

SCHOOL CONSTRUCTION — GOVERNMENT PERFORMANCE

Motion

DR A.D. BUTI (Armadale) [5.05 pm]: I move —

That this house condemns the Minister for Education and the government for its slow rate of building new schools.

I have brought this motion to the house today because I am incredibly concerned about this government's performance in the area of building schools and the lack of new schools. Whether we are looking at the western suburbs, Midland or the south east corridor where the Minister for Corrective Services' new electorate will be if he is successful at the next election, we see prime examples of how this government has failed to keep up with demand for new schools in our electorates.

What is the new seat going to be called? Will it still be Jandakot? There are schools in the electorate of Jandakot that are less than eight years old and have as many demountable buildings as they have purpose-built buildings. The number of demountables—or “transportables”, as they are generally referred to now—is deplorable. There are nearly 50 schools in Western Australia that have more than 10 transportable classrooms, and there are eight schools that have 20 or more. Churchlands Senior High School has 36 transportables; Baldivis Primary School has 16; Bertram Primary School has 15; Bletchley Park Primary School has 20; Currambine Primary School has 15; West Byford Primary School has 22; and the number at Kelmscott Senior High School is also in double digits.

I will just go through some of the other schools. Aubin Grove Primary School has 26; Broome Senior High School, in the member for Kimberley's electorate, has 15; Butler College has 10; and Byford Secondary College has 10. I think Byford Secondary College opened only two or three years ago. Canning Vale College has 11; Campbell Primary School has 12; Cape Naturaliste College has 13; Carramar Primary School has 12; and Challis Community Primary school, in my electorate, has 14.

Challis Primary School is the school that the government likes to visit to announce initiatives, because it is an education pioneer in Western Australia under its principal, Lee Musumeci. The school is a pioneer in trying to have a full-service school approach to education, but this government unfortunately does not assist in providing the proper infrastructure it needs. Infrastructure in schools is incredibly important to allow proper educational instructions to take place and it is also incredibly important for the morale of the staff and the self-esteem of the students. If they go to school and are taught in shabby classrooms, it does not do anything for their self-worth or their self-esteem. Of course, the quality of teachers is the number one issue, but if a school does not have the infrastructure to support those teachers, a lot of the goodwill and hard work of the teachers will battle against the physical environment they have to deal with.

I mentioned Churchlands Senior High School. I think Churchlands Senior High School currently has 3 000 students because this government has neglected public secondary education in the western suburbs. The list continues: Comet Bay Primary School has 22 transportables; Currambine Primary School, which I mentioned, has 15; Dalyellup Primary School has 11; Durham Road School has 11; Dunsborough Primary School has 13; Ellenbrook Secondary College has 14; Kalumburu Remote Community School has 11—a remote community school has 11 transportables! Kelmscott Senior High School, my former school and that of the member for West Swan, has 11 transportables; Kenwick School has 11; Kingston Primary School has 11; Kununurra District High School has 12; La Grange Remote Community School has 11; Landsdale Primary School has 17; Looma Remote Community School has 14; Lynwood Senior High School has 14; Malibu School has 12; Malvern Springs Primary School has 13; Margaret River Primary School has 15; Margaret River Senior High School has 13; and Meadow Springs Primary School has 22 transportables.

Mr D.A. Templeman: Twenty-two; that's amazing! It's in my electorate.

Dr A.D. BUTI: Twenty-two transportables! I will also go on to explain what it means to have transportables, member for Mandurah.

Melville Senior High School has 11 transportables; Mount Magnet District High School has 13; Ocean Reef Senior High School has 11; Rockingham Lakes Primary School has 10; Roebourne District High School has 10; and Piara Waters Primary School has 17 transportables. Bletchley Park Primary School and Piara Waters Primary School are pretty close to each other, so between them they have nearly 40 transportables. Settlers Primary School has 13 transportables; Shenton College has 19; Spring Hill Primary School has 17; Vasse Primary School has 10; West Byford Primary School, which I mentioned previously, has 22; Willetton Senior High School has 14; and Yanchep District High School has 20 transportables—20!

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What does it mean when schools have these transportables? Of course, the inside of a transportable can be fitted out to look quite attractive and be comfortable. I will not name the school, but the transportable at one school has holes in the walls and gaps between the walls and the floors. The heat is so severe that the school has had to ask the P&C association for extra money for extra air conditioning and blinds. In addition, demountables do not come with extra toilets. There are extra students—of course, if a school has extra students it has to have transportables—but if the buildings were purpose-built, toilets would come with them. Transportables have no extra toilets so the toilets become crowded due to the extra students. In one primary school where there are as many demountables as there are purpose-built buildings, there are too many staff to fit in the staffroom. The wet areas where students do painting or cooking cannot be used for cooking and painting because they have to be used as daily classrooms.

Ms S.F. McGurk: Don't worry; we've got Zumba down at Elizabeth Quay! It's all right.

Dr A.D. BUTI: That is right—down at Elizabeth Quay. Because of the environment demountables are creating, teachers are becoming quite sick and having days off school. Of course, that adds additional costs to the school's budget. At one school, as I said, the wet areas cannot be used because they have to be used as classrooms. Which class will have purpose-built classrooms and which class will have transportables is determined by whether the class has a child with special needs. Of course, a child with special needs should be in a purpose-built building. However, is it not amazing that that is the criteria for whether a class is in a purpose-built building? It is deplorable.

If members go back and look at the yearly budget papers, they will see that every year the former Labor government was building nearly double the number of primary schools being built under the current government. But, guess what? The population is now growing faster than it was under the Labor government. The previous Labor government—the Leader of the Opposition was Minister for Education for part of that period—built nearly twice the number of primary schools each year than this current government is building! We go into budget estimates every year and look at what schools are being built. It seems that that is being repeated each year and the same number of schools are being built. The seat of Jandakot has Piara Waters and Harrisdale Primary Schools. Harrisdale Primary School is a beautiful new school; it already has demountables. What does that mean? As I said, it means that they do not have toilet provisions, but also the demountables encroach on the playing areas. A new demountable is to be installed at Harrisdale Primary School, right near the long-jump pit, and its placement will substantially reduce the useable area of the school oval.

Mr F.M. Logan: Atwell Primary School, which was in the member for Jandakot's electorate until very recently, is almost completely covered in demountables, but he never said one thing over the whole time he held that seat.

Dr A.D. BUTI: He never said one thing.

Mr F.M. Logan: Not one thing!

Several members interjected.

The ACTING SPEAKER (Ms L.L. Baker): Excuse me.

Several members interjected.

The ACTING SPEAKER: Hello! Member for Cockburn, member for Jandakot and member for West Swan —

Mr J.M. Francis: He started it!

The ACTING SPEAKER: Well, I am going to finish it. That is enough! The member for Armadale has the floor. Unless you are taking interjections—I certainly did not hear anybody ask for that—would you please continue through the Chair.

Dr A.D. BUTI: Thank you very much, Madam Acting Speaker. When we bring this up, government members—especially the Treasurer—seem to try to attack the Labor Party. I will give him a challenge. Members opposite should go and look at the budget papers from when Labor was in government to see how many schools were being built each year; then they can look at the budget papers for the last four or five years under this government. Members can also compare the population or student growth. This government is failing. In the Loan Bill debate tomorrow, the government will argue that there has been an increase in population; there has been a boom and therefore we need—although this money is being put to wages of public servants —

Ms R. Saffioti interjected.

Dr A.D. BUTI: Yes, but it is appalling. How can schools that are less than 10 years old have as many transportables as purpose-built classrooms? That is absolutely deplorable. How can schools have wet areas that cannot be used for the purpose of painting and cooking et cetera? There is not enough room in the staffroom for all the teachers. The heat that is generated in the transportables is so severe that the teachers have had to go back

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to the P&C to ask for extra air conditioning and blinds. Whether teachers get transportables or purpose-built classrooms is determined by whether they have a child with special needs in their class. In one school, male teachers have to use the unisex toilets because the female teachers now have to use the male toilets. It is just deplorable. We talk about the health and fitness of our children. If we keep providing transportables that encroach on their playing fields, that will do nothing to assist the activity space needed for students to stay fit. I hope that the member for Southern River gets up and talks about how great things are with the transportables at Canning Vale College, for example, in his electorate. The member always seems to have some way of trying to show the great light of what this government is doing in his electorate.

Mr M. McGowan: He knows a lot about taxis, too.

Dr A.D. BUTI: He knows a lot about taxis. He seems to know —

Mr D.A. Templeman interjected.

Dr A.D. BUTI: The member for Southern River seems to know a lot about everything.

Mr M. McGowan: Gay marriage.

Dr A.D. BUTI: He knows a lot about gay marriage. He also says that there are no problems with public transport in his electorate.

Several members interjected.

Dr A.D. BUTI: It is amazing; it is absolute utopia!

Mr M. McGowan interjected.

Dr A.D. BUTI: I will sit shortly —

Mr F.M. Logan: You're doing a great job! Keep going!

Dr A.D. BUTI: I turn to Perth city; I would be interested to hear the member for Perth's views on public education in the CBD. Talking about the western suburbs, senior colleges and high schools, such as Churchlands and Shenton Park, could pass for small universities given the size of their student populations.

Mr F.M. Logan: And they are still not enough.

Dr A.D. BUTI: And they are still not enough.

This motion applies to Midland and surrounding areas, the Darling Range, Byford, the seats of Jandakot or Southern River, Ellenbrook or the member for Butler's electorate. As to country regions, once again, the National Party is missing in action. It never seems to be around when we are pointing out the failures of the Liberal-National government—not the alliance; the Liberal-National government. When we are pointing out the failings in the country areas, where is the National Party? It did not contribute to the Universities Legislation Amendment Bill 2016 that was about guilds and the assistance they provide to country students; it is always missing in action. The member for Geraldton knows all about the National Party. It is missing in action, is it not, member for Geraldton?

Several members interjected.

Dr A.D. BUTI: Whenever we talk about the failures of this government in the country areas, it is always missing in action.

Several members interjected.

The ACTING SPEAKER (Ms L.L. Baker): Member for Mandurah, I think we have heard enough from you without you having the floor; thank you. Can we continue with the member for Armadale, please?

Dr A.D. BUTI: I am about to sit to allow the Leader of the Opposition —

The ACTING SPEAKER: Better let the member for Mandurah stand!

Dr A.D. BUTI: — to contribute. I will keep going.

It is very interesting that over the years since I have been in this place, this government has always talked about what it is doing to cope with the demands of the growing population of Western Australia. It often says that the reason we have gone into deficit or debt is that it has to provide schools. The government is not providing enough schools. It just does not make sense. Harrisdale Primary School opened this year and it already has demountables; they are about to put another one on the playing field. It is deplorable. It is the same in Piara Waters and Bletchley Park. Bletchley Park Primary School is fantastic and what the principal and teachers are doing there is fantastic, but it has around 20 transportables. It has as many transportables as it has

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purpose-built classrooms. That is absolutely deplorable. I look forward to the member for Perth standing and telling us what the government is doing for public education in the city. I look forward to the member for Churchlands getting up and telling us what the government is doing about Churchlands and Shenton Park. I look forward to the missing-in-action National Party members standing and telling us the failings of the government in rural areas. I very much look forward to the Minister for Corrective Services telling us about the problems in his electorate. That goes for many, many other members on the other side. I can tell members what: members on this side will be standing to tell this house about the failings of this government when it comes to building new schools.

MR M. McGOWAN (Rockingham — Leader of the Opposition) [5.24 pm]: The motion moved by the member for Armadale condemned the government for its slow rate of building new schools. This issue has come into focus in Western Australia in the last few years. The population growth in our state has been very significant. It has dropped off in maybe the last year or two, but it has been very significant for at least the past 15 years. Until the past couple of years, Western Australia had the highest population growth rate in the nation. That was driven by a few things such as immigration from overseas and interstate, and also a high birthrate in Western Australia that has necessitated the requirement for additional educational facilities to meet the population growth. We require a significant school build because we have, in particular, three things going on. The first is rapidly growing outer suburban areas, rapidly growing regional communities—particularly Bunbury—with an increase in the number of people living in inner suburban areas where there has been some infill, and large numbers of families returning as those areas become a younger demographic. The second thing that has occurred, particularly in the past couple of years, is the decline in the economy. The job insecurity, loss of employment and the reduction in incomes that many people have experienced has meant that people, particularly in inner suburban and perhaps the western suburbs of Perth, have looked to put their children into public schools. That is a national phenomenon: when incomes go down and there is job insecurity, people look for the saving that might be generated by not paying private school fees and they put their kids back into public schools. In the western suburbs three schools were closed in the 1990s—City Beach Senior High School, Hollywood Senior High School and Scarborough Senior High School —

Mr F.M. Logan: Swanbourne.

Mr M. McGOWAN: The member for Cockburn informs me there was Swanbourne Senior High School, so it was four schools. Certainly City Beach, Hollywood and Scarborough were closed.

Mr F.M. Logan: And Swanbourne; that is four.

Mr M. McGOWAN: Those schools were closed in the 1990s, and Shenton College was built as a replacement —

Mr F.M. Logan: For four schools!

Mr M. McGOWAN: For a number of high schools; Shenton College was built to take up the slack.

As a consequence of that decision 18 years ago, those schools are now very crowded. In the western suburbs of Perth there are high levels of educational attainment at public schools, and lots of people think they will save \$25 000 by not putting their son or daughter into an expensive private school in the western suburbs and putting them into one of those public schools. We now have schools with very large student numbers. I saw the figures the other day for one of the schools—Shenton or Churchlands—and it is now approaching more than 3 000 students, which is unheard of in Western Australia. The government is floundering around for a solution to this. Basically, the problem was created by the closure of those high schools in the 1990s, and the person who closed those high schools is the current Premier. That is an indisputable fact; it was a bad decision. At the time maybe he thought he was doing the right thing, but in hindsight it was a bad decision. Parents in those areas are now desperately seeking high school options, and the schools are flooded with students for the reasons I just went over.

People referred to my time as Minister for Education. It is true; I did have an issue in making sure we had enough teachers to meet the needs of the system. I will just take people through that so that they understand what happened. The economy was more than extremely strong; it was a boom the likes of which this state had never seen before. From 2004 to 2008 that sucked people out of the public sector into the private sector, where they were able to achieve higher incomes, particularly in the mining industry. People in the teaching profession and people in schools were seeking jobs elsewhere. I might say that it is a different situation now: unemployment is up and there are three times as many people out of work in Western Australia as back then. We have to take the good with the bad. Back then it was difficult to retain people in the public sector because the economy was so strong; these days that is not a problem because the economy is not strong. We have a domestic economy in recession, an unemployment rate higher than that of Tasmania, the winding down of the construction phase, high levels of state debt and deficit, and, therefore, a limited capacity, certainly on the part of this government, to do something about it. The public sector was losing people to the private sector; that was the reality of the economy

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from 2004 to 2008. Do I make an apology for a strong economy and therefore people being attracted to the private sector? I probably will not apologise for that; a strong economy was a good thing, but it was something that we had to confront. We had to put in place a range of initiatives to make sure that we attracted more people into the teaching profession. I will not take members through them but I put in place 20 to 30 initiatives to attract more people to the teaching profession to cope with the situation that confronted the state. Teacher shortages were not unusual. At the start of the 1999 school year, we were 70 teachers short. In 2008, as I recall, we were maybe 200 teachers short a week or two out from the start of the school year. By the end of the first or second week I think it was down to 20 or 30 teachers short, and that is out of a system of 22 000. When people yell and try to create an issue out of that, they are talking about being 20 teachers short out of 22 000 positions. That meant that at some schools, particularly high schools, one or two specialist teachers were missing, and in a few primary schools the deputy principal had to go into the classroom for that period. That was the reality we faced and that is the explanation. Government members can try to exploit it if they want to but it was not an unusual situation. As I said, the current Premier was Minister for Education in 1999 and members will find that we were 70 teachers short at the start of that year. I might also add that at that point in time, the domestic economy was in recession as well. Whatever the excuse was back then, it certainly would not have been as substantial as the reasoning in 2004 to 2008 when the economy was extremely strong. Again, in 2008 I recall opening school after school. From memory around eight schools were being built per year from 2006 to 2008. The electorate of Wanneroo, for instance, had a booming population and a significant number of schools were being constructed there to meet the needs of the population. The current build is significantly smaller. What does that mean? We have very large schools in the western suburbs of Perth and the inner city that are having difficulty coping. As I said, it is not my electorate. I am from an electorate that is unlikely to be successful in school building when Shenton College and Churchlands Senior High School have over 3 000 students. There has been a significant failure in the planning for education when we get a situation like that in Western Australia. The government needs to take responsibility for that. It is unacceptable that the government has not reached a solution and it is now floundering around talking about solutions in years to come. The other day I read that 3 250 students are at one of those schools—that is extraordinary! In my view, the best size for a high school is probably 1 000 students, maybe up to 1 200. With that we get a wide range of course selections, we do not have too many students or too many demountables, and the school still has a level of interpersonal relationship between staff and students whereby the students feel comfortable in that environment. We do not get that with 3 250 students.

A range of issues are going on in schools but one has been brought to my attention. I want to make sure that the house is aware of this and I call on the government to do something about it. Members might be interested to know about the situation at Mount Hawthorn Primary School. In 1995, Mount Hawthorn Primary School, an inner city school, had around 339 students. By 2005, the number had grown to 545 students, and by 2015 the number was 692 students. Enrolments at that school for 2017—next year—are currently sitting at 840 students. This means that with kindergarten students, the enrolment at that school is projected by 2023 to rise to 912 students; that is nearly 1 000 students at Mount Hawthorn Primary School in the inner city of Perth. The number has been growing each year by 25 to 30 students over the course of the last 10 years or so. Not many students are leaving, it is an inner-city school, it is an attractive and quaint school—I have been to that school—it has high educational standards and some pretty significant people have passed through that school and North Perth Primary School and those sorts of schools—it does well. The school board has been calling for some additional permanent classrooms at that school. It has called for a two-storey classroom block on the site of the existing preprimary centre at a cost of around \$4.5 million. That would mean that the school gets some additional classrooms and it would alleviate any pressure for transportables to be put in place. The reason that transportables are not exactly suited to Mount Hawthorn Primary School is that the size of the school campus is 2.39 hectares. The average primary school is around four hectares, so this is a small site. It is an inner city school and a historic school, so it is naturally quite small; therefore having additional transportable classrooms is not really an option for this school. The school board has asked for a two-storey classroom block on the preprimary site to cope with the growth. As I outlined just a moment ago, the growth in the number of students at that school has been really quite extraordinary. If more transportables were put on the site, it would mean a loss of playground and car parking space and the like, which is quite important. The school board has been a firm and strong advocate for an improvement and it has had some assurance from the member for Perth about this in some emails I have here. The member for Perth gave the chair of the Mount Hawthorn Primary School board, Mr Michael Jenkin, the assurance that there would be funding in the 2017 budget for this building. I have an email dated 23 May 2016 confirming that from the member for Perth to the chair of the Mount Hawthorn Primary School. Subsequent advice was received by the chair of the board, Mr Jenkin, from the member for Perth indicating that only a feasibility study would be carried out. The email states —

A feasibility study to provide additional permanent classrooms on the school site has been completed. The proposal involves the construction of three early childhood learning areas on the ground floor and

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four general learning areas on the first floor. This feasibility study will form the basis for planning and will be considered in future capital works programs.

The earlier assurance was that it would be in next year's budget, but now it is just something to be considered. Naturally, the Mount Hawthorn school board is a bit concerned by this. The earlier assurances it was given by the member for Perth have now turned into a feasibility study. I do not blame the board for being concerned. When an assurance is given by a member of Parliament, one would think that it would be delivered upon. Therefore, I am raising this matter on behalf of the Mount Hawthorn school community because it is concerned that this commitment has not been delivered upon. Perhaps the Parliament, the government or whoever the minister is who represents the Minister for Education in this place can give us some better assurance on this issue. As I said at the start of my address, this is a big school with a big population. It is growing rapidly and, considering the size of the school, transportables are not really an option. The school has done a lot of work to come up with a solution to that, and it now feels that it has been duded by the government because the early assurances it was given have not been met. If the government wants to respond to my address and fix this situation, I would welcome that. I would welcome the government fixing the situation. If the government does not want to do that, it can admit that it has broken its word to the Mount Hawthorn Primary School community, because that community will be very disturbed and disappointed to hear what has gone on in this chamber. I urge the government to take action to repair and perhaps give better guidance and assurance to the Mt Hawthorn school community on these issues. This is an issue. Because of the state of the government's finances—it has run up the greatest level of debt and the greatest deficits this state has ever seen or imagined—it is cutting back its new-school build. The big school build of eight years ago, of eight schools a year, is now down at around four schools a year. Eight schools a year were being built, but that is now down to around four schools a year, and that is a consequence of the government's poor financial management over the last eight years. Poor financial management has resulted in school kids and school communities suffering overcrowded schools, in a lack of planning for schools in the western suburbs, in the Mt Hawthorn school community being let down, and in outer urban areas having very large schools. Those are the consequences of what the government has done.

MR N.W. MORTON (Forrestfield) [5.41pm]: I rise to make some comments on the motion before the house today. I thank Madam Acting Speaker for giving me the call. The member for Armadale talked about morale in education in his contribution. I can quite safely say that I recall morale in education in my time spent in that sector. I remember it vividly, in fact. I remember it under the Labor government and the then Minister for Education, who is now the Leader of the Opposition, and it was not pretty.

Mr M. McGowan: I'm pretty sure you'll experience it again.

Mr N.W. MORTON: If the Leader of the Opposition wants to stay in the chamber, I will explain his shortcomings. The Leader of the Opposition can leave the chamber; he does not want to hear the truth. He has brushed off the teacher shortage. I was living that experience.

Ms R. Saffioti interjected.

Mr N.W. MORTON: The member for West Swan will have an opportunity to speak. She should listen to the facts, because I was there, member for West Swan. I remember the panic and distress across the sector when there was a teacher shortage caused by the Labor government and the Minister for Education, the member for Rockingham. The member can brush that off as her leader did, but it was real and it impacted education in our state. I draw members' attention to the fact that during the Labor Party's reign in government, the curriculum was a mess and it disillusioned the workforce.

Mr F.M. Logan: You contributed to it.

Mr N.W. MORTON: Member for Cockburn, do not try to rewrite history; it was a mess and an absolute shambles. One week it was this policy and the next week it was this policy. Hon Ljiljana Ravlich rolled out policies in front of the cameras, and then the Leader of the Opposition, the then Minister for Education, tried to pick up the slack but he dropped the bundle. He referred to teachers' pay and the teacher shortage, and I took some notes. Members opposite do not like being confronted with the truth. The Leader of the Opposition talked about the teacher shortage and said that the public education system was losing people to the private sector. Yes, we were losing people to the private sector and the economy was doing well at that time, yet we were experiencing a teacher shortage in our public schools. We had a dire teacher shortage in our public education system. That highlights that that minister was ineffectual and unable to advocate around the cabinet table. The Leader of the Opposition just brushes off that he could not negotiate a better deal for teachers. The Premier was able to do that in the first weeks of the Liberal-National government. Western Australia has the highest paid teachers —

Mr F.M. Logan: You've got the largest wages bill ever.

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Mr N.W. MORTON: The member for Cockburn knows the teacher shortage was caused by the Labor government. The member can go back through *Hansard*.

Several members interjected.

The ACTING SPEAKER (Ms L.L. Baker): Excuse me, members. I know there is a bit of screaming and yelling going on in the chamber—I understand that—but I can also hear quite a bit of other interjections and conversations going on. Can you please keep your conversations down so that we cannot hear them; it is bad enough with the yelling.

Mr J. Norberger: It's mutual whipping.

The ACTING SPEAKER: I do not care. Please keep it down while Hansard attempts to record what is being said. I am sorry, member for Forrestfield; do continue.

Mr N.W. MORTON: Thank you, Madam Acting Speaker.

We were in the grip of a teacher shortage and the curriculum was a mess and, by his own admission, we had an ineffectual minister who was unable to advocate a better deal for the people he purported to represent as minister. I remember the rally that my then boss attended on the steps of Parliament House advocating a better deal for teachers. My then boss, who would not mind me saying this, is a dyed-in-the-wool Labor voter, but I cannot and will not repeat how he described the affair, be it the ongoing tensions between the minister and his workforce or what transpired at that rally—or lack thereof. Obviously, I will not put that on the record because it is very unparliamentary. But it highlights again that the Leader of the Opposition in his role as Minister for Education was unable to advocate effectively for his workforce. He just brushed it off. He said that there was a teacher shortage but there were other pressures in the economy. That is just not good enough; that was his job.

I also want to talk about transportables, because sometimes the facts get distorted, and people can make statistics work in their favour if that is what they wish to do. But let us deal with some facts. The member for Armadale talked a lot about transportables across the system. I am not saying that transportables are necessarily ideal or that we would not prefer that these transportables were hardstand classrooms. Of course, that is ideal. The fact is that in 2008 there were 1 801 transportables in the education system. When we fast forward to this year, we have 1 833 transportables across our system. That is an increase of 32 transportables across the system in a time—this is the key fact—when an extra 40 000 students are enrolled in our public education system. To my way of thinking, we can do a simple calculation and divide that number by about 30, which equates to about 1 300 classrooms. That is a tad high, but I am happy to average it at 1 300 classrooms. We needed 1 300 more classrooms to accommodate our students, yet, in the eight years since we formed government after the Labor Party, there has been an increase across the system of only 32 transportables.

Mr J.R. Quigley interjected.

Mr N.W. MORTON: The member for Butler can stand and make his contribution when it is his time.

Mr J.M. Francis: We've had a better ratio of students to transportables than they did, and they are complaining about it.

Mr N.W. MORTON: Correct; but they are complaining and whinging about our lack of investment in infrastructure. This government invested some \$3.1 billion in infrastructure—\$1 billion in this year alone—and members opposite complain about an increase of 32 transportables. I already made the point that of course we want hardstand classrooms, but an increase of 32 transportables across eight years, when we have had 40 000 extra students to accommodate, is not a bad record to stand on. Furthermore, I want to use a local example from my electorate. Last year, Wattle Grove Primary School was primary school of the year in the state. It was a fantastic achievement. The school also celebrated its centenary. It is an outstanding public school, and it has transportables. I have been in those transportables. I have watched lessons taught in those transportables. I have taken the minister into those transportables to watch lessons. They are outstanding learning environments; they are very pretty and appointed nicely. They are not shabby and dilapidated like the transportable that I learnt in, I think, in year 6 or year 7. We have come a fair way in that time. These transportables have air conditioning, heating, smartboards and everything a normal classroom has.

Mr I.C. Blayney: They have carpet.

Mr N.W. MORTON: They have carpet; yes, they have all of that, member for Geraldton.

Members opposite can twist things and say that a school has X number of transportables and the government has dropped the ball, but the facts are the facts.

Mr F.M. Logan interjected.

Extract from Hansard

[ASSEMBLY — Wednesday, 14 September 2016]

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Dr Tony Buti; Mr Mark McGowan; Mr Nathan Morton; Ms Rita Saffioti; Ms Eleni Evangel; Mrs Michelle Roberts; Acting Speaker; Mr Chris Hatton; Mr Paul Miles

Mr N.W. MORTON: The facts are the facts, member for Cockburn. I felt compelled to put on the record the true nature of transportables across the system.

In the closing final minutes I want to talk a bit more about some other things we have done in education. I turn to independent public schools, which are a brilliant initiative. I think the minister is about ready to announce a further tranche of schools that will come under the IPS banner. I sit on the councils of some schools in my local area and they have been going through that process of applying, and I wish them the very best of luck. It will not be due to a lack of hard work if they do not get across the line, but I am very hopeful that they can. It is a fantastic initiative, because it gives individual schools the capacity to drive their own destiny. We all know, I hope by this stage, that one shoe does not fit all and that we need to accommodate local communities, and those schools know their local communities and know what is best for them. This is an outstanding initiative and it is expanding further as of the announcement, I think, in the very near future.

I turn to a couple of more things. Child and parent centres are a fantastic initiative. I was the deputy principal of a high school, but I always saw the need for that early intervention. Absolutely, without equivocation, we need that early intervention, because by the time children get to 13, 14 or 15 years of age, if the die is cast, it is very, very difficult to undo. Being able to invest in and identify those kids with needs, who are at risk or who may have something that impedes their learning, is a critical outcome for the betterment of our young people. I commend this government for rolling out that policy and initiative across our system. I honestly hope it continues to expand, because it has merit, and I challenge anyone to talk against that merit.

As I alluded to earlier, we have the highest paid teachers in the country. Members can look at the *Hansard* transcripts of my speeches on education. We can talk about transportables and we can talk about hardstand classrooms—we can talk about all the resources in the world and, yes, they are important, but the number one most important critical resource we have is our classroom teachers. To brush off the fact that there was a teacher shortage is abhorrent. We do not kick off education without a teacher at the front of the classroom; it does not happen. The number one most important critical factor in our whole system is our classroom teachers—absolutely, any day of the week. That is why we made sure that they were valued and remunerated as they should be and made sure that there is one in front of every student enrolled in the public education system as of 2016—something that I am very proud of and this government should be very proud of as well. That has allayed a lot of concerns that existed previously in the education system under the former Labor government. That is a very important thing.

The other thing this government has done is to make sure that we have the highest spend per student of all states in the country. That ensures that not only do we have the best teachers—a teacher in front of each student in each classroom across the state—but also they are well resourced. We saw the introduction of the student-centred funding model, something that was debated fiercely and cursed. We were told that the sky would fall in, yet the sky has not fallen in. Anyone advocating against making sure money gets to students at the most risk must have rocks in their head. The student-centred funding model ensured that there was transparency in funding and that the factors of disadvantage to students in their learning were taken into account and properly accommodated with the funding model. I think that should be commended. Having worked in the system, I know there were lots of sweetheart deals and a lack of transparency in how some funding arrangements were brought about. I commend the government for moving, with some opposition, down a path of transparency in the funding of our schools, and furthermore redirecting more money—again, I worked in a high school—to younger years so it can be ensured that they are better placed to achieve and become contributing members of our society, which I hope is an aspiration we all share.

The member for Armadale talked about the large numbers of students in our public education system, and he is right. We have had an increase in students in our public education system, but that is to be commended, because it is a reflection of the quality of education that our public school teachers and support staff are delivering to the young people across the length and breadth of this great state of Western Australia.

I think I have made my point. We have invested heavily in education. We have made sure we have had a good capital infrastructure build going on. I have a list of pages and pages of schools that either have been built or are planned to be built across the state, some of them in the member for Armadale's electorate.

In fact, there is something I want to mention specific to Armadale that is dear to my heart too, because I used to work in one of the schools in question—that is, the revitalisation that has been occurring in Armadale, particularly to the two high schools there, Armadale Senior High School and Cecil Andrews Senior High School. I declare an interest, because I was deputy principal of Cecil Andrews Senior High School. This government has recognised the need of that community and is investing to make sure there are clear options for vocational education and training or a focus on science, technology, engineering and mathematics, so that kids who want to go down that path of further education and possibly to university have the capacity to do that with clear options.

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The infrastructure the member for Armadale talked about will be in place to accommodate those students as close to home as his own electorate. I commend the government. We have done it in Fremantle as well. There are some serious issues there. From an educational point of view, the amalgamation of those schools is a very sound thing to do because it creates the economies of scale to create a robust education for students wanting that education so they have the choice. That possibility was not there previously and doing this will ensure that young people in the community have the robust choice of options so they can choose the pathway they wish to. That is to be commended and applauded. These are in communities that have been overlooked in the past. This Liberal-National government is delivering those —

Mr F.M. Logan interjected.

Mr N.W. MORTON: The member can laugh.

The Liberal-National government is delivering those real outcomes to those students.

Mr F.M. Logan interjected.

Mr N.W. MORTON: Member for Cockburn, I am talking about the educational opportunities for people in the communities of Armadale and Fremantle. The member can laugh, but it is the truth.

Mr F.M. Logan interjected.

Mr N.W. MORTON: I may as well keep talking until the break now, Madam Acting Speaker.

This government identified those difficult issues and it has tackled some of them. It is not always a popular thing to have a conversation with a community about the potential amalgamation of schools, because there is fear, worry and concern about what the future may look like, but this government was willing to tackle those issues in those communities and make sure they had real and robust options for their education. It is happening in Armadale, as I have said; it is happening in Fremantle with the Fremantle secondary college, which will be on the beautiful site of South Fremantle Senior High School; and the revitalisation is happening in Geraldton, member for Geraldton.

There is one other thing I wanted to talk about and that is year 7s in secondary school. Again, there was some trepidation from mums and dads in the community and I absolutely understand that. It changed the environment in which the students operated their daily school lives, but I think it was well managed by the department, and I give credit to the people in the department on managing that and making sure that those kids could transition into the high school setting.

In my last couple of minutes I might just talk about some of the infrastructure spending in my own electorate.

Mrs G.J. Godfrey interjected.

Mr N.W. MORTON: Brilliant!

I will talk about some of the infrastructure that has been built in my electorate. Carrying on from the topic of year 7, we have a new year 7 block at Darling Range Sports College; a rebuild at Maida Vale Primary School worth \$5.5 million; \$200 000 invested in a park 'n' ride and some playground equipment at East Kenwick; and refurbishment of a classroom at Forrestfield Primary School for a new kitchen, which is supplemented by the community gardens program. It is a great program. There is a build underway at Woodlupine Primary School, which needed a new administration block, and that is bringing it up to the twenty-first century, and new fences have gone up at Dawson Park Primary School. We talk about infrastructure. Locally in my part of the world, there has been a lot of infrastructure spend on schools so that students in my community have the capacity to undertake their learning in some first-class, world-leading facilities in Western Australia.

Sitting suspended from 6.00 to 7.00 pm

MS R. SAFFIOTI (West Swan) [7.00 pm]: I wish to speak to this motion, but I do not think I will take my full allocation of time. This is a very important issue, particularly in electorates such as mine, which are growing every day and seeing new suburbs created. The West Swan electorate is ever-changing, with new houses being built and new suburbs created, but we have seen a lack of investment in new schools in our area. The member for Armadale outlined that this government's current construction rate of schools is about half that of the previous Labor government. Significant new areas are being left without schools, which creates enormous uncertainty. This issue crosses the portfolios of both education and planning, so, in my capacity as shadow Minister for Planning, an issue that I would like to try to tackle should we win the election next year is a better way of creating certainty in planning for schools in the area.

The process goes like this. A structure plan is submitted to the Western Australian Planning Commission. For every certain number of lots, the developers and landowners are required to set aside particular blocks of land for

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new schools. That is done in the planning process, and is ticked off by the WAPC. Then the developer starts selling land. In many cases, people buy land on certain streets and in certain estates because they understand that a new primary school—possibly a new high school, but usually a new primary school—will be built in that area. Sometimes they pay a premium on the price of their land, but they choose particular areas in which they think schools will be built. Then comes the waiting game, in which they wait for the Department of Education to allocate the funding and the priority for that project. In many instances, that funding and priority never comes. We end up with empty blocks of land with no schools for people moving into the area.

I want to talk specifically about the school site in Bennett Springs in my electorate. The Bennett Springs Estate has developed over time and is now pretty much at maturity in the development of its blocks. All indicators show that the number of homes in that area is enough to trigger the construction of a school on that land. However, despite my campaigns over the past eight years to get a public school, the Department of Education has said no. We have an empty block of land of about four hectares that is now an eyesore for the community, poses a fire risk in the summer and contains other risks, such as snakes, that impact on the liveability of the community. We have to continually ask the minister to have the vegetation on the land cut back to try to keep it tidy, so that the local community is not impacted by the fire risk or snake problems, or by the unkempt, messy state of the land. It was last meant to be cut back at the end of August, but we are still waiting for that to be done.

We have also asked whether the government, if it is not willing to fund a public school, would sell the land to a private school. I know of one particular private school that would be very keen to purchase that land to build a non-government school in that area. I surveyed the local community on this issue and asked: if there is to be no government school there, would they rather it stay as an untidy block of land or be used for a non-government school? The responses were strong. They wanted it to be sold to the non-government sector. I have asked the minister a number of times to put the land on the market and progress the issue because there is a non-government school in close proximity that needs more space, and it is very keen to move there. It would be a move that the entire school community, which is primarily based in the Dayton and Bennett Springs area, would welcome. It is less than 100 metres down the road, but that has not been facilitated by the government. I understand that land sometimes needs to be kept for future schools, but as we have seen in the city and particularly in the western suburbs, that has not happened. This is clearly a situation in which there is a lot of land still available in the area and new schools have been earmarked in another growth area nearby. Again, we have raised this issue in Parliament, and hopefully the minister will see sense before March. If not, it is hopefully something we could progress should we win the election in March next year. Basically, it is an eyesore and it does not do anything for the community to have an empty, unkempt block of land that has become a safety issue for the community.

That is the example of Bennett Springs—an estate that has been there for a few years now. I want to talk about the other growth areas in my electorate. I also look after what is known as the Swan urban growth corridor. That is a plan for around 30 000 people to move into the corridor leading to Ellenbrook. That plan is meant to be completed in about 10 to 15 years—that is, in 10 to 15 years' time, the entire corridor will be a significant subdivision. Caversham is one of the cells that have seen a significant increase in population. This is a community that has been directly let down. Caversham south primary school was funded in a state budget a couple of years ago. It is a new area south of Reid Highway and there is no existing public school in the area. The government committed to a public school and put it in the budget, and a sign went up on the land saying, "New public primary school coming here soon". Of course, developers sold lots around the proposed school site on the basis that the government would build the school, because the land had been sold to the government on the basis that it would be used for a school. That was funded and committed to, and then the government cancelled it, and it appears that there are no plans by the government to fund a new school. The government is now saying that the children who live in this new subdivision will have to go to other schools—East Beechboro Primary School and Caversham Primary School, which is in the suburb of Dayton. That is an example of the government not providing any certainty.

This has had flow-on effects, and I will talk about the larger impacts. Nowadays, there are often agreements to have a school in a particular area and the councils have a funding agreement with the Department of Education so there is joint funding of the sports ovals. That is basically designed to get as much use of the ovals as possible. During school hours, they are used by the school community, and after hours and on weekends, they are used by the general public—the ratepayers of the area. Caversham south is one such example, and I will talk about some other examples in a minute. When the Department of Education walks away from its commitment to those schools, there is a cost for the ratepayers and the landowners of the area. Only two weeks ago, the City of Swan amended its developer contribution policy for the new areas of Dayton and Brabham in my electorate. I think Dayton has six or seven estates underway, and its first one, St Leonards, is well progressed. Some parts of Brabham are jointly funded by the government's Department of Housing and other parts are being privately

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developed. Significant residential subdivision is happening in those areas. Land has been set aside and I have assisted a number of landowners who had to sell their land to the Department of Education for the new school sites in this area. Land has been sold or transferred to the Department of Education for school sites, but there is no certainty that they will become schools. This has a number of impacts. It automatically increases the cost of land and it builds the expectations of homebuyers who move to the area. They are automatic impacts. Without the certainty of a school, the community and school community are let down.

I will give members a recent example. Developer contributions are made by landowners and developers for community infrastructure. Only a couple of weeks ago, developer contributions in Dayton increased by \$541 a dwelling and in Brabham by \$988 a dwelling, which was mainly a result of the government not providing any funding certainty for new schools in the area. The City of Swan council minutes state that in Brabham, the major driver of the increase in costs is the lack of funding confirmation from the Department of Education. This contributes to the provision of shared-use sites and neighbourhood active open spaces that were previously included. This also happened in Dayton. In Dayton, the major drivers of the increase in costs are infrastructure costs because of the Department of Education's shortfall in contributing to the construction of the neighbourhood active open space. These are clear examples in which the plan has been ticked off by government and the land has been transferred to the Department of Education, yet there is no certainty from the Department of Education or the government about the construction of these schools.

This is a major problem in our planning and education system. I think we need to reform the planning system so that when the Western Australian Planning Commission ticks off on a school being located in an area, some sort of liability is triggered in government to acknowledge the true cost of the subdivision. Without it, we let down communities and we never fulfil the undertakings that the government gives. We expect roads to be built. We expect landowners to put in infrastructure. We expect homeowners to comply with the laws of estates, but, as a government, we do not fulfil our obligations to deliver the schools that we commit to when we sign off on structure plans.

There has to be a better way because we cannot continue to let down communities in new areas. There are always issues with people who do not want to send their children to older schools. One of the reasons that people buy new houses and land, rather than older stock, is that they like the new house and land. They pay a little bit of a premium, and they get the new school with it, too; it is a package. Normally, the people who move into these estates are families with young children. They plan their house purchases according to the ages of the children and the types of facilities that will be nearby—primary schools, child care and playgrounds. If the government continues to sign off on the WAPC's structure plans, the state has an obligation not to let them down. It might be triggered in the form of a contingent liability, but there needs to be a transparent cost to provide these facilities. We asked the council to do it for some of its infrastructure, but the state government does not do it, and the same applies to public transport services. The government might agree that a public transport bus stop is needed somewhere, but it does not commit to the funding until it is subject to another budget process. We need to trigger some sort of recognition that these costs potentially exist for the state. I think that is really important.

Because these things have not happened in a timely manner, and there is always a fight over which community deserves which school and when, there is an impact from overcrowding in these new areas. It is very hard to manage the significant growth that occurs. I have seen it in Ellenbrook, although it is starting to taper off as the Ellenbrook community is about 50 per cent complete, with the last village now underway. But there is still the town centre to go.

There is enormous pressure on schools when there is significant movement of people into an area. Normally, there is a big increase. The government needs to make sure that the next primary school is built at a rate that ensures that the area is not bursting at the seams and that there are not so many demountables on the existing school sites that they are impractical to manage. We all have stories; we were all taught in demountables. When I went to Roleystone primary school, I was in a demountable, but we were not short of space. I do not think we had air conditioning in those demountables in Roleystone.

Dr A.D. Buti: It would've been hot up there.

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: It was pretty hot at Roleystone primary, which the government bowled over—not while we were in it—but that is another story. They did find the time capsules.

In those days, they were not very comfortable. Yes, modern demountables have varying comfort levels, but they have an impact on the school grounds. As I said, we had demountables in Roleystone, but it was a big school site with a lot of nature around it, so it was not an issue. But when demountables impact on play space, particularly school ovals, it becomes a major problem. Other services also need to be connected, including toilets and other services.

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A lot of the movement in the early childhood years is about connectivity between classes.

[Member's time extended.]

[Quorum formed.]

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: When schools are not built at the appropriate rate, there is overcrowding in existing schools. There are also other pressures. For example, the lack of construction of south Caversham primary school means that enrolments at Caversham Primary School, which is north of Reid Highway, are growing significantly. It is already above capacity, because it is a small rural school, so it has brought in demountables. However, it will have to bring in more demountables because there is no building program to accommodate the extra students it will have because south Caversham is not being built. This is the problem. When the government says that it is not building south Caversham, it has not planned any expenditure for the adjoining schools, and Caversham Primary School is a classic case. The fact that Caversham Primary School now has more demountables means that it does not have an undercover area large enough for a school assembly. The school put in a bid of \$1 million for an undercover assembly area, and it did not get it. The government's failure to build south Caversham is having enormous flow-on effects.

Another policy challenge is that housing estates are growing at a rapid rate. No-one in government is looking at the overall impact of the growth in housing estates on roads, public transport and education. We get some data. However, no-one in government is saying that X-thousand people will be moving into a particular area this year, and we need to look at the impacts on schools and roads. Therefore, we get a disjointed approach and not the delivery of infrastructure that the community deserves.

The last example is North Ellenbrook secondary college. As the member for Armadale has outlined, Ellenbrook Secondary College has 14 demountables or transportables this year, and the number will climb next year. Ellenbrook Secondary College is already a constrained site. Ellenbrook has a significant population. Some commitments were made about building north Ellenbrook in a faster time frame to ensure that Ellenbrook Secondary College does not get to a point at which it needs to have demountables or transportables. Ideally, north Ellenbrook should have been open by now. However, it is not forecast to open until 2018.

The member for Forrestfield, who believes that the school system is 100 per cent fine and nothing ever needs to be improved, and who talks about things in a Pollyanna way, is actually acknowledging the pressure being placed on the teaching environment and principals because of the government's failure to build new schools. That is the case particularly in secondary schools. Secondary schools have a lot of active young people, and they are often in confined spaces and do not have the opportunity to run around because their play space or their oval has been taken away because of the need for transportables. Therefore, this is not just an infrastructure problem. It also impacts on the ability of teachers and the principal to manage the school. North Ellenbrook should have been built by now, and the figures that have come out show that many of the primary schools in the Ellenbrook area are suffering as a result.

This is a planning matter. The government is failing to handle the growth in our suburbs and the movement of children into our schools. As a result, it is not building new schools in the time frame that the community deserves. Through the planning process, the government is creating expectations that new schools will be built. However, those schools are not being built. That lets down the local community. It creates extra costs for land developers and landowners. It also creates enormous uncertainty for the future. There must be a better way of doing this. The government needs to be better coordinated on the ground. The government needs to ensure that when new housing estates are delivered, it identifies the cost of the new schools that will be required and raises that as a contingent liability, for example, in the books somewhere to show that the state government recognises the future cost of building school infrastructure in those areas.

The ACTING SPEAKER (Mr P. Abetz): I give the call to the member for Perth.

MS E. EVANGEL (Perth) [7.24 pm]: Mr Acting Speaker —

Mrs M.H. Roberts: It is private members' time. Do you think we could get a go at our own motion?

The ACTING SPEAKER: I have given the call to the member for Perth. I am happy to give the member for Midland the call next.

Ms E. EVANGEL: I would like to thank the member for Armadale for raising this motion, because it gives members on this side of the house an opportunity to reiterate all the outstanding achievements of this government during its term in office. I would also like to acknowledge the outstanding work of our Minister for Education. I personally believe that he is one of the best education ministers that this state has ever seen —

Several members interjected.

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The ACTING SPEAKER: Members!

Several members interjected.

The ACTING SPEAKER: Members, I am on my feet! You will still have the opportunity —

Mr D.A. Templeman interjected.

The ACTING SPEAKER: Member for Mandurah, I am on my feet. You know that when I am on my feet, you are not to open your mouth—or at least not let sound come out of it, which I appreciate is at times very difficult for you, but that is fine.

Ms E. EVANGEL: I would like to request that I not have any interjections. I sat here and listened to the opposition without —

The ACTING SPEAKER: I shall give you my protection.

Ms E. EVANGEL: Thank you very much; I appreciate that.

As I was saying, the Minister for Education, Hon Peter Collier, has made outstanding achievements in his time as minister —

Several members interjected.

The ACTING SPEAKER: Members! Member for Mandurah!

Several members interjected.

The ACTING SPEAKER: Members, I am going to start calling people if they persist.

Ms E. EVANGEL: I would like to work through some of the outstanding achievements in the Perth electorate. I will go through each and every one of my state primary schools, and I will make a few comments on some of my personal initiatives in the time I have been member for Perth. I will then make some comments on the independent public school system that has been embraced by the Perth electorate and has seen Perth electorate schools achieve outstanding results across the board.

I will start with Highgate Primary School, which is an inner-city primary school. It is a fantastic little primary school that sits in the middle of Highgate. We recently managed to achieve a \$5.5 million two-storey build for Highgate Primary School. That is an outstanding achievement because, as has been raised on a number of occasions in the house, inner-city schools are really quite unique because they sit on a very small footprint. We are enjoying a boom in inner-city residents due to the outstanding work of this Barnett-led Liberal government over the past few years. We have seen some outstanding projects that are attracting families into the schools—projects that have not been supported by the opposite side of the house; projects that it did not get behind at all. We have created a vibrant inner city, and that, in turn, is attracting residents into the Perth electorate. The \$5.5 million two-storey build at Highgate primary is a great achievement, and a new early childhood facility will be built at the north western end of Highgate Primary School. That is really exciting news that the school community —

Mr J. Norberger: Well done!

Ms E. EVANGEL: Yes.

The school community has embraced that announcement, and we are all looking forward to seeing that come to fruition.

One of this government's major announcements during the 2013 election was the 40-kilometre-an-hour LED flashing lights. I am really pleased to say that each and every one of my primary schools has received those, including Highgate. It has also been the beneficiary of the primary device program to the value of \$8 912, which has paid for new tablets, laptops and accessories to help support the children of Highgate in their learning and education. I take this opportunity to mention the intensive English centre that Highgate Primary School runs. It really has become a very integral and central part of the Highgate school culture and community. There have been a number of outstanding principals, at least in my time, in Cristina Sandri to begin with, and now in Stephen Ivey, and they speak very, very highly of the intensive English centre. Usually, about 80 students are in the program, and anywhere between 40 and 60 nationalities and cultures can be represented in the centre. It is a very important part of the Highgate school community.

I will now talk about Mount Hawthorn Primary School, which has one of the largest school populations in the electorate—there is no doubt about that—and sits on a very small footprint. I have been working very closely with Mount Hawthorn Primary School to try to achieve some really good outcomes for it. I have to say that we are on our way. A couple of years ago, \$1.25 million was spent on Mount Hawthorn Primary School. It was one

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of my government's election commitments and one I was pleased to deliver to the Mt Hawthorn school community. That spend included a massive undercover area to house the entire primary school community, along with the parents and visitors, for school assemblies. It also included lots of resurfacing of tennis courts and other court facilities at the school.

Earlier, the Leader of the Opposition mentioned in this house that the Mt Hawthorn school community needed a school build. That is certainly the case, and the Department of Education is doing what it does best and is working behind the scenes to make sure that supply and demand are met. The Leader of the Opposition also mentioned an email forwarded to him by a member of the Mt Hawthorn school community. I would like to clarify that. An email, dated 23 May, was sent by me to Mr Michael Jenkin. That email was in reference to a visit earlier in the year in which I, the chairman of the school board and a member of the Department of Education discussed some of the issues and concerns the school community had. My email was sent to Mr Jenkin on 23 May. The email specifies that, based on information received by the Department of Education, we would be looking at a two-storey build potentially for next year.

Mrs M.H. Roberts interjected.

The ACTING SPEAKER (Mr P. Abetz): Member for Midland!

Ms E. EVANGEL: I do not want to take interjections, thank you, Mr Acting Speaker, with all due respect.

The email was sent on 23 May and I specified, based on information received from the Department of Education, we would be looking at a build next year. The budget was handed down on 12 May. I understand that the school community could be confused and think that I was referring to this year, but I certainly do not understand why the Leader of the Opposition would think that an email sent on 23 May, which refers to next year's budget, would mean that the school would be built in 2017. I know he cannot add. I know he has absolutely no interest in the electorate of Perth. He did not support the new Museum. He did not support Elizabeth Quay. He still does not support any of the major key projects that have built and rejuvenated the city of Perth, yet, all of a sudden, he is interested in what is happening in my electorate's schools. He does not care about the Perth electorate's schools. He cannot even count. He cannot even work out what "next year" means when I refer to state budgets. I understand that people in the Mt Hawthorn school community are concerned. They want a build; they need a build. That is exactly what I am doing as the member for Perth—I am advocating and lobbying on behalf of my community.

The interesting thing is that I have had to sit here and endure constant comments on the inner-city school situation. In this role, I enjoy doorknocking because it gives me an opportunity to speak and connect with my community. When I doorknock in Mt Hawthorn, the most common thing I see and hear when I rock up to people's houses is, "Hi, Eleni. How are you? I have seen you down at the school, Eleni. You're doing a fantastic job down at Mount Hawthorn Primary School." That is the common feedback I receive and it is feedback I am really grateful for. One of my main priorities in this role is to do the best I can to advocate and work for the Perth electorate schools. I take great pride in the work I do with my schools.

I would like to confirm my support for Mount Hawthorn Primary School and its need for a build. I understand that there are a lot of students on a very small site. I will continue to lobby and advocate for the build that school needs, and it will need that in the very near future. That is what I do and what I spend most of my time on.

A government member: A good local member.

Ms E. EVANGEL: Thank you. In fact, just two weeks ago I attended the P&C meeting. I had a really good conversation with the board and pretty much explained how I am working for them and advocating on their behalf.

I would like to move on to North Perth Primary School, an outstanding little school in the heart of North Perth. The school community does an amazing job, as does Karen Lockyer, the school's very dedicated principal. For the teachers and principals at all of the schools in my electorate of Perth, it is not a job, it is a way of life—and you can see it. There is so much tender, loving care between the principal, the teachers and the students, and the school communities are just beautiful. You would be struggling to find an inch of land that has not been either looked after or allocated for something such as a community garden. Every single nook and cranny has something valuable placed on it to make good use of it for the students. I enjoyed working with the former parents and citizens association chair Ms Kirstyn Johnston just last year on obtaining some wigwag lights for Loftus Street. Quite a few kids who live in the Leederville precinct go to North Perth Primary, and Loftus Street is a really busy road. Kirstyn ran a really good campaign with me and we managed to get some wigwags placed at the corner of Loftus and Franklin Streets. I was very happy to work with Kirstyn on that because I live nearby and can see how busy Loftus Street is. It is really important that our kids can safely walk to school. We are a very small electorate and people enjoy riding and walking to school so it was good to work with Kirstyn on that.

Dr Tony Buti; Mr Mark McGowan; Mr Nathan Morton; Ms Rita Saffioti; Ms Eleni Evangel; Mrs Michelle Roberts; Acting Speaker; Mr Chris Hatton; Mr Paul Miles

I would also like to congratulate the current P&C chair, Ms Andrea King, who does an outstanding job at North Perth Primary School. I must say that the school committees are mind-blowing. Andrea worked very closely with me and we had our Deputy Premier, Hon Liza Harvey, come out to the school to meet with us and assist us and the school community to achieve a crosswalk man for View Street—another little spot that was a bit tricky for the kids. I appreciate Liza Harvey for showing such an interest at all times in the Perth electorate. She is always very welcome in the electorate and is always very well received. A \$20 000 grant application was approved for the shade structure on the new dome equipment that the North Perth P&C community raised money for—so that was really good news. Just a couple of weeks ago, the principal, Karen Lockyer, was quite proud of the new eastern boundary fence that we managed to get for the school to make that eastern entry point a lot safer. The school has put up this wonderful big mural along the end of the boundary wall, which looks absolutely fantastic. Recently, I have been working with the minister to see whether we can get some perpendicular parking. Understandably, an inner-city electorate always has parking problems. Whether it is a problem for businesses, schools or residents, we are always fighting for that parking spot. We identified one section of the school oval along Albert Street where some perpendicular parking would make life that much better for the parents who drop off their children at North Perth Primary School.

I will move on to Kyilla Primary School. I have been closely affiliated with that school for quite a long time, even before my role as the member for Perth because my two nieces went through that primary school. In fact, one of my nieces is still at Kyilla Primary School, so I have enjoyed visiting and attending the school for many years now. It is a gorgeous little school and we have managed to get \$520 000 allocated for the refurbishment of the new toilet blocks there, which I am really proud of and they will be great to see. Earlier this year, I managed to assist the school in getting some money so that it could enhance the bike paths leading to the school. As I said, the parents of the students who attend our schools really enjoy walking or riding to school. That was a good little achievement. I also worked with the previous principal, Ms Carol Selley, who is now the principal of Mount Hawthorn Primary School, to get some perpendicular parking for that school to provide a bit more parking space.

Point of Order

Mrs M.H. ROBERTS: This motion is about the government's slow rate of building new schools. So far this member has been on her feet for 15 minutes and has not spoken about any build for any new school.

Ms E. Evangel interjected.

Mrs M.H. ROBERTS: It is about the slow rate of build of new schools, not renovations that have not been done at Mount Hawthorn but new schools.

The ACTING SPEAKER (Mr P. Abetz): We have given a fair bit of latitude to speakers. Member, you need to zero back in on the subject of the motion, which is the building of schools.

Debate Resumed

Ms E. EVANGEL: I would also like to draw the attention of the house to West Leederville Primary School, which services part of Leederville in my electorate. It has just received \$10.5 million for a two-storey build. That, too, will ease the pressure on the inner city schools, which is a really good outcome.

The feeder schools in my electorate are Churchlands and Mount Lawley.

Mrs M.H. Roberts interjected.

Ms E. EVANGEL: I am pleased to say that Churchlands Senior High School has \$38.8 million to put aside to accommodate new facilities. Shenton College has just received \$49.5 million to improve its facilities as well. I visited Mount Lawley Senior High School a couple of weeks ago to look at its facilities and to also see how the year 7 students were transitioning —

Mrs M.H. Roberts interjected.

Ms E. EVANGEL: Mr Acting Speaker, I would prefer not to have any interjections.

The ACTING SPEAKER: Member for Midland.

Ms E. EVANGEL: I enjoyed visiting Mount Lawley Senior High School a couple of weeks ago because, as I said, I was very keen to see how the year 7s were transitioning into high school. It was really great to see that the kids were so happy. The new build for the year 7s is absolutely outstanding. It is a state-of-the-art high school. It is interesting to note that with all the talk that comes about pressure on inner-city high schools, Mount Lawley, which is our feeder school, has 1 350 students, so it still has the capacity for more students.

Mrs M.H. Roberts interjected.

Dr Tony Buti; Mr Mark McGowan; Mr Nathan Morton; Ms Rita Saffioti; Ms Eleni Evangel; Mrs Michelle Roberts; Acting Speaker; Mr Chris Hatton; Mr Paul Miles

Ms E. EVANGEL: Mr Acting Speaker, I gave members due respect when they were speaking and I would like your protection, if that is possible.

The ACTING SPEAKER: Member for Midland, if the member uses different language from what you would use, that is up to her.

Ms E. EVANGEL: I know that those opposite do not like listening to good news, especially when it comes from the Perth electorate—it really grates on them—but the fact is that there is a lot of good news in the Perth electorate and I am really proud of it.

I caught up with the principal of Mount Lawley Senior High School, Mr Milton Butcher, who showed me around. He was quite proud of the music achievements, in particular, of the kids in my electorate. He said that the school is deliberately trying to recruit some of the Mount Hawthorn students because Mount Hawthorn Primary School has an outstanding music program. Mount Lawley is very keen to attract a lot of those students. I would like to acknowledge that both Churchlands and Mount Lawley have outstanding performing arts and music programs. There is obviously a great demand to get into these schools purely because of their exceptional programs.

There has been quite a bit of talk about a high school in the western suburbs. It is certainly on the agenda. I have invited the Minister for Education, Hon Peter Collier, whom I would say again has been an outstanding minister, to my electorate office on a number of occasions. We hold school forums, which is a great opportunity for school communities to get together and talk about the issues that really matter to them. They have been really successful over the past three and a half years that I have been the member for Perth.

Mr R.F. Johnson interjected.

The ACTING SPEAKER: Member for Hillarys.

Ms E. EVANGEL: It is interesting to note, and I want to say this, that at the first school forum I held in my office the common feedback that came back from the principals, the teachers and the P&C representatives is that they were really, really happy to be given an opportunity to get together and talk about something they all have a common interest in, that being education. They had not seen that prior to me becoming the state member for Perth. They had not been given that experience and that opportunity.

MRS M.H. ROBERTS (Midland) [7.45 pm]: Of course, the previous speaker did not deal with the motion before us. The motion before us reads —

That this house condemns the Minister for Education and the government for its slow rate of building new schools.

Mr P.T. Miles interjected.

The ACTING SPEAKER: Member for Wanneroo.

Mrs M.H. ROBERTS: We got a 20-minute diatribe from the member for Perth. I take it that that is her valedictory speech. She said there is good news for the people of Perth and she is right in that, so she got one thing right.

Ms E. Evangel interjected.

The ACTING SPEAKER: Member for Perth.

Mrs M.H. ROBERTS: There is very good news for the people of Perth.

Ms E. Evangel interjected.

The ACTING SPEAKER: Member for Perth, I have to call you if you persist.

Mrs M.H. ROBERTS: Yes, there is great news for the people of Perth: come next March they will get a new member and hopefully then, and only then, will Mount Hawthorn Primary School get the facilities that it deserves.

Several members interjected.

The ACTING SPEAKER: Members!

Mrs M.H. ROBERTS: The fact is that this member for Perth is incompetent and she is also virtually illiterate.

Several members interjected.

The ACTING SPEAKER: Members, let us have a little bit of decorum in this place.

Point of Order

Dr Tony Buti; Mr Mark McGowan; Mr Nathan Morton; Ms Rita Saffioti; Ms Eleni Evangel; Mrs Michelle Roberts; Acting Speaker; Mr Chris Hatton; Mr Paul Miles

Dr A.D. BUTI: If the behaviour shown by the member for Wanneroo and, I think, member for Swan Hills had been on our side, you would have been naming us, Mr Acting Speaker. I think to just say “calm down” is really not strong enough.

The ACTING SPEAKER (Mr P. Abetz): There is no point of order.

Several members interjected.

Dr A.D. BUTI: They are interjecting on my point of order.

The ACTING SPEAKER: Members!

Mr J. Norberger interjected.

The ACTING SPEAKER: Member for Joondalup, when I am on my feet you are to be silent. There was bedlam in this place on both sides. I did not call anybody, but I will call people if they persist.

Debate Resumed

Mrs M.H. ROBERTS: Thank you, Mr Acting Speaker —

Ms E. Evangel interjected.

The ACTING SPEAKER: Member for Perth, I will call you for the —

Several members interjected.

The ACTING SPEAKER: Members!

Ms E. Evangel interjected.

The ACTING SPEAKER: Member for Perth, do I need to call you for the second time?

Mrs M.H. ROBERTS: It is a shame that the member for Perth did not receive a better education herself, because otherwise she would not have said so many ignorant things tonight.

Several members interjected.

The ACTING SPEAKER: Members, this is not acceptable. Member for Perth, I have called you once and I will call you another time. I call you for the second time.

Point of Order

Mr C.D. HATTON: The member for Midland is not staying relevant to the topic and all she is doing is delivering a barrage of derogatory comments to the member for Perth; she has no relevance to the point.

Mrs M.H. ROBERTS: Further to that point of order, I have had less than one minute on my feet and I have been responding to issues raised by the former speaker.

Mr J. Norberger interjected.

The ACTING SPEAKER: Member for Joondalup, I call you for the first time.

Debate Resumed

Mrs M.H. ROBERTS: We have a member for Perth, a member in this chamber, who does not know what a feeder school is. I will explain it to the member for Perth. Churchlands and Mount Lawley Senior High Schools are not feeder schools.

Point of Order

Mr P.T. MILES: The member for Midland is not speaking to the motion. You did make a ruling before and asked her to go back to what the debate is about. It is their private members’ motion about growing schools —

Several members interjected.

The ACTING SPEAKER: Members, points of order are to be heard in silence.

Dr A.D. Buti interjected.

The ACTING SPEAKER: Member for Armadale, I call you for the first time and I will make further calls if this persists.

Mr P.T. MILES: I just go back to the point of order in reference to the member for Midland not talking to the motion before the house and talking about and abusing another member of the chamber.

The ACTING SPEAKER: I take the member’s point. I just encourage the member for Midland to get back to the motion.

Debate Resumed

Dr Tony Buti; Mr Mark McGowan; Mr Nathan Morton; Ms Rita Saffioti; Ms Eleni Evangel; Mrs Michelle Roberts; Acting Speaker; Mr Chris Hatton; Mr Paul Miles

Mrs M.H. ROBERTS: I make that point because I think that the member for Perth should know that feeder schools are primary schools. At least twice in her speech she referred to Churchlands Senior High School and Mount Lawley Senior High School as feeder schools. They are not. Feeder schools are little primary schools that feed into the high schools. Perhaps the member would do well to know that. If the member for Perth has learned one thing tonight, that will be something.

The motion before us is to do with the government being slow in building new schools, and it has been. In 2014, the government promised to build a school on a site in Caversham. In 2015, it took it off-budget. Now in 2016, it will not say when the school will be built there. People bought into the estate at Caversham south and the developer is required to give over a site on the map for community use to the council and for the provision of a primary school.

The ACTING SPEAKER: Members, there are too many conversations in the chamber.

Mrs M.H. ROBERTS: The City of Swan is moving on and building the community centre there and doing its part. There was to be a shared oval between the community, the City of Swan and the Department of Education, with the school. The City of Swan is doing its part. The Department of Education, despite having promised to have done it a year ago, still has not done it and now will not give a commitment. Indeed, I am told that at a recent meeting, City of Swan representatives asked when the commitment to the school would be made, because the vacant site is unsightly and a problem to the community. Rather than having the advantage of a local primary school to send their children to, it has this vacant site. The government has simply backed away from building the primary school because it has spent the dough. It does not have the money to proceed with the school at this point, but it will not admit that. When asked by City of Swan representatives what it will take and when it will be built, the answer is: when each neighbouring primary school is 200 students over quota. That is about seven demountable classrooms at one neighbouring primary school and seven demountable classrooms at the other, because the government wants a surplus of 400 kids at the local schools before it will commit to building the school at Caversham south. That is how the government has let down that community.

Not only that, the Department of Education will not let anyone else have the site. I understand that there was at least one expression of interest from a private school to acquire that site and provide a local school in that Caversham south community; but, no, the Department of Education sits on the site, yet gives no commitment. I have seen this happen before. It occurred at Jane Brook and it has occurred in other areas. It sits on the school sites and then eventually it sells them off and it does not build schools there. The families move in, expecting a primary school; their kids are of school age and they have to send them elsewhere to progress through school, and the time never comes. I know what is happening. The government is pushing overcrowding on other schools because it is failing to build the new schools that it should be building. I believe that there are about eight sites in the City of Swan alone that the Department of Education is just sitting on and not building schools on.

I do not blame the developers of the new estates for advertising the fact that there will be a school in these local communities where people are purchasing a block of land and building houses. How can we blame the developers when they are required by government to provide the land for a local school? Everyone within that development is paying a little extra for their block because the developer has had to cede a large portion of land for a local school. To add insult to injury, the developers pay for that land for the school as part of its purchase price for the block but then the government is not actually building the school. They leave these sites unkempt and uncared for so that they become a hazard in the local community. It is just wrong. We then find that the neighbouring schools have become overcrowded. Woodbridge Primary School in my electorate was formerly known as West Midland, so it is very close to the heart of Midland. The education department drew up a little map showing how it could put 10 demountable classrooms on that site. The member for Swan Hills knows that 10 demountables on that site is not suitable. Woodbridge Primary School is a 2.6 hectare site. Primary schools are now built on 4.5 hectare sites. Woodbridge primary is not one of those tiny little schools with a few students; it is the second highest category of school, so it is a relatively big school but it is on only 2.6 hectares. The department drew up a little map to show that it could squeeze 10 demountables on that site if it needed to, while it is keeping demand back because it is not building new schools. The department could plonk some demountables on the Woodbridge site. I am not saying that the demountables are not quality buildings or not suitable. My argument is that it is a school site that is about half the size of a regular primary school site. If demountables are put on that site, the kids will lose all their play space. Four of the demountables would have to squish onto the school's little oval. One of the demountables would be over the school's vegetable garden area. Other demountables would be on other play space. If an additional 10 demountables are put in, I can only assume that somewhere above 250 more kids will be playing in even less space. I know the member for Swan Hills knows that school well and he knows that that would be wrong.

This is the government's policy. Why? Because it has busted the bank and spent the money. If the member for Perth wants to know why money is not being spent at Mount Hawthorn Primary School or why we are not

Dr Tony Buti; Mr Mark McGowan; Mr Nathan Morton; Ms Rita Saffioti; Ms Eleni Evangel; Mrs Michelle Roberts; Acting Speaker; Mr Chris Hatton; Mr Paul Miles

getting any new primary schools in areas like Caversham and other new estates, it is because this government has blown the dough. It has taken us from a \$3.6 billion debt to over \$30 billion worth of debt.

Several members interjected.

The ACTING SPEAKER (Mr P. Abetz): Members!

Mrs M.H. ROBERTS: If we are critical about some of the government's building projects, it is because those building projects have been —

Ms E. Evangel interjected.

The ACTING SPEAKER: Member for Perth, I call you for the third time.

Mrs M.H. ROBERTS: Those building projects have been given priority over school projects. Three primary schools instead of six schools are being built a year. Less work is being done at existing schools because the money is simply not there. It is not there because this government has blown out state debt. The interest bill alone on the extra money this government has borrowed would build a number of primary schools a year. Tomorrow, it will bring on a loan bill in this house for nearly \$2 billion. Imagine it! It is criminal and kids are missing out as a result. They are travelling further to school. People are investing in their local communities; they are buying homes. The education department is not getting on with it. My call is this: if the government is not going to build the Caversham south primary school, it should have the guts to say that. Say it is not going to do it. Hand the site over to the City of Swan; sell it at a reasonable price to a private school so it can potentially go in there. Let us not have this eyesore there and let us not keep stringing the community along. The government does not have the dough; it has broken the bank. If the government does not have the money to build the school and is not going to build another school until there are 200 extra children over demand —

Mr P.T. Miles interjected.

The ACTING SPEAKER: Member for Wanneroo!

Mrs M.H. ROBERTS: — at each of the local schools, do not say that rubbish; just say that it will not build it and tell the truth.

Several members interjected.

The ACTING SPEAKER: Members! Member for Joondalup and member for Wanneroo, I will call you if you interject once more.

Point of Order

Dr A.D. BUTI: My point of order is a clarification. Can I ask why the Acting Speaker refuses to name the members? I interjected once and the Acting Speaker named me. The Acting Speaker constantly warns government members that he will name them, but he does not.

The ACTING SPEAKER (Mr P. Abetz): If the member wishes to dissent from the ruling of the Chair, feel free to move a motion. I have given a fair bit of latitude. I have called the member for Joondalup once and I have called the member for Perth three times. I think I have done enough calling, but I am happy to do a little more.

Debate Resumed

Mrs M.H. ROBERTS: I need an answer on Caversham south primary school. The community needs an answer. It cannot live on a never-never promise. The community needs some honesty from this government and from this minister. We need to know what can happen at that site. The City of Swan is doing its part. It wants to go ahead and do the oval. We need to know what this government's commitment is.

Debate adjourned, pursuant to standing orders.