

TEACHERS — WORKING CONDITIONS

6315. Mr M.P. Murray to the Minister for Education

In relation to the 2011 log of claims by the State School Teachers Union Western Australia (SSTUWA), I ask:

- (a) what is the reason for the disparity between a primary school teacher (years 1 to 7) receiving 240 minutes per week for Duties Other Than Teaching (DOTT) while Kindergarten, Pre-Primary and High School teachers, get 320 minutes per week;
- (b) how are disputes currently dealt with in the following disciplines, and are there any proposed changes that may affect these dispute areas:
 - (i) permanency of staff;
 - (ii) behavioural management;
 - (iii) class sizes; and
 - (iv) occupational Health and Safety;
- (c) is the Minister aware that there are now an extra three meetings per term, a total of 20 per year, that equates to a maximum of 5 one-hour meetings per term;
- (d) are teachers required to attend these extra 12 one-hour meetings for no remuneration;
- (e) in terms of the Department of Education seeking to get a separate administrators' agreement, can the Minister outline the purpose of distinguishing between non-teaching and teaching administrators; and
- (f) can the Government be confident that it meets its responsibility to provide the best possible working conditions and relationships between our educators and management?

Dr E. CONSTABLE replied:

- (a) The difference in time allocated for teachers to undertake Duties Other Than Teaching (DOTT) is historical and has been agreed to between the relevant union and the Department of Education over the course of several industrial agreements.
- (b)
 - (i) Permanency and tenure of teaching staff is covered by clause 7-Permanency and Tenure of the Teachers (Public Sector Primary and Secondary Education) Award 1993 and is consistent with the Government's Modes of Employment policy. Teachers who applied for vacant permanent teaching positions could lodge breach of standards claims with the Public Sector Commissioner if they felt the selection and recruitment process was unfair. Depending on the nature of the dispute, other processes available to teachers include the Grievance Resolution Procedure; Dispute Settlement Procedure, referral to the Employee Relations Executive Committee-Industrial Coordination Group, or referral to the WA Industrial Relations Commission. The Department of Education is not seeking to change any existing entitlements relating to permanency or tenure or the procedures for resolving associated disputes.
 - (ii) A dispute relating to student behaviour management is not an industrial matter and therefore did not and does not fall within the jurisdiction of the WA Industrial Relations Commission. Issues of this kind are dealt with at a school level by teachers and principals.
 - (iii) Individual teachers who are requested to accept a class size greater than those provided for under the General Agreement can elect to utilise the grievance resolution procedures as detailed in the General Agreement. No amendments to the grievance resolution procedures have been sought by the Department of Education other than minor consequential changes reflecting the change from a district to a regional organisational structure.
 - (iv) Disputes concerning occupational health and safety are dealt with under the provisions of the Occupational Safety and Health Act 1994.
- (c) Yes.
- (d) On Thursday, 8 December 2011, the State Government reached an in-principle agreement with The State School Teachers' Union of Western Australia for a new Enterprise Bargaining Agreement. The additional meetings equate to approximately three minutes per week. The Government's pay offer of 12 per cent over three years remunerates teachers for their attendance at these meetings.
- (e) Sections 63 and 64 of the School Education Act 1999 define the different functions to be performed by principals and teachers. The Department has proposed that a joint review of principals' conditions of

employment be undertaken with the SSTUWA so that these differences in roles and responsibilities are properly recognised in any agreement.

- (f) The Government has reached an in principle agreement with the SSTUWA for a 12 per cent pay rise over three years which will again make Western Australian teachers and school psychologists the best paid in Australia reflects how highly this Government values teachers and psychologists. As a sign of goodwill, the Government has announced an immediate salary increase through an administrative payment of 3.75 per cent. This increase will be in their pay of 22 December 2011.