the member another answer.

**Mr P.J. RUNDLE:** Sounds good.

**Mr P. PAPALIA:** I suggest that it is an “additional” answer.

**Ms S. O’Neill:** It is a complementary answer. I just want to make it clear that the Point Peron school camp is owned by the Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions and the Dampier school camp is owned by Rio Tinto. We have leased those camps. To add to the minister’s answer, when we seek those alternative providers, we will be working with them on their applications and proposals to ensure that schoolchildren at camp feature and are a priority. Those camp sites and providers will also have relationships with the owners of some of those properties.

**Mr P.J. RUNDLE:** My understanding is that camp schools provide an element of curriculum and that employees from the Department of Education work in the camp schools, so once the contract is in place, will the department have oversight of those things?

**Mr P. PAPALIA:** My understanding is that the misnomer or the nomenclature of “school” was attributed to these sites as a consequence of the administrative process within the education department. Essentially, when people who are employed by the education department work at a camp site, it has to be called a “school” for the purposes of administration. As I said before, it is an absolute stretch to suggest that a camp site is a school. It is not a school; it is a camp site. I went to the Point Peron camp as a kid, and I do not believe that anything has changed in the nature of the services provided at those sites. They provide a valuable opportunity for kids to get away from school to experience physical activity in a natural environment and to undertake camp activities, which is a valuable thing. But there is no reason that that cannot be delivered by anyone in the same way as it is right now at the Nanga Bush Camp, for example. I would assume that some state schools use that site, as do many other private schools. They also use other school camp sites for taking their kids away on excursions. An important observation indicated to me by the director general is that whenever kids go to these sites, the teachers from the school that provides the children accompany the children. They retain all their responsibilities with regard to duty of care and the delivery of curriculum. If they intend to provide some sort of out-of-classroom experience that links to what they are doing back in the classroom, it is the teachers from the school who go on the camp and provide that—not the camp-site administrators.

**Mrs L.M. HARVEY:** I refer to spending changes at page 291 of the *Budget Statements* and the line item “Growth Funding—Revisions to Student Enrolment and Cost Growth Forecasts”. I note the estimate in 2018–19 is around \$1.4 million, which increases to \$24.786 million in 2020–21. Last year, however, for 2018–19, the budget showed a revision down of \$22.4 million for 2018–19, which has now been revised back up —

**Mr P. PAPALIA:** Sorry, what was that last bit?

**Mrs L.M. HARVEY:** Last year, the growth forecasting was significantly revised down and it now seems to have swung back up significantly. I want an explanation about how last year’s budget revised down the cost growths of \$22.4 million in 2018–19, \$58.05 million in 2019–20 and \$119 million in 2020–21, when this year it seems to have been revised back up? I want an explanation as to how those swings can occur.

**Mr P. PAPALIA:** It is just a shift in the census data as a consequence, I would assume, of the wider economic factors at play. In all likelihood, in Western Australia, a greater number of people no longer have the capacity to enrol their kids in private schools and have shifted them back to the public sector. I agree with the claim that has been made in the past that the public sector is providing a great product and is attractive to parents and is therefore drawing a greater proportion of the overall student body back into the state system. That is a component as well. A census was done and it identified that the projections in the previous budget were not adequate to accommodate the growth now foreseen, so the number has changed and the budget then shifted to respond.

[10.50 am]

**Mrs L.M. HARVEY:** Can the minister give me an indication of the indicative student growth figures that sit behind those changes?

**Mr P. PAPALIA:** It is just that the number has exceeded the anticipated number. There was obviously a shift, and we can speculate about what drives it. It would be not hard to suggest that in the past a number of people might have had confidence in their employment, which enabled them, were they so inclined, to enrol their kids in the private sector, and subsequently that has changed. That may be a contributing factor. It may be that the public sector is seen as an attractive option. Regardless of the motivations, the numbers have shifted and the budget had to respond. We had projected a lower anticipated growth than was achieved. This year, post-census, the growth rate was confirmed at 1.7 per cent, and that was not anticipated. Subsequently, the modelling reflects that shift and there is a continued growth in numbers as a consequence of this number growing this year. We can anticipate the retention of a proportion right through the school years and that gives growing numbers in the out years and additional costs as children go through the school system. All those factors contribute to the need to anticipate growth in the budget. I confirm the record amount of spend for education projected into the future.

**Extract from Hansard**

[ASSEMBLY ESTIMATES COMMITTEE B — Tuesday, 22 May 2018]

p96c-114a

Chair; Mr Sean L'Estrange; Mr Paul Papalia; Mrs Liza Harvey; Mr Peter Rundle; Ms Cassandra Rowe; Mr Reece Whitby; Ms Emily Hamilton

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**Mrs L.M. HARVEY:** I refer to the line item for the voluntary targeted separation scheme in the same table on page 292 of budget paper No 2. What is the target for full-time equivalents to achieve those savings from the VTSS?

**Mr P. PAPALIA:** There is no actual target other than the overall one that the Treasurer has articulated in the public domain on a number of occasions, which is around 3 000. I think by now we have exceeded 2 000 across the public sector. We are looking to achieve further VTSS numbers in the near term.

**Mrs L.M. HARVEY:** Has this just been done with an allocation to the budget of what needs to be reduced?

**Mr P. PAPALIA:** I can tell the member how many have been achieved in the education department to date.

**Mrs L.M. HARVEY:** Yes, please.

**Mr P. PAPALIA:** There have been 234.

**Mrs L.M. HARVEY:** Have those 234 cost the \$16.65 million allocated for this year? What has been the cost of those 234 voluntary targeted separations?

**Mr P. PAPALIA:** The funding to meet the obligations associated with that number is \$21 million. Obviously, the savings are far in excess of that over the forward estimates once that cost is accommodated.

**Mrs L.M. HARVEY:** When did the scheme start?

**Mr P. PAPALIA:** It started late last year.

**Mrs L.M. HARVEY:** If 234 redundancies have been achieved for \$21 million —

**Mr P. PAPALIA:** That is the payout to them for the voluntary targeted separation scheme.

**Mrs L.M. HARVEY:** Is the \$16.652 million allocated for this year's budget a proportion of the \$21 million? Was some of that paid from last year's allocation?

**Mr P. PAPALIA:** The figure is \$21.519 million and that is the cost associated with the payout, but savings of \$4.867 million were realised in this budget year as an immediate consequence, so we subsequently get the net outcome.

**Mrs L.M. HARVEY:** That clarifies it for me. I thank the minister.

**Mr P. PAPALIA:** That is where the figure came from. The moment that is done, savings start to be accrued and they continue through the forward estimates, but they are attributed in the financial year in which they are achieved.

**Mr P.J. RUNDLE:** I refer to the second last dot point on page 292 of budget paper No 2, which relates to the provision of childcare facilities in schools. What schools are being considered for day care sites on school premises?

**Mr P. PAPALIA:** I am interested in this one too, member! I will let the director general respond.

**Ms S. O'Neill:** The policy of the government through Educare was to make provision into the future of some school sites for long day care. The Department of Education does not operate long day care, but in some schools we have the opportunity to give land for buildings to be built there and to be operated. Just to be clear, we do not operate the long day care and it is not the intention. The Educare policy was to be sympathetic to families with young children going to school and being in day care. Many of our primary schools already have facilities that are appropriate for out-of-school care, so several hundred schools have out-of-school care—before and after-school care—and that is a deed of licence. Separately to that, we do not run long day care, but the policy states that into the future, when no long day care is available nearby, because we do not want to duplicate services, there needs to be some provision to accommodate long day care. At some of the schools coming forward in the near future—new schools—we would have already had that land, so the footprint might not be large enough to set aside land for long day care, but as we look at land acquisition in the future, extra land will be required to accommodate long day care. It is not going to be needed at every school site, because something might be nearby, but we will need to undertake that forward planning. That is the policy. It is future oriented and we are undertaking planning to ensure that any new land acquisitions are able to accommodate that, if that is a local area need.

**Mr P.J. RUNDLE:** Does the minister have any idea how much funding will be allocated to regional schools for that?

**Mr P. PAPALIA:** As I understand it, the policy is that land to be allocated for future use for those purposes is identified at new school sites in advance. The cost is not identified separately; it is just part of the school site. It is more a process, so there is no cost attached to ensuring that there is a capacity to enable it and then going to the private sector. In fact, developers provide the land as part of growing developments anyway. The land is there, so that does not cost the department, and allocating a proportion of it for this purpose does not cost the department either.

[11.00 am]

**Extract from Hansard**

[ASSEMBLY ESTIMATES COMMITTEE B — Tuesday, 22 May 2018]

p96c-114a

Chair; Mr Sean L'Estrange; Mr Paul Papalia; Mrs Liza Harvey; Mr Peter Rundle; Ms Cassandra Rowe; Mr Reece Whitby; Ms Emily Hamilton

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**Ms C.M. ROWE:** I refer to page 293 of budget paper No 2, in particular the government's goal of safe communities and supported families. I imagine that this goal would include the provision of chaplaincy staff. What funding is the state government committing to this program?

**Mr P. PAPALIA:** I ask the director general to respond.

**Ms S. O'Neill:** Chaplaincy is part of the suite of support mechanisms that we provide in schools. For 2018, the state government provides \$6.4 million as part of the in-school state-funded chaplaincy program. That provides for chaplains in school. Remember that commonwealth funding for chaplaincy is supplementary to that. A need for chaplaincy services was identified by 562 public schools. They each submitted an application, and they have either received direct funding or a credit for funding when they can recruit a chaplain. The state has committed \$21.9 million for pastoral care in the forward estimates—a continuing commitment to chaplaincy.

**Mrs L.M. HARVEY:** I refer to pages 112 and 113 of budget paper No 3. Revisions to international student training expenses equate to around \$36 million less funding required to train international students. There is a note on page 113 to the effect that the recurrent expenditure has been revised down by a total of \$31.6 million through the out years. Notwithstanding this, the government expects student enrolments to grow over the forward estimates period. If the government expects student enrolments to grow, why has it revised down the cost of training them?

**Mr P. PAPALIA:** This is the wrong division in which to be asking this particular question. It should be under training, rather than education.

**The CHAIR:** Member, are you happy to hold that question until the Training and Workforce Development division?

**Mrs L.M. HARVEY:** Yes, I will hold it over to training. Sorry—I was getting a bit ahead of myself.

**Mr P.J. RUNDLE:** I refer to the residential college minor works program mentioned on page 301 of budget paper No 2. Will any of this funding be allocated to Moora Residential College? I thought this was appropriate, now that the member for Moore has arrived.

**Mr P. PAPALIA:** The member is nothing if not persistent, and I think he already knows the response—no. This year's budget allocations for necessary maintenance to ensure the safe operation of the hostel until it closes has already been announced.

**Mr P.J. RUNDLE:** Is the minister comfortable that the facility is deemed to be safe for students?

**Mr P. PAPALIA:** That is what I was referring to. I am informed that necessary work to ensure the safety of the children at the hostel was completed in April. That facility is safe, and as we are aware, and as the member is aware, projected costings for necessary additional works, were the hostel to remain open, vary between \$7.2 million and \$11.2 million. The previous government identified a requirement for \$8.7 million. The present government has decided that it cannot justify that expenditure in the current circumstances. The budgetary measures necessary to repair the damage that we inherited dictate that we cannot spend that money on that site.

**Mr R.R. WHITBY:** I raise an issue relating to the service summary table at the top of page 294 of budget paper No 2. My question relates to federal funding and how that has impacted on Western Australia's spending on public education.

**Mr P. PAPALIA:** Can I ask the member specifically where the table refers to federal funding?

**Mr R.R. WHITBY:** There are two line items at the top of the table, referring to spending on primary and secondary public education. I am wondering what impact commonwealth funding has had on our spending on public education.

**Mr P. PAPALIA:** I am not sure that it is specifically related to that particular table, but there is an impact. The state is in negotiations with the federal government to try to mitigate that impact and return appropriate funding to the state from the federal government. I ask the director general to respond further.

**Ms S. O'Neill:** Currently, we have an interim agreement with the commonwealth government, and we are receiving our funding that way. The commonwealth's National Education Reform Agreement is currently being negotiated with the states. The member would have heard about the Gonski review. The funding element is being negotiated with the states, with the aim of it being in place from the beginning of 2019. As a state, we have historically funded students to a higher level, so the national agreement now looks at the school resourcing standard. We are already in excess of the school resourcing standard, so that is part of negotiations that would be undertaken. The Gonski report has just been released, and the point of that report is to describe the nature of the reforms needed as part of the negotiated funding that would come from the commonwealth to the states. We are in negotiations on that, and in fact it is due to go to the ministerial council in the next couple of weeks for the next part of that discussion to be undertaken. The commonwealth funding is part of our funding, although it is not the greater share—it is the greater share for non-government schools, but not for us. We are in the middle of that

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discussion right now, and until we finalise some of the aspects of that, we cannot determine the full impact of the commonwealth negotiations on our state budget. We are in the middle of discussions now.

**Mr P. PAPALIA:** It is probably worth quoting on Hansard because, as the director general indicated, we already spend far in excess of the national average per student for delivering education services in this state. If that is assumed to be the benchmark that we have to retain as our proportion of the ongoing contribution, that is completely unfair in comparison with states that have neglected their public sector education contributions, and will therefore, as a consequence, be given an unfair advantage. For having been less dedicated to education, they will be rewarded, and by coincidence, in reality, they will be the same states that have been receiving a disproportionate share of goods and services tax contributions from the federal government. The Turnbull government is basically setting Western Australia up to get thumped yet again. If this is the baseline, and the commonwealth is not rectifying the disproportionately unfair share of GST distribution to Western Australia, how on earth does it expect us to continue to maintain the highest level of funding per student in the country? It is totally unfair, it is irrational and it overlooks the fact that other states have been neglecting their education sector and are being rewarded for it. It also overlooks the fact that at the moment the GST distribution system rewards states that neglect the opportunities that reside within their commodities sector and do not pursue opportunities to develop mining potential. When we do that, we get penalised, and now we will get penalised again with the education distribution. It is outrageous. I expect every Western Australian member of both state and federal Parliaments, regardless of their political party, to condemn the federal government for this apparent plan to further penalise us. I have not heard much at all from the state opposition and I certainly have not heard anything from federal members of Parliament from the Liberal and National Parties—no, there are no federal Nationals; that is right. They have shown no interest in holding the Turnbull government to account on this matter. It is just a disgrace. It is a further impending disaster for our budget that will yet again be inflicted upon the state by the coalition.

[11.10 am]

**Mrs L.M. HARVEY:** I am somewhat confused by the minister's response. On page 308 of the budget papers under the heading "Grants and Contributions", the line item shows that recurrent commonwealth grants funding is \$729 million in 2017–18 and it will increase by 7.1 per cent to \$793 million in 2018–19, by 8.6 per cent to \$848 million in 2019–20, by an additional 11 per cent to \$949 million in 2020–21 and by 10 per cent to over \$1 billion in 2021–22. To me, those increases seem in excess of what the predicted student enrolment data is showing.

**Mr P. PAPALIA:** Is the member making a speech or asking a question?

**Mrs L.M. HARVEY:** Can the minister put in context his previous answer about the decline in commonwealth grants?

**Mr P. PAPALIA:** Happily. The problem is that, in the same way as the member's lot signed up for this unfair GST distribution plan that we are suffering from as a consequence many years later, her federal colleagues are demanding that we sign up to a distribution plan that assumes a disproportionately high contribution by our state government to education costs in the future. If we sign up to it, sometime in the future we will get a distribution from the federal government that might one day resolve a fairer outcome, but, in the meantime, it will just damage us yet again. We are not going to do it. I cannot say that we are not going to do it, but we are not inclined to be duded yet again by the federal government. Rather than the member defending the indefensible, and defending the federal government's approach to Western Australia, she should condemn it as well and urge it to provide a fairer distribution of federal government funds both through the GST and in education.

**Mrs L.M. HARVEY:** I am just asking the minister to explain what the increase in the recurrent commonwealth grants expenditure in the out years will do. I understand that a capital grants program has not been agreed to, but if recurrent expenditure will increase by seven per cent, 8.6 per cent, 11 per cent and 10 per cent in the out years, it flies in the face of the minister's commentary that it is decreasing. Is there some other area of income from the commonwealth that the minister can point me to in the budget papers to show that it is declining?

**Mr P. PAPALIA:** I just did, member. Effectively, we are getting strongarmed by the federal government to sign up to a dud deal to receive funding in another allocation. It is unfair. The member should condemn the federal government, not defend it. She should act on behalf of Western Australia and show some interest in the students of Western Australia. She knows that we already spend more per student to educate our students than any other state. It is not being acknowledged and recognised by the federal government. This ongoing process is quite disturbing. The member should be participating in the right team—team WA—instead of joining her Canberra colleagues and mates, as she has done on some other issues lately.

**Mrs L.M. HARVEY:** So the minister cannot explain what this is about.

**Mr P. PAPALIA:** I just explained it.

**Mrs L.M. HARVEY:** The minister cannot explain this line item.

**Extract from *Hansard***

[ASSEMBLY ESTIMATES COMMITTEE B — Tuesday, 22 May 2018]

p96c-114a

Chair; Mr Sean L'Estrange; Mr Paul Papalia; Mrs Liza Harvey; Mr Peter Rundle; Ms Cassandra Rowe; Mr Reece Whitby; Ms Emily Hamilton

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**Mr P. PAPALIA:** Go back and read *Hansard*. I explained it.

**Mr S.K. L'ESTRANGE:** I refer to the appropriations, expenses and cash assets table on page 291 of the budget papers and to the total appropriation provided to deliver services to the Department of Education, which relates to the total appropriations provided by the state government for recurrent purposes. In the 2017–18 state budget, the government forecast total appropriations to deliver services of \$4.11 billion in 2018–19, \$4.12 billion in 2019–20 and \$4.2 billion in 2020–21, but in this budget, these appropriations have been reduced to \$4.04 billion in 2018–19, \$4.02 billion in 2019–20 and \$4.09 billion in 2020–21. This is a reduction of \$281 million over three years. Given that the spending changes table accounts for only \$140 million of these cuts, what other changes or cuts have occurred?

**Mr P. PAPALIA:** Member, there are no cuts. As has been publicly announced and attacked by those on the member's side, who imposed on the state forty thousand million dollars of debt—that is what they did —

**Mr S.K. L'ESTRANGE:** It was \$32.5 billion.

**Mr P. PAPALIA:** They should be ashamed.

**Mr S.K. L'ESTRANGE:** It was \$32.5 billion.

**Mr P. PAPALIA:** So the member does not believe in the forward estimates. His government built in costs that we have to meet. They do not magically disappear because it lost government.

**Mr S.K. L'ESTRANGE:** Just answer the question, minister.

**Mr P. PAPALIA:** The previous government built in costs that we have to meet; in fact, it built in costs that we have no indication how to meet and we have had to find further savings.

**Mr S.K. L'ESTRANGE:** I am simply asking where the rest of these reductions are coming from.

**The CHAIR:** Member for Churchlands, let the minister finish his answer.

**Mr P. PAPALIA:** The voluntary targeted separation scheme and our agreed wages policy of \$1 000 per person across the public sector, regardless of the person's job, category or scale of payment, have resulted in a reduction in that cost. That is a good thing. The previous government did not do anything. It gave the state 6.4 per cent year-on-year compounding growth in the public sector.

**Mr S.K. L'ESTRANGE:** The minister is not answering the question.

**Mr P. PAPALIA:** That is the imbalance that we have to rectify.

**Mr S.K. L'ESTRANGE:** The minister is lecturing me; he is not answering the question.

**Mr P. PAPALIA:** We are working on it. We made it very public what we were going to do about it and it was applauded by the Western Australian public.

**Mr S.K. L'ESTRANGE:** Yes, but the minister is not answering the question.

**The CHAIR:** Member for Churchlands!

**Mr P. PAPALIA:** That is why we were elected at the last election. We are delivering on what we told people we would do.

**Mr S.K. L'ESTRANGE:** The minister keeps pontificating. Just answer the question.

**Mr P. PAPALIA:** We are fixing the mess that we inherited from the previous government.

**The CHAIR:** Member for Churchlands, I will call you to order if you keep going.

**Mr S.K. L'ESTRANGE:** I say again that given that the spending changes table accounts for only \$140 million of these reductions, what other changes or reductions have occurred?

**Mr P. PAPALIA:** We inherited from the member's government a financial imbalance.

**Mr S.K. L'ESTRANGE:** So the minister is not going to tell us. There is no transparency.

**Mr P. PAPALIA:** Every single year the previous government spent more than it got. Any household understands that that will result in a disastrous outcome. Over time, it is unsustainable. We are repairing the previous government's mess. We hope that we can get to the point at which we are spending less than we are getting. We have forecast that to occur in 2020. Every department, every agency and every arm of government, including all of us in this place, are contributing through the voluntary targeted separation scheme and the wages policy and, in our case, as the member knows, through the frozen wages of judges and members of Parliament over the forward estimates.

[11.20 am]

**Mr P.J. RUNDLE:** I refer to the sixth dot point on page 292 of budget paper No 2, which relates to resilience, emotional regulation and behaviour of children. How many mental health coordinators will be assigned to schools, and what schools?

**Mr P. PAPALIA:** I might get the director general to respond.

**Ms S. O'Neill:** It was the government's election commitment to provide additional support to schools by way of mental health coordinators. There will be 300 mental health coordinators in schools. They will each get 0.1 time release, which I think is half a day. It is part of the focus on mental health for students that the department will continue to have. The member might remember that level 3 teachers—our most expert, senior teachers—will undertake this role. Three hundred of those teachers will receive additional training. They will get time release to deliver and coordinate mental health programs. That expression of interest is now complete.

**Mr P. PAPALIA:** We can provide the list of schools. I undertake to provide the member, by way of supplementary information, the names of the schools to which the mental health coordinators will be allocated.

*[Supplementary Information No B4.]*

**Mr P.J. RUNDLE:** Where will the funding for the mental health coordinators in regional areas come from?

**Mr P. PAPALIA:** The regional ones will be funded from royalties for regions allocations. The metropolitan ones will be funded through reprioritisation. The opposition will get a good deal yet again.

**Ms E. HAMILTON:** I refer to the outcomes and key effectiveness indicators on page 294 of budget paper No 2. I notice that the NAPLAN results of WA students have remained consistently high. How does this compare with those in other jurisdictions?

**Mr P. PAPALIA:** I might let the director general answer that.

**Ms S. O'Neill:** The results that the member is referring to are based on the NAPLAN results over some years. As she would know, as we just talked about it, that testing regime is being undertaken as we speak. Western Australia has been seen as a growth state as we are one of the fastest growing on the results. We did not start out at the top of the table with our results, but given the progress that we have made over time, we are deemed to be one of the fastest growing states. Western Australia's mean achievement score was above the base of 2018 in 12 of the 20 assessments. This has been really great for us. It is the highest number of improved mean scores of any state. That is on the back of some fantastic work done in schools and by our support staff, but primarily in schools. That stands out around Australia as a really great achievement. Mean scores across 12 out of 20 assessments is pretty hard to achieve so we are pleased with that result.

**The appropriation was recommended.**