

HALLS CREEK DISTRICT HIGH SCHOOL — ATTENDANCE

**716. Hon NEIL THOMSON to the Minister for Education and Training:**

I refer to the attendance plans for children at Halls Creek District High School, which are now subject to investigation.

- (1) Was the minister aware of publicly expressed concerns about the adequacy of staff resources prior to the attendance plans being finalised?
- (2) If yes to (1), did the minister direct the Department of Education to allocate more resources to the task?
- (3) Was the minister aware of deficiencies in the plans when she attended Halls Creek District High School to present awards and when she spoke about the “fantastic initiative” in Parliament in 2020?
- (4) If no to (3), why did the time frame of a few days to create the attendance plans not raise concerns for the minister?
- (5) Further to the minister’s answer to part (4) of question without notice 621 —
  - (a) does the minister now concede that the Department of Education may have misled the Ombudsman; and
  - (b) does the minister believe that the department has misled her?

**Hon SUE ELLERY replied:**

I thank the honourable member for some notice of the question.

- (1)–(2) No. Operational matters relating to schools, including the provision of resources, are made at a departmental level and not by me.
- (3) No.
- (4) I was not advised that the attendance plans were created in a few days.
- (5)
  - (a) I have asked the director general to confirm the accuracy of the information that the Department of Education has provided to the Ombudsman.
  - (b) The department provided me with incorrect information—I made that clear in my statement this morning. The director general has advised that on the information currently before her, she believes there was no intention by department staff to mislead me.