

SCHOOLS — SUICIDE AND SELF-HARM PREVENTION GUIDELINES

204. Mr P.J. RUNDLE to the Minister for Education:

I refer to the *School response and planning guidelines for students with suicidal behaviour and non-suicidal self-injury*. In light of yet another tragic suicide of a south west student, will the new Minister for Education consider making these guidelines mandatory across public and independent schools in WA; and, if not, why not?

Dr A.D. BUTI replied:

Of course, suicide is a tragedy for anyone, particularly a young person, so I will try to speak about this matter in a sensitive manner and not refer to any particular incident that may have happened. In regard to those guidelines the member referred to and independent and Catholic schools, I do not have authority to mandate it in any case. I think the member would understand that as the opposition education minister. We are the regulator of those schools. In regard to public schools, as the member knows, those guidelines are inserted into the policy. But in regard to the guidelines, it is not one size fits all. We allow individual schools to determine how they should respond. The schools ask the parents. The schools speak to the students who might be in danger. That is what should happen. I am sure the member understands that there is a need to be sensitive and flexible in this area. We do not mandate one broad policy to fit everyone. We have a policy, but the mandatory guidelines are inserted into the policy to be considered by every school in consultation with allied professionals—experts in the area—and the families. That is the policy at the moment. Obviously, we are always looking at and reviewing policies in this area, and that will continue.