

STANDING COMMITTEE ON ESTIMATES AND FINANCIAL OPERATIONS

2019–20 BUDGET ESTIMATES



**TRANSCRIPT OF EVIDENCE
TAKEN AT PERTH
WEDNESDAY, 20 JUNE 2019**

**SESSION ONE
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION**

Members

**Hon Alanna Clohesy (Chair)
Hon Tjorn Sibma (Deputy Chair)
Hon Diane Evers
Hon Aaron Stonehouse
Hon Colin Tincknell**

Hearing commenced at 9.01 am

Hon SUE ELLERY

Minister for Education and Training, examined:

Ms LISA RODGERS

Director General, examined:

Mr JAY PECKITT

Acting Deputy Director General, Education Business Services, examined:

Mr JOHN FISCHER

Executive Director, Infrastructure, examined:

Mr STEPHEN BAXTER

Acting Deputy Director General, Schools, examined:

Mr DAMIEN STEWART

Executive Director, Workforce, examined:

Mr LINDSAY HALE

Executive Director, Statewide Services, examined:

Mr MARTIN CLERY

Assistant Executive Director, Statewide Services, examined:

Ms ALISON RAMM

Acting Executive Director, Strategy, Policy and Governance, examined:

Ms JUANITA HEALY

Acting Executive Director, School Curriculum and Standards, examined:

The CHAIR: Good morning, members. On behalf of the Legislative Council Standing Committee on Estimates and Financial Operations I welcome you to today's hearing with the Department of Education. Can the witnesses confirm that you have read, understood and signed a document headed "Information for Witnesses"?

The WITNESSES: Yes.

The CHAIR: Thank you very much. It is essential that all your testimony before the committee is complete and truthful to the best of your knowledge. This hearing is being recorded by Hansard and a transcript of your evidence will be provided to you. It is also being broadcast live on the Parliament's website. The hearing is being held in public, although there is discretion available to the committee to hear evidence in private. If for some reason you wish to make a confidential statement during today's proceedings, you should request that the evidence be taken in closed session before answering the question. Agencies have an important role and duty in assisting the Parliament to review agency outcomes and the committee values your assistance with this.

Minister, do you have a brief opening statement of no more than two minutes?

Hon SUE ELLERY: I do not.

The CHAIR: As this is a longer session, we will be having a break around 10.15 am depending on the flow of the hearing. Members, you will have around 13 minutes each with the opposition spokesperson having a little longer than that. Starting with questions, I give the call to Hon Diane Evers.

Hon DIANE EVERS: I have just one question to start off and then I will give others a go. It is in relation to one of the key effectiveness indicators on page 315. The indicators are around 71 per cent in year 3, they drop for the next two years—5 and 7—and then go back up at year 9. Is there some explanation for why the percentage drops off in those middle years but then in year 9 we pick it up again? What would be the reason for that?

Hon SUE ELLERY: I will get the director general to explain that.

Ms Rodgers: Thank you for the question. The reason why they are different targets is because the baseline for the targets in the younger years is lower than those at year 9. Of course, our targets are predicted in regard to previous performance, so that is why we have different targets at different years.

Hon DIANE EVERS: I do not think that quite makes sense to me yet. In year 7 we do not have as many kids meeting the target, but then at year 9 that picks up again. It seems to me that the target would be set so that it would be somewhat consistent through that. Am I misunderstanding how the target is set?

Hon SUE ELLERY: I think you are asking two separate questions. One is about why do we set the target at different levels, which is what the director general just provided you an answer on. In terms of performance, we know that there is an issue particularly around writing for a particular cohort. I will ask the director general to make some more comments and then perhaps I will ask Juanita from SCSA to talk about the results as well.

Ms Rodgers: Could you just confirm the question: why are they set differently?

Hon DIANE EVERS: Maybe it is not the targets. Why is the estimated actual at 62 per cent for numeracy for year 7s but then it goes up to 70 per cent? Is it something that we are missing in those younger years to try to get more kids meeting the target?

Ms Rodgers: It is up to 70 per cent in year 3.

Hon DIANE EVERS: It is 70 per cent but it drops down to 62 per cent and then picks up again.

Ms Rodgers: One, we have the results, but the way we set the targets is largely determined by the previous actuals.

Hon DIANE EVERS: Exactly, so why are the actuals so much lower in year 7 than in year 9?

Ms Rodgers: The direct result has been because of the OLNA and the requirement for students to get their literacy and numeracy requirements in order to get their WACE.

Hon DIANE EVERS: So we try harder as they get older?

Ms Rodgers: They are incentivised to make sure that they have the foundation literacy and numeracy. We want to ensure that in years 3, 5, 7 and 9 all students are competent in terms of reading, writing and numeracy. We know that that is a problem. We know that growth is really strong in years 1 to 4 in primary school, and often it flatlines between years 7 and 8 essentially. There are some compounding factors in that. Children go into high school and we see an increase in things like suspensions and the like. We see an increase in behaviour problems and we see issues

in regard to transition. However, those students that remain in high school at year 9, in order for them to pass, they have to pass their OLNA or meet the minimum standard in regard to NAPLAN. This has incentivised them to stay on at school and meet that target.

Hon DIANE EVERS: Wonderful, thanks. That is fine. That is all, Chair.

Hon AARON STONEHOUSE: I am looking at page 312, the table at the top of that page, “Spending changes”, and the line item second from the bottom: “Upgrade and Maintenance Costs to Tuart College for Western Australian Football Commission Accommodation”. About \$3 million is allocated in total for this, according to a recent media statement. Have the funds allocated for the establishment and maintenance of accommodation for the WA Football Commission come out of the Department of Education’s consolidated funds or has there been some transfer from the Department of Treasury or some other agency to cover those costs?

[9.10 am]

Hon SUE ELLERY: This is new money, so it has not come out of an internal reallocation; its additional money. This is all connected with Bob Hawke College and all the work that is being done in the Subiaco precinct.

Hon AARON STONEHOUSE: Just to clarify, the WA Football Commission is not a statutory agency; it is not a government agency.

Hon SUE ELLERY: No, it is not, but it is a tenant at Subiaco Oval, so in order to do the demolition of the stands to enable access to the Subiaco Oval for students and the local community, they need to move somewhere.

Hon AARON STONEHOUSE: Why has it fallen to the Department of Education to put up the WA Football Commission of all government agencies, of all authorities? Is it just that the Department of Education was the only one with spare office space?

Hon SUE ELLERY: There is a joint exercise being done between lands, planning and education around that Subiaco precinct. We needed to move the tenant, the WA Football Commission, so all agencies were looking around for suitable facilities that might meet their needs, and Tuart College met their needs. It was not that we were asked to bear the burden. All the agencies involved in how we get the school online and do the rest of the development and that Subiaco precinct were looking for an alternative site for the football commission, and Tuart College met the need.

Hon AARON STONEHOUSE: What are the Department of Education’s objectives? What is the Department of Education’s mission, broadly speaking?

Hon SUE ELLERY: To educate children.

Hon AARON STONEHOUSE: How does having the Western Australian Football Commission as a tenant at Tuart College help achieve that objective?

Hon SUE ELLERY: I am not sure what you did not understand about what I just said. In order to meet the needs in the Subiaco precinct, we were looking for a place that would meet the needs of the WA Football Commission.

Hon AARON STONEHOUSE: It is all good and well to meet the needs of the WA Football Commission —

Hon SUE ELLERY: I have not finished giving you the answer. We got additional funds, so education was not asked to bear the burden out of our existing budget. Additional funds were provided to use a facility that is currently run by the Department of Education. I do not see it as being inconsistent is all; I think it is a win-win.

Hon AARON STONEHOUSE: How is the new tenant at Tuart College improving educational outcomes? What impact is it going to have on your KPIs to achieve the objectives of the Department of Education?

Hon SUE ELLERY: It is a very significant impact, because it means we can go ahead with the new Bob Hawke College and have access to Subiaco Oval for the students and for this City of Subiaco to have access to the oval for community sports. You might be aware that the City of Subiaco open space for its community sports organisations is at a premium, so they are really looking forward to having access to Subiaco Oval as well.

Hon AARON STONEHOUSE: Is the \$3 million over four years or will it extend further? What is the time frame?

Hon SUE ELLERY: I might get John Fischer to explain the split between the respective agencies. That \$3 million is across respective agencies that are involved. I will get him to explain the split of the money to you.

Mr Fischer: In terms of relocating the footy commission to Tuart College, there was money allocated to sport and recreation to upgrade the facilities at Tuart College to accommodate the footy commission. In addition, because the tenancy is ongoing for a period of time, it had been anticipated that education would have recovered some of the operating costs from the tenants at Tuart College. The money that is shown in the education budget refers to the running, maintenance and operation costs at Tuart College for the footy commission over this four-year period.

Hon AARON STONEHOUSE: I am still a little unclear, minister. Of all the agencies that have a real estate portfolio or has some office space available, why it falls on the Department of Education to put up the WA Football Commission. You could probably just as easily put them into Dumas House or somewhere else if you are looking for somewhere to fit them.

Hon SUE ELLERY: No, you could not put them into Dumas House.

Hon AARON STONEHOUSE: There is \$700 000 here, at least, in the forward estimates. There is about \$3 million allocated towards this according to the media statement put out on 20 December 2018. Okay; there is a need to move the Western Australian Football Commission, but how far would \$700 000 go to employ teaching aids or upgrading facilities or infrastructure at some of our schools that desperately need it? I wonder whether this is really a priority for the Department of Education as opposed to something that another agency would be better equipped to deal with.

Hon SUE ELLERY: I am not sure that you have understood how we have explained it so far, but let us go back to your preamble to that question. A mark, if you like, of this government is that we take seriously our commitment to get agencies to work together to solve issues. There is a joint governance arrangement, for example, in place around the development of Bob Hawke College. You have all agencies that are engaged working together. In fact, you will find that the Department of Education is one of the biggest, if not the biggest, landholder in government, so in fact we have one of the biggest landholdings in government. So it is not at all unusual that you would look to facilities that are not currently being used by the Department of Education to assist government meet its objectives for another school, which is the Bob Hawke College, and also a greater objective in respect of that about access to the oval. I do not see it as unusual at all. I think it is a great example of government agencies working together to come up with a solution that is a win-win for everybody.

Hon AARON STONEHOUSE: Just a final question. In your media statement, there are comments attributed to you. You say —

“The Tuart College site has retained its education focus with the foundation tenants bringing a range of development and enrichment programs.

What enrichment programs have the WAFC brought to Tuart College?

Hon SUE ELLERY: I am not sure whether you are aware of how they operate, but the WA Football Commission runs a lot of programs, for example, for junior football. They are not the only tenant at Tuart College; they are one of the range of tenants there. They run a range of sporting programs for kids. If you want more information about their programs, I direct you to the Minister for Sport and Recreation.

Hon COLIN TINCKNELL: I just have a few questions to ask about page 311 and they are all on the area of spending changes. I just want to get a bit of clarification. The top one under “New Initiatives” is “National School Reform Agreement—State Contribution to Government Schools”. What is involved in these costs?

Hon SUE ELLERY: The way that funding is provided to schools is a combination of funds from the commonwealth and the state. The national schools agreement, which Western Australia signed in December last year, was around the funding for public and non-government schools in Western Australia. I guess the marked difference between that national schools agreement and previous agreements was a significant increase in the proportion of funds that were provided by the commonwealth for public education. They had traditionally funded at a lower level—a lower proportion, if you like— of the funding for schools. That is the main difference between this national schools agreement and previous agreements. I guess the other main difference is that previously, states were able to, if you like, enter into what might be described as “sweetheart deals”, because the agreement between each state and the commonwealth was not published or made public. A hallmark of the most recent round is on the day that they were agreed, the commonwealth made them public, so every state’s agreement with the commonwealth is there for everybody to see, to see the proportion that the commonwealth is contributing and the proportion that the states are contributing.

[9.20 am]

Hon COLIN TINCKNELL: The next one is ongoing initiatives. You will notice the school chaplaincy and the universal access to early childhood education. I notice in the forward estimates there is no expenditure at all. What has happened with these? Are there going to be no chaplains?

Hon SUE ELLERY: Certainly not. In respect to universal access to early childhood education, I wish that the commonwealth would fund that program for more than one year at a time, but that is what they have been doing now for probably five years—maybe longer. That is in respect of that. We have to wait each year to see if they will re-fund. In respect of chaplains, I will get Mr Peckitt to provide a response.

Mr Peckitt: In the commonwealth budget, the amount for chaplaincy has still been set aside, but the allocation to the various states and territories has not yet been determined, so until that allocation is done, it will not be reflected in our budget. However, it is reflected globally in the commonwealth budget, so it is still to be allocated.

Hon SUE ELLERY: It is worth noting that both state and the commonwealth contribute to the chaplaincy fund. This bit that you are referring to now is just in respect of the commonwealth’s contribution.

Hon COLIN TINCKNELL: The last one on that page is under “Growth Funding—Revisions to Student Enrolment and Cost Growth”. There is a bit of a difference in the forward estimates for 2021–22 and 2022–23. Could you explain those differences there?

Hon SUE ELLERY: I can. I think this is in part to do with a revision of projected enrolment numbers. At the mid-year review, the projected student enrolment growth was lower than had been projected. That is why the budget papers reflect a lower enrolment number. I might get Mr Peckitt to provide you with some more detail about that.

Mr Peckitt: Essentially, every year, as part of the budget process, we revise up and down our budget based on projected enrolment growth across the years. In this case, over a number of years, our projections have increased compared to the prior year, which is a result of the increase. However, in the last year, there has been adjustments that would be down that would cause the reduction, but essentially, across our budget, the department is funded for the required level of students that we project at this point in time.

Hon COLIN TINCKNELL: Moving on to page 313 and note 9, it states that —

... additional specialist programs are being set up in public schools to provide a seamless education across Kindergarten ...

What are these and what are the costs of these?

Hon SUE ELLERY: I think Mr Clery can talk about that.

Mr Clery: Sorry; can I just have the question read again?

Hon COLIN TINCKNELL: Yes, it is page 313, note 9. It talks about kindergarten to year 12 and the specialist programs that are being set up.

Mr Clery: Yes, for students with ASD.

Hon COLIN TINCKNELL: Yes.

Mr Clery: They are programs for students who are diagnosed with ASD who have the capacity to engage with the regular school curriculum but require additional support for their personal and behavioural aspects, if you like. Those programs provide specialist dedicated staff specifically trained in providing that support to those students, so they are able to engage in the school curriculum with their regular-age peers.

Hon COLIN TINCKNELL: Do you have any costs for that? Do you have any figures?

Hon SUE ELLERY: While we are looking for the figures, I might get the director general to give you a bit more information about the programs.

Ms Rodgers: I will go through the list of specialist programs that we have on offer, which is additional to standard classroom teaching for those students. As part of our provision, we have a School of Special Educational Needs: Disability that has a range of special supports for students with autism, and it consists of 20 additional teachers that consult particularly in the area of ASD. We have specialist programs available for students with ASD for those who are particularly high on the spectrum, and these programs provide skilled one-on-one individual planning and supports for those particular children. I can list the schools where those programs are available, if you would like me to?

Hon COLIN TINCKNELL: No, I do not need that; that is okay.

Ms Rodgers: Okay. We have a program called the “Accelerated Learning Centre for Autism”. Again, it is in a particular school with intensive support for students with ASD. There is the early intensive intervention program, and, of course, as the title depicts, that is for early intervention for students, early diagnosis and young students.

Hon COLIN TINCKNELL: Are we able to get the costs?

Hon SUE ELLERY: Yes, I can get Mr Peckitt to give you some information about the allocation of funds.

Hon COLIN TINCKNELL: Thank you.

Mr Peckitt: In relation to the specialist programs for students with autism, approximately \$6.9 million in 2019 is allocated, but obviously there are a number of other funds allocated for students with disability, including the individual disability allocation, which is separate to that allocation.

Hon COLIN TINCKNELL: Just under that, note 10 —

With continuing high demand for vocational education and training in schools, a plan is being implemented ...

What is that plan?

Hon SUE ELLERY: That is being worked on now. For some time—honourable member, you may have even heard this yourself—there have been, I guess, issues or concerns raised about how well or not we were delivering vocational training in schools. Certainly, earlier this year there was an issue with a significant provider of what is called auspicing services to schools, such that the national regulator stepped in and said that organisation was not providing the level of quality of auspicing that was required. I have asked three agencies to work together—SCSA, which is the curriculum authority, working with the Department of Education and the Department of Training and Workforce Development—to, in fact, get a much tighter focus on how we deliver vocational training in schools. I might ask the director general to make some more comments about that.

Ms Rodgers: The minister has outlined the issue with VETiS. Essentially, we have worked with schools to make sure that none of those students are disadvantaged as a result of VETiS and, indeed, any other RTO that might go under in the future, so all of those students can carry on with their vocational qualification and they will be auspiced either through the schools or through DTWD. It is part of a larger program for us to think about how we deliver that in schools, and relates to ensuring that all students have access to the curriculum through an appropriate pathway. That goes into the work around the opportunity for students to take general courses. As well as the issue in regards to quality provision for VET providers, we have the issue whereby many of the teachers who are providing VET in schools have to have the industry currency standards—the industry standard—and they have to be registered in terms of being a registered teacher. It is a huge constraint for principals in the provision of curriculum for all students, so we are looking at making sure that all VET providers are auspiced and have the right quality, but also we are enabling principals to run credentialised moderated courses through the general course strand that will now allow the students to be qualified and, indeed, walk out of school with a great pathway, essentially.

[9.30 am]

Hon TJORN SIBMA: I have a question—potentially a series of questions—around paragraph 7 on page 313. It is a significant issues affecting the agency piece. In particular, the number of teachers with expertise in teaching STEM remains a challenge. Notwithstanding that, I think the STEM acronym is a bit too trendy. The fundamental gap, I imagine, which is being addressed here is not the S, T or E bits; it is the M bit—the maths bit. Can I get a sense of what the shortage of maths teachers is across both the primary and secondary school systems?

Hon SUE ELLERY: I will get one of the officers to talk about that in a minute, but I will just make some general comments first because this is a live issue that we have been engaged in discussions with the universities about as recently as yesterday. I chair WAHEC, which is the WA Higher Education Council, which is all of the vice-chancellors. We put it on the agenda there and asked the universities

to work with us about how we might ensure that we get more graduates who are specialists in those areas. Prior to that, the Department of Education had convened a round table of all the deans of education from the respective universities to see how we might better work together to achieve that. The first thing I wanted to say is that there is a commitment now between the agency and the universities to work together on that. It is also about thinking a little bit outside the square. The member would be familiar with the Teach for Australia program, which takes those people who have a qualification in a whole range of areas, provides them with an intensive 12-month supervised program to get them ready to teach, and then they are placed particularly in schools in challenging areas. I guess I will describe it that way. Teach for Australia works really well. We are looking at whether there is something along those lines that we might be able to consider as well in addition to the Teach for Australia program. I will perhaps get the director general to make some comments as well.

Hon TJORN SIBMA: Would you mind if I just follow up on that one, minister, and then perhaps the director general might add something. How long has the Teach for Australia program been operating in Western Australian schools?

Hon SUE ELLERY: I reckon five years—about five years.

Hon TJORN SIBMA: Is that subject to an MOU or some form of agreement between the Department of Education and Teach for Australia as a service provider?

Hon SUE ELLERY: Someone might correct me, but I think the agreements are with the schools and they place the teachers in the specific schools. Someone might be able to correct me about the contractual arrangements.

Hon TJORN SIBMA: I am interested on the cost and the effectiveness of the program because I think, from recollection, the ACT government pulled out of Teach for Australia toward the end of last year. I know the New South Wales government has steadfastly refused to get involved. I am just interested to know what the effectiveness of Teach for Australia in Western Australian schools has been since operation and whether the government is of a mind to commit to roll it over.

Hon SUE ELLERY: I will get the director general to make some comments about that in a minute. If I can speak anecdotally, my observation, both in opposition and now as minister, is that TFA works really well. One of the schools in my electorate, Southern River College, for example—if the member has been around for a while, which he has, he might remember it as “Gossie High” before it was renamed—it has some challenging families in that area. Not all of those kids are growing up in households where they get the kind of support for their education that perhaps students in other schools get. TFA in that school has been absolutely amazing. They have some absolutely sensational individual teachers, but I have also seen it working really well at Balcatta High in your electorate, where they have had a number of teachers for three or four years. It is less than Southern River College. My anecdotal observation as a non-educational professional is that I have not seen a school yet where people have said that it is disaster and is not working well. I cannot comment on the ACT or New South Wales. My observation in Western Australia is that it is working well, but I will ask the director general to make some comments.

Ms Rodgers: It is working well. We currently have 88 associates, they are called, in schools across Western Australia. We have a direct relationship with Teach for Australia, where they place a certain number of teachers into the system with us. We target low ICSEA schools. In fact, they are required to go into low-ICSEA schools. What we know in terms of the research is that the program works. We get teachers that come out of the Teach for Australia program and they are fully qualified trained teachers and they are able to be registered. They meet the requirements in regard to the Australian Professional Standards for Teachers, like every other teacher that teaches in Western Australia.

There has been a national review of Teach for Australia and what the review has found is that they are incredibly impactful in terms of their outcomes for students. Their only negative, if you like, if there was one, is that the price per teacher trained is higher than a teacher through university. But, actually, their impact in regard to student progress offsets that.

Hon TJORN SIBMA: Thank you. Director general, do you track the attrition rates of these teachers? Is there any difference in how long —

Ms Rodgers: TFA do. You have picked up an important point. Often they will not be teachers—there has been some evidence to suggest that they do not stay in the classroom beyond five years, but what we do know is that those teachers tend to stay in education. They may have been in the classroom for a shorter period of time than some, although we know that in regards to the workforce, many of our teachers do not stay longer than five years. They do tend to stay and they go into other positions in regards to education.

Hon TJORN SIBMA: So they do not stay in schools teaching?

Ms Rodgers: They do not stay in classrooms. They might not stay in classrooms, but they might go into other areas. There are some TFA teachers that have been really successful in regards to administrative positions in assessment or they have been building curriculum content. They often stay in the system, but they progress through the system quite quickly because they are super smart, actually, and incredibly capable teachers.

Hon TJORN SIBMA: I certainly appreciate that they potentially bring with them a dynamic skill set, which makes them prone to some rapid career advancement, but I cannot help but observe, though, that while that is very positive for them individually, it is not really the purpose of the program. I might just leave it there. Could I get a sense of what the gap is in terms of STEM teachers in the system and what the department is targeting? I can understand you are using a variety of means to get to a target, but could I get a sense of how large the gap is?

Hon SUE ELLERY: I am not sure that we can give you a number today or if, indeed, there is one measure, but I am happy to take your question on notice.

Hon TJORN SIBMA: Thank you. I would appreciate that.

[Supplementary Information No A1.]

Hon TJORN SIBMA: I know that the government has a STEM enterprise schools program. In terms of overall spend, though, frankly, it looks a bit modest, but can I get a sense of where that STEM enterprise schools project is being operationalised.

[9.40 am]

Hon SUE ELLERY: The government has a STEM strategy. This is across several agencies, so you will not see all the money for it in this budget, and it is made up of a range of different things. There is \$5 million for science labs in primary schools. There is \$2 million for coding, including the Teachers Can Code professional learning and DigiTech Schools. There is a contractual arrangement with Scitech to provide curriculum resource modules, face-to-face professional learning workshops and online and professional learning modules to build the capacity of teachers to implement exemplary STEM education practices. There is an Innovation Partnership Schools program, which brings together clusters of schools. There are teacher development schools that have particular expertise in STEM. There is the Little Scientists professional learning program to support early childhood educators to develop STEM learning skills in younger students. Then, there is an arrangement where the department collaborates with the Department of Jobs, Tourism, Science and Innovation to deliver the STEM enterprise schools professional learning and the STEM mentoring program. I will

see if I can find you a total amount for the STEM enterprise. It requires me to do maths. I would say it is a bit over \$2 million for the STEM enterprise schools component of the whole picture.

Hon TJORN SIBMA: Is that in this budget year, minister, or is that across the estimates?

Hon SUE ELLERY: That is across the estimates.

Hon TJORN SIBMA: Thank you.

Hon DONNA FARAGHER: I would like to pick up on the questions that were asked by Hon Colin Tincknell in relation to page 313 and item 10 regarding VET in schools. You mentioned VETiS. Obviously, that involved a number of students; I think around 10 000 students. Can I just get some understanding with regard to this; it is really for some clarification. Is there a process underway to identify and select new providers? I am not quite sure how it actually works. Obviously, it has left a rather large gap, which, as I understand, TAFE, by and large, has filled for certainly this year. Can I understand what the process will be going forward; is there a tender process or something like that? If I could get some clarity around that, I would appreciate it.

Hon SUE ELLERY: We made an announcement; I think it was may be around October last year. We are establishing a preferred provider panel of quality assured RTOs that schools can select from. We are saying to schools that these are the ones that we are confident are high quality. We are developing a standard contract for schools to use as well when they are procuring those services so they are not entering into a vast variety of different contracts which are not helpful. Then, we are reviewing the VET funding structures and processes as a whole with DTWD. It is an ongoing piece of work.

The auspicing process itself is kind of arcane, if I can be so bold, for the ones who invented it. It is this strange process where the schoolteachers deliver the program, there is an external organisation that is paid, frankly, an awful lot of money to say, "Yes, you have delivered that appropriately", and that auspice function is regulated at a national level. They hold the quality standards. They did the review that found VETiS to be wanting and cancelled their registration accordingly.

I think, looking back over probably the last 10 years, VET has grown and grown but has not really been controlled, if you like, in respect to the quality, and the structures have got, I think, a bit out of hand. The process that is in place is: let us control the contracting arrangements, so have a preferred provider panel and you can only pick from those. To get on that panel, we need to be satisfied that there are rigorous quality standards being met. Schools cannot have their own 800 variations of different contracts; there is a standard contract that they need to use. In the meantime, SCSA, the Department of Education and DTWD will work together much better on making sure what is in the VET program—what is able to be offered—is sound, is relevant to industry and is relevant and appropriate educationally. Frankly, there are an awful lot of students who are either doing a business cert or a sport coaching cert. There is only—what is it—18 AFL teams in Australia? There are not that many coaching positions available to young people. While a VET course like that might serve two purposes, it might also legitimately be about engagement. Kids might really struggle in the classroom, but you put them out on the oval organising the equipment and organising teams et cetera and they will thrive, so it serves an engagement purpose as much as an actual skill purpose. Recognising that, I still think we can do better to make sure that VET is more relevant and educationally appropriate for students.

Hon DONNA FARAGHER: Thank you, minister. With regard to the preferred provider panel and the standard contract; first, with respect to the standard contract, has that been finalised and is it now actually being used within schools?

Hon SUE ELLERY: Not yet, I am told.

Hon DONNA FARAGHER: Do we know when it will be?

Hon SUE ELLERY: We are anticipating that both the panel and the standard contract will be in place in early July, so that it is a matter of weeks away.

Hon DONNA FARAGHER: With regard to the preferred provider panel. In a situation where a school might already be utilising a provider that they have found is working well—I suppose this is a hypothetical—but they might find that they do not end up on the preferred provider panel; is the school still able to utilise that provider under those circumstances?

Hon SUE ELLERY: Good question. I will find out for you. Yes.

Hon DONNA FARAGHER: Would they have to undertake any other additional requirements to continue to utilise a provider that is not on the panel?

Hon SUE ELLERY: If it has been auspiced, they would still need to be using an auspicing organisation that met the national standards.

Hon DONNA FARAGHER: I will go on to, if I may, again on page 313, item 8 in and around issues of violence in schools. As I understand, in terms of the term “exclusion”, we are talking about students who can be removed from a school either permanently or for a set period of time. Is that correct?

Hon SUE ELLERY: Correct.

Hon DONNA FARAGHER: From the start of this new regime, from the start of the school year to, I suppose, the point at which you can actually provide me with some information, whether that is May or June, what is the number of students who have been excluded?

Hon SUE ELLERY: I can. As at 17 June, the number who have actually been excluded is 28. To put that in some context for you, the number of recommendations—this is where a principal has recommended—is 40. That gives you a sense of that. If you wanted to compare that to, say, for example, the whole of last year, there were 24. So up to June of this year there has been 28. If you would recall, at the time that we announced the policy, we said that this will mean there will be more exclusions and more suspensions.

Hon DONNA FARAGHER: Just so that I can clarify, you mentioned 40. Is that where 40 have been recommended by a school of which 28 have been approved by the director general for exclusion? Is that what I am understanding?

Hon SUE ELLERY: My language was incorrect. In fact, the recommendation comes from a panel, which the principal convenes.

Hon DONNA FARAGHER: So there were 40, and then subsequent to that the director general has approved 28 exclusions?

Hon SUE ELLERY: Correct.

Hon DONNA FARAGHER: Of those 28 exclusions, how many has the director general approved for permanent removal from a particular school?

Hon SUE ELLERY: I do not know that we have that here, but I am happy to take it on notice.

[9.50 am]

Hon DONNA FARAGHER: Okay. Perhaps this might need to be taken on notice as well, and I would appreciate it if we could take that on notice. Of those, how many have been permanently excluded? Can I also ask, then, with regard to those who have not been permanently excluded, what is the average—I am not sure if you can provide me with individual figures; I accept that that might be

difficult to do for privacy reasons, but if we can get that, I would like that, but certainly the average period of time that students are being excluded?

Hon SUE ELLERY: I am happy to take that on notice. We might get somebody to walk you through some scenarios now, because it is a combination of things that happen, depending on what is going on in that child's life.

[Supplementary Information No A2.]

Hon DONNA FARAGHER: I appreciate that, yes.

Hon SUE ELLERY: A kind of case management approach is taken, and it might be that, for some of them, they need to be at a different school—break the cycle, change the peer group, all of those sorts of things. It might be that there needs to be reference to therapeutic assistance. There is a whole range of things, but the director general can talk to maybe some examples of the kinds of things that end up happening to the different kinds of students.

Ms Rodgers: If I take the easiest one, that is permanent exclusion. That would happen in a case whereby clearly there was intent in regards to the student to harm another individual or, indeed, a teacher, and we will find those particular individuals, once excluded, the best alternative in regards to education. Our primary focus to start with is care for that child and, indeed, education provision. We will work across agencies to make sure that there are supports for that child, if indeed there are not already supports there—often there are. They may go into one of the alternative learning settings. They may go to a different school. We have in the past actually provided opportunities for transport to and from particular schools for those students that are permanently excluded, and, of course, online access to education.

For those that are not permanently excluded, what we will do is put them in often—if it makes sense—an alternative learning setting. We will provide them additional support in regards to their education, and we often find that those students, even when they are placed in particular places, will still have those particular behaviour problems that we need to very sensitively manage. The options for any students are alternative learning settings, TAFE, CARE schools, and I mentioned another school, and there are now 60 additional programs that we can put them into, as well as SIDE. Each student is managed with very sensitive and specific targeted support for that student, and often that targeted support will be reviewed weekly in regards to how they are going.

Hon DONNA FARAGHER: Thank you for that. Just so that I am clear in terms of the questions that I am taking on notice, if I may, does the minister believe that we will be able to get, I suppose, an individual breakdown of the length of time that each student has been excluded for a period of time—I am getting a nod.

Hon SUE ELLERY: I would say yes, because we are so early, at this point, into the process. I think that is manageable.

Hon DONNA FARAGHER: All right; thank you. If we can do that, that would be good. Can I also clarify, perhaps taking into account what the director general has just said, obviously it may well be a little easier, if I can put it that way, with respect to students who might be permanently excluded within a metropolitan setting, because there might be a few more options with respect to alternative schools to be placed, if that is appropriate and safe to do so, from a regional perspective, I assume from what you are saying that the utilisation of SIDE and other options might come to the fore more readily. Would that be a fair assessment?

Hon SUE ELLERY: Obviously, it is harder in regional areas, but that is just a function of the geography. So it is harder, but we are trialling one in the south west now. The response is that, because it is case managed we can do that wherever the child is. If that case management, let us say in a remote

town, means using SIDE, or working really closely with the family—so, actually visiting the home and doing all those things—that is what happens. I am not sure if the director general might want to add a bit more. For example—I can hear the advice being offered—we also engage with TAFE about providing support, but I will get the director general to provide you with a bit more information.

Ms Rodgers: We will do whatever it takes to make sure that that student stays in education. As the minister said, often it is harder, but for every single one of those students we have found them options, and it might be a CARE school, it might be an NGO or it might be SIDE, but we commit to and deliver for every one of those students very individualised case-managed education.

Hon DONNA FARAGHER: Thank you. Still on violence in schools and the 10-point plan, with regard to the professional learning program, I understand that the plan is specifically targeted to graduate teachers receiving some form of professional development. Is that something that is being built into the university course or actually at the time that they enter a school?

Hon SUE ELLERY: It is part of the induction process for working with the Department of Education. I might note that, before the 10-point plan, there had already been an arrangement in place. I think it was about \$1 million being spent on, as I understand it—someone might correct me if I am wrong—de-escalation training for existing staff, not necessarily new staff. In respect to the professional development for new staff, I might get the director general to say something about that.

Ms Rodgers: It is exactly as the minister said; when they finish their initial teacher education, through their induction program, we provide that professional learning program. I cannot remember the name off the top of my head—the graduate teacher modules.

Hon DONNA FARAGHER: And that is funded, therefore, through the department?

Ms Rodgers: Yes.

Hon DONNA FARAGHER: Then, with regard to the existing teachers, if I might put it that way, you mentioned the program that was in place previously, and I would expect that that is still in place for existing teachers. Is that correct?

Hon SUE ELLERY: Yes. That is called Team-Teach de-escalation and positive handling—a very straightforward name, I suppose. We have a contract with Team-Teach Australia for effectively five years. That started in 2014, so this would be the last year of that. Four funded regional courses were held in the Pilbara, Kimberley, goldfields and midwest for around 150 staff. A beyond-term extension of the Team-Teach contract for eight months to the end of this year—so, to 31 December 2019—was approved in March of this year. The process to tender for a new contract for 2020 and beyond has commenced.

Hon DONNA FARAGHER: Okay; so it is anticipated that it would be a continuing program?

Hon SUE ELLERY: It would appear so.

[10.00 am]

Hon DONNA FARAGHER: Can I understand from what you are saying, that with regard to that program and for professional development for existing teachers, and other training and opportunities like that, the cost is not borne upon the school, it is actually borne by the department; is that correct?

Hon SUE ELLERY: Yes.

Hon DONNA FARAGHER: So the schools do not have to contribute in any way?

Hon SUE ELLERY: No. Many schools will do—would be aware—their own in addition to that. Particularly those schools that have had issues might —

Hon DONNA FARAGHER: Do something additional?

Hon SUE ELLERY: Yes, they might do something on top of that. These things are important; all these elements we are talking about now are important. A key part of this program is really twofold: a message to staff that they are entitled to be in a safe workplace and that the department will back them, because people felt that they were not being backed and that the pendulum had swung too far towards, “You will not touch a student. You will not intervene” et cetera or “You will get into trouble for inappropriate behaviour”, so by telling them we think that we now have the pendulum in the right spot, but also by saying, “You have a right to keep yourself safe and you have an obligation to intervene whatever that intervention might be that is appropriate for you at the time.” The example I use is that I think there is a difference between what, say, an average 23-year-old graduate, 70-kilo teacher might choose to intervene versus, your kind of, wiry 54-year-old phys. ed. teacher who has been in the system a much longer time and might be physically of a different build. The issue is you need to take some intervention, whether that is calling for help or physically intervening. The other thing to do—sorry, I do not want to take up time and stop people asking questions—is that we need to have a wider conversation in the community. Most recently, there was some media attention about Gilmore College—last week—about some violence incidents there. One of the violent incidents that occurred was that a parent turned up to the school with a gidgee and a hammer. That is not acceptable, and no wonder kids are acting out when that is the behaviour in the home. So a wider conversation is needed to be had that this is all our responsibility.

Hon DONNA FARAGHER: You will get bipartisan support from me in relation to that, minister, as you know.

Hon SUE ELLERY: Thank you.

Hon DONNA FARAGHER: Can I go to page 312, under “Significant Issues Impacting the Agency”, item 1.1 states —

having senior secondary students on learning pathways that explicitly connect to further training or higher education;

I suppose it is in the context of this question that I am keen to get an understanding, if I can get some form of breakdown with respect to the number of public school students who would currently fall within the current two pathways—the ATAR pathway and the VET pathway—not only for, I suppose, the 2019 school year, but the two previous years? You may need to take that on notice.

Hon SUE ELLERY: I think we will start with the director general and then perhaps SCSA might be able to assist as well.

Ms Rodgers: In terms of the students in the senior years, the number of year 12 students enrolled in at least one WACE course in 2018 is 26 333; the number of students enrolled in an ATAR course is 68 343, and the number of enrolments in year 12 general courses is 54 186. Just looking at these numbers, I need to clarify—I think these are the number of enrolments per subject rather than individual students; is that right? Yes.

Hon SUE ELLERY: Is that helpful to you?

Hon DONNA FARAGHER: I think we probably need a little bit more detail in relation to students generally.

Hon SUE ELLERY: If we do not have it here, we might take it on notice. I think that is the safest thing. We are happy to take that on notice.

[*Supplementary Information No A3.*]

Hon DONNA FARAGHER: In the context of that, if I can keep going, I might turn to page 315 under “Outcomes and Key Effectiveness Indicators”. It refers to the WACE achievement rate by year 12 public school students. Is that a new KPI? Has that been in previously?

Hon SUE ELLERY: Yes, it is. You will see that note (d) says that yes, it is. It replaced the secondary graduation rate. The secondary graduation rate was one of the 11 key effectiveness indicators in the 2018–19 budget. It showed the proportion of public school year 12 students who achieved the WACE. That is calculated by longitudinally tracking whether or not each individual year 12 public school student in the semester 2 student census subsequently achieved the WACE. The WACE achievement rate is a better key effectiveness indicator than the secondary graduation rate that it replaced, because the secondary graduation rate was an apparent rate from year 8 that did not actually longitudinally track the WACE outcome of each individual student. The new rate is also better than an alternative WACE achievement rate, sometimes reported by the department, which only relates to a subset of year 12 students—that is, those who are potentially WACE eligible—and can include some year 12 students who achieve the WACE despite not being enrolled in a public school in semester 2. There is a lot of education-speak in that.

Hon DONNA FARAGHER: There is a lot.

Hon SUE ELLERY: So perhaps somebody could translate that for me as well. Director general?

Ms Rodgers: Basically, it is count. What we want to ensure is that every student in the cohort goes forward and achieves a WACE. What we were tracking were those students who were still in. So we actually need to track the number of students in the whole of year 12 rather than those who hung on to the end.

Hon DONNA FARAGHER: Then with regard to the proposed new third pathway that the minister has announced, what will be the process undertaken to assess the effectiveness of that additional third pathway, and will that be able to be measured and placed into a future budget either through KPIs or some other measure?

Hon SUE ELLERY: I will get the director general to make some comment and SCSA might make a comment as well. There are really two parts. In terms of the courses themselves, SCSA will do moderation, which is another education-speak term for kind of weighting and scaling, essentially. But overall, an evaluation of having introduced the third pathway is: are we ending up with an increased number of students doing WACE? That is what we want. I would imagine that SCSA would be tracking that very closely. This was a piece of work suggested by SCSA and the consultation was done by SCSA. SCSA is absolutely committed to the highest number of students achieving a WACE. I will get the director general to make some comments and then perhaps Juanita from SCSA might add something to that.

[10.10 am]

Ms Rodgers: The outcome that we want to see for every single student in Western Australia is that they stay in school right through to year 12, so they are retained and, as well as being retained, they walk out with a WACE. We know that if they walk out with a WACE, then they have options with regard to further tertiary study or, indeed, work and the like. Basically, whether it be an ATAR course, a VET course or a general course, those courses are embedded in the senior secondary curriculum. What we are trying to do through VET, through ATAR and, indeed, through the general courses is credentialise, if you like, those students in regard to the levels that are set by the curriculum.

Regardless of whether you are doing a WACE course or a VET course or a general course, what we are saying is if you are learning health as an ATAR subject, or health as a VET course, or health as a general course, it will be levelled at the same standard within the curriculum, and we will credentialise that. Through that credentialisation, you will go on to achieve your WACE. So, the WACE will also require you to undertake those five general courses, or a mix, and it will require those literacy and numeracy skills. Often it is mistaken; people just think that they are dumbed down courses. The framework for accreditation and credentialisation is indeed the curriculum. The way we are credentialising is through the general courses, through VET or through the ATAR, and we assure the standard and credentialisation against the curriculum through moderation, through SCSA. So, they will set the bar.

Hon SUE ELLERY: I will ask Juanita Healy to make some comments as well.

Ms Healy: As the minister and director general just outlined, we have courses that suit all types of students. Students do not necessarily just want to go to university, so the types of courses being the ATAR and the general. We have preliminary courses for students with disability and foundation courses for students with limited literacy and numeracy skills. They all have standards, and the School Curriculum and Standards Authority, as the director general just explained, have processes in place where we ensure that across schools the teachers are all well equipped with understanding what the standards are that we expect those students to achieve in each of those courses. The technical term “moderation” is part of that. So, we ensure that the standards in one school are equivalent to other schools, and that the students, in the end, have options in terms of their future pathways, whether it is to university, TAFE or into the workforce.

Hon DONNA FARAGHER: I will just ask one follow-up question to that, thank you. It is really just for clarification from the minister. Did I hear the minister say that the third pathway option—if I can put it that way—was a result of a suggestion by SCSA? I had understood it was as a result of a request by you, Minister.

Hon SUE ELLERY: Really, principals, SCSA and me. Principals have been saying to me for some time that they thought there needed to be something in the middle, and SCSA hears that as well. I asked SCSA to do some work on it. They had already thought about a general pathway but had not pursued that piece of work. So, together.

Hon DONNA FARAGHER: Is there an intention to increase the number of courses that might be available as general courses? At the moment, as I understand it, you are not proposing any changes or new courses.

Hon SUE ELLERY: There are 51, I think, now. No, I would not rule it out, though. But it is a pretty broad range. If you wanted the list, we could provide that to you.

Hon DONNA FARAGHER: If I could, please.

Hon SUE ELLERY: Yes. We will get you the list.

[Supplementary Information No A4.]

The CHAIR: Do you have one quick one just to take us out?

Hon DONNA FARAGHER: Okay. Well, I will continue, then. Sorry, I was getting the wind-up, previously.

The CHAIR: You were, but you were a bit short on that one, so —

Hon DONNA FARAGHER: Oh, okay. See—I was being helpful.

The CHAIR: So was I.

Hon DONNA FARAGHER: Okay, well then, a quick one. Maybe this might need to be taken on notice—page 313, item 13. It refers to an investment of \$452.8 million for new schools and expanding existing ones. Can I get a breakdown—this may need to be taken on notice—of that \$452.8 million?

Hon SUE ELLERY: It is already in there, in the asset investment program, which is at page 320 to 323, I think—it goes over.

Hon DONNA FARAGHER: Okay, so it is all of those.

Hon SUE ELLERY: So if you wanted —

Hon DONNA FARAGHER: No, that is okay. So, it covers all of those—right?

Hon SUE ELLERY: Correct.

Hon DONNA FARAGHER: That also includes maintenance as well—yes? I am just having a quick look.

Hon SUE ELLERY: Maintenance is included in recurrent funding, as opposed to our capital investments.

Hon DONNA FARAGHER: All right, and with regard to maintenance, have we got a list yet with regard to the schools that are going to receive additional maintenance funding? As I understand, my recall is that there is \$13 million or thereabouts for new funding under maintenance. It was one of your budget announcements.

Hon SUE ELLERY: Yes.

Hon DONNA FARAGHER: Would that be finalised throughout the year?

Hon SUE ELLERY: There is \$18 million that has already been announced. We can give you a list. That work will be completed by the end of this financial year—in two weeks, basically. We can give you a list of that, if you would like.

Hon DONNA FARAGHER: So that \$18 million—just so that I can clarify —

Hon SUE ELLERY: Out of this financial year.

Hon DONNA FARAGHER: That is not the—hang on. There was an announcement that you made prior to the budget of additional funds, which included funding for Hedland Senior High School and a whole range of other schools. That is not the \$18 million that we are referring to here? I understood that there was additional funding in this budget. I understood that was last year's budget, and then there is now this year's budget coming on board.

Hon SUE ELLERY: I will get it sorted. It is in several places. Part of it is on page 323 under "Miscellaneous School Alarm System Upgrades". I will see where else I can find it for you. Then on page 321, under "Miscellaneous Plaster Glass Ceilings" and the "Roof Replacement Program", sort of in the middle of that page on 321.

Hon DONNA FARAGHER: Yes. I have got it. So, essentially, the new funding for maintenance is for those two items as well as the alarms that you have referred to as well?

Hon SUE ELLERY: Correct.

Hon DONNA FARAGHER: So, not for other general additional maintenance at schools?

Hon SUE ELLERY: No. There is a base every year—hundreds of millions of dollars on school maintenance.

Hon DONNA FARAGHER: But the actual new funding that was referred to, I think via press release, via the minister, relates to those three items? I just want to be clear on what we are talking about.

Hon SUE ELLERY: Yes.

Hon DONNA FARAGHER: Thank you.

Proceedings suspended from 10.17 to 10.30 am

[10.30 am]

Hon ALISON XAMON: I just want to get some additional information about the plan addressing violence. I refer to page 313 and the eighth significant issue impacting the agency. Where are the alternative learning centres located?

Hon SUE ELLERY: I am prepared to say on the record north metro, south metro and south west. For the reason that I want to protect those students, I am not prepared to identify on the record the actual addresses. I am happy to have a conversation behind the Chair about that.

Hon ALISON XAMON: I am satisfied with that answer, because I am after regional responses. I do not need specific addresses, and I am happy to speak to you behind the Chair. I suppose the concern is that I wanted confirmation that up north, we do not have any alternative learning centres at the moment.

Hon SUE ELLERY: We do not actually have a dedicated place. What we are doing now is the trial of the three sites; however, the services are certainly being offered across the state. It is just that we do not have dedicated place other than those three areas. Right now we are piloting to make sure we can get all of the technical bits and the support bits right, but, ultimately, it is a program that will be rolled out statewide.

Hon ALISON XAMON: When you are saying you have got it as a pilot, how long is the pilot anticipated to be running for?

Hon SUE ELLERY: We have a process of getting it evaluated. It is out for tender to do an evaluation. I have not put a time line on it yet, because I want to see how it goes, how long it took us to get it up and ready, but we have started the process of making sure it is evaluated, so any decisions we make about the model going forward are based on some evidence.

Hon ALISON XAMON: Of course, the irony is that the ultimate sign of success would be that you do not have to have many students in these centres. I am not necessarily pushing for a large expansion; I just wanted to know what happens to those children who are particularly in the regions.

Hon SUE ELLERY: They are getting the service; there is no question about that.

Hon ALISON XAMON: How many students, again being mindful of the concerns about identifying, are currently in each of those alternative learning centres?

Hon SUE ELLERY: I think we have got that information. It is worth bearing in mind as well they do not go there forever; they are not staying there forever.

Hon ALISON XAMON: I have a line of questions about that, too.

Hon SUE ELLERY: They will go in and out. As at 17 June, there were 26 engaged with alternative learning settings and 10 were in family or carer liaison for potential placements.

Hon ALISON XAMON: Are you able to give any additional breakdown of the regions—how many are in each region?

Hon SUE ELLERY: Yes, I can. In the north metro, there are two excluded students and seven students at high risk of exclusion. There are nine students at higher risk of exclusion in family or carer liaison for potential placement. In south metro, there are four excluded students and seven students at higher risk of exclusion are engaged. No further students are currently in family or carer liaison for

potential placement. In the south west, six students at high risk of exclusion are engaged. One student at high risk of exclusion is currently in family or carer liaison for potential placement.

Hon ALISON XAMON: Can I just get an idea of the staffing profiles of these centres? Do they include, for example, AIEOs, or “the vowels” as we used to call them? What sort of psychiatric, psychological or social work support might there be as well?

Hon SUE ELLERY: I will get that for you. Each has three FTE teaching and two FTE support staff, so that is welfare or social work. There is a coordination team of a level 4 deputy principal, school psychologist and business support officer to oversee the three pilots and manage partnerships and service agreements with agencies and other providers. The nature of the wraparound services is that there will be referrals and working with other agencies to make sure it is an individualised plan for each student, depending on their therapeutic or care needs.

Hon ALISON XAMON: So those referral services might include CAMHS or disability services, as well as child protection?

Hon SUE ELLERY: Correct.

Hon ALISON XAMON: Generally, recognising that each child is individual, each child is going to have to have their own caseload and that you have some children in there who are subject to permanent exclusion, as was raised before, how long is it generally envisaged that children need to be at the centres on average?

Hon SUE ELLERY: The question we were asked before is: what is the average of how long they have been there? We do not have a view that the placement needs to be no more than X days or no less than X days. We do not have that; we do not go into it with that point of view. It is what is in the best interest of that particular child. Some will need a bit longer and some will need a bit less. Some might be referred. Some might need to be at the alternative learning setting and they do not turn up; that is not unusual given all the other things that might be going on in their lives. It might take a couple of weeks to get the child to engage at the setting as well.

Hon ALISON XAMON: Except for those students who are subject to permanent exclusion, how do you generally work with schools to ensure a successful transition back to those schools, or is it the case that the majority of students will need to be transitioned into different schools?

Hon SUE ELLERY: If they have been permanently excluded from that school, they will not go back to that school. They may go to another school, but they will not go back to that school. I might get the director general to add some additional information to that as well.

Hon ALISON XAMON: Before you answer, director general—thank you—are there some students whose needs are deemed to be so high that they are likely to be permanently excluded from all school settings?

Hon SUE ELLERY: I do not know that we could say that yet. It is a possibility, I suppose, but if you think about the range of options that are available, including TAFE, CARE schools and SIDE, the statutory obligation and, frankly, the moral obligation on the department is to continue to provide that child—every child—with an education.

Hon ALISON XAMON: I would agree.

Hon SUE ELLERY: The department will not be giving up on a child. I might get the director general to make some comments about your earlier question.

Ms Rodgers: When I make the decision to permanently exclude, it is permanently excluded from a school. It is my expectation that we will provide tailored care for each individual student. If that means that over time—that is my expectation—they will go back into mainstream education, then

we will find them another school. If we have a case whereby mainstream education is not suited for that student, we will continue to provide education for that student in the best possible scenario that meets their needs.

Hon ALISON XAMON: How do you arrange that transition back into the school setting with the original school?

Ms Rodgers: There is a care plan put in place. It is overseen by our regional executive directors and, of course, our school psychologist. We liaise quite closely with the school that they are in, whether it be a CARE school or the alternative learning setting, and, indeed, the principal and the parents to make sure everything is in place to transition that student back into school.

[10.40 am]

Hon ALISON XAMON: Can I turn to page 312, “Significant Issues Impacting the Agency”, point 5. I would like to ask, please, how are Aboriginal histories, cultures and languages being embedded into the classroom practice, and who is doing that work? Who is developing the content and the strategy?

Hon SUE ELLERY: I will get Juanita Healy from SCSA to talk to you firstly about how it is embedded in the curriculum from K–10. She can talk to you about that, and then I will get the director general and perhaps one other officer to provide some other information in respect of schools.

Ms Healy: Thank you, minister. All of our Western Australian schools implement the “Western Australian Curriculum and Assessment Outline” from preprimary to year 10. Within that outline are syllabuses at year level for every one of the eight learning areas. That is actually a cross-curricula priority. We adopted and adapted the Australian curriculum from ACARA, and that cross-curriculum priority is embedded throughout the syllabuses. Teachers are expected to embed it in their teaching and learning, and the department would have additional support resources that would support teachers when they develop their teaching and learning programs.

Hon ALISON XAMON: Who has been doing the work of developing the content and strategy? I am assuming and hoping that that has also had the input of Aboriginal people?

Ms Healy: Absolutely. As I mentioned before, we adopted and adapted the Australian Curriculum in the development of the Australian Curriculum. Western Australian teachers were involved and contributed to that. There were different committees whose advice was sought, and those committees had Indigenous representatives on them. At the School Curriculum and Standards Authority, we also developed resources to support Western Australian teachers to implement it, and a range of stakeholders—particularly practising teachers from across preprimary to year 10 from different types of socioeconomic schools and those with different perspectives—were involved in supporting the development of it.

Hon SUE ELLERY: I will get the director general to provide you with some additional information as well.

Ms Rodgers: Alongside the curriculum—of course, the curriculum content is essential in regards to what students learn—we also receive advice from elders in residence. We have two elders in residence on staff with the department that provide us advice in regards to the delivery of the curriculum to students. We also have an Aboriginal staff member at the corporate executive who oversees our programs in delivery of education. The other thing the department has is the Aboriginal cultural standards framework that supports teachers in the delivery of the curriculum and, indeed, ensures that their practice responds to and builds Aboriginal students’ identity, language and culture. There are a series of supports that we have put in place to support principals and teachers actually to lead learning in that area.

Hon ALISON XAMON: So the way it has been described, minister, it is certainly intended to be across all school settings up until year 10? I am just confirming that.

Hon SUE ELLERY: Correct.

Hon ALISON XAMON: Is there also additional targeting of some schools to provide additional information or additional supports, additional programs around this area; and, if so, would you be able to give a little bit of detail around that?

Hon SUE ELLERY: Sure. I will get one of the officers to make some comments about that in a minute. I also make the point that you will find that schools themselves will do great work in respect to involving, including and celebrating not just the Indigenous students that are part of their school community, but the Indigenous culture, irrespective of whether they actually have Indigenous students attending the school. I do not want to pick on particular schools, but in the Kimberley, for example, I think it is Broome Primary School that has a bilingual program in place around the local Indigenous language. I can recall being at Serpentine Primary School, which has got a fantastic Indigenous program. All schools celebrate NAIDOC Week, for example, and do that really well. But I will ask the director general to add some additional information.

Ms Rodgers: We provide professional learning for graduate teachers as part of the induction program. We also have face-to-face and online learning modules in regards to the familiarisation of the framework and indeed the curriculum, and I can provide the numbers of those schools.

Hon ALISON XAMON: Yes, please.

Ms Rodgers: There are 107 schools that have participated in that, and we have 200 schools that have graduate teachers who have participated specifically in the PL that I referred to. We have 145 schools that have engaged in tailored workshops in regards to that cultural standards framework. We also, in our three-yearly school review, undertake a review of the implementation of that framework as part of the school review.

Hon ALISON XAMON: There was information offered; I do not know if that needs to be noted.

[Supplementary Information No A5.]

Hon ALISON XAMON: Thank you very much. I just want to confirm: it does not sound as though there is any specific funding being allocated to this work; it sounds as though it is incorporated overall within the budget as part of the rollout of the normal curriculum, and other than that, it is up to individual schools as to whether they choose to allocate specific funds out of their budgets. Is that correct?

Hon SUE ELLERY: I do not know. I will get some information about whether there is a specific line item, but having it embedded in the curriculum means that —

Hon ALISON XAMON: It is really good. I am not complaining, but I am curious to know.

Hon SUE ELLERY: Yes, it is absolutely incorporated in the key funding to schools to deliver the curriculum. I will just double-check whether there are any other line items. There is no additional line item, but I might get Mr Hale to talk about the program that is in statewide services.

Mr Hale: Thank you, minister. Our ambition with this work for some time has been that matters relating to Aboriginal education, Aboriginal children and young people, but also cultural responsiveness across the whole system, should be embedded in all of our work. We did make a significant change some time back in our approach to that. We used to have a unit called the Office of Aboriginal Education, and you would have been able to identify at that time particular funds for programs. We have moved away from that model. It is not that we do not value programs. Those programs have all either continued or been expanded, but they are now embedded in the

appropriate areas across statewide services, so they are not just the province of one unit that is devoted to Aboriginal education but are embedded, for instance, in our strategies around attendance, behaviour, or whatever it might be.

In addition, though, when we spread those responsibilities through statewide services to make sure that everybody took some shared responsibility, we also created a new team in relation to Aboriginal education but with a very different focus. We call that team the Aboriginal education teaching and learning team, and that work is premised on the fact that, ultimately, what we really want to see is changes in classroom practice and the way schools operate. That team is dedicated to supporting research around that work, supporting development of our principals to be able to lead that sort of work, and then that in turn is complemented by a whole range of other activities. If you went to our leadership institute, for instance, there are a range of programs there. One of the programs for school leaders is leading a culturally responsive school, for instance. So it is not easy, the way we have now constructed things, to simply put a figure on, “This is what we do in relation to the framework”, because we have genuinely attempted to embed it in all our work. Of course, as the director general said earlier, some other specific complementary measures have been taken. For some time now, we have had elders in residence, and recently the director general appointed one of our senior executive former executive principals. Former executive director Kevin O’Keefe has been appointed to make sure we have an Aboriginal voice at the table at corporate executive in every matter we discuss.

Hon ALISON XAMON: Can I move on? It is the same table on page 312 under “Significant Issues Impacting the Agency”, point 6. It talks about identifying target groups and students for intervention. What I would like to know is what criteria are being used to identify these students?

Hon SUE ELLERY: The member will be aware, I think it was in February, that the Premier announced our priorities, which are 12 policy areas that the government intends to focus on. Underneath each of those policy areas are a number of specific KPIs. There is one that is around the early years, and that is about lifting the percentage of children who are tracking on target to meet each of the developmental measures set out in the AEDC. That means that by age of five years we want to lift the percentage of children who are on track on each of those measures. That is a piece of work that is being done across government. Education is involved; health is involved—a whole range of government agencies are involved in that piece of work. I might get the director general to add some additional information about that, but that is a key target—we have set a specific number I could find for you, if you wanted—by a specific deadline.

[10.50 am]

Hon ALISON XAMON: Yes, please.

Hon SUE ELLERY: I will ask the director general to make some comment.

Ms Rodgers: In the AEDC, there are five buckets, if you like, that teachers are asked to respond to in regards to children’s competency. Those five buckets relate to whether they are ready for school—do they turn up dressed, fed and well prepared for school?—through to things like their competence in regards to language and reading and the like. In regards to those five competencies, you can identify the number of students who are highly vulnerable or those who are borderline in terms of vulnerabilities. We have looked at the AEDC work and have been able to know the numbers and names of those students who are coming up in terms of vulnerabilities, whether that be moderate vulnerability or high vulnerability. We know the numbers and names of those students across the state. In regards to Our Priorities, we are working with communities and health to work with those children and those families to work out what is going on and what are some of the things that we can do to set them up in order to come to school every day well prepared and able to learn.

Hon SUE ELLERY: I will give you the specific targets. By 2027, the aim is to increase the number of children in Western Australia who are developmentally on track on all five AEDC domains by 10 per cent.

Hon ALISON XAMON: I am being given the windup. I refer to page 313, significant issues impacting the agency. I would like to draw your attention to point 9 regarding the increase in disability funding allocation. What I would like to know, please, is: how is this funding being allocated to individual schools and whether there are any limitations or guidelines regarding how it can be spent? I ask that question because anecdotally it has been raised with me by families that the maximum a special needs education assistant can be allocated to one child using this funding is two and a half days. I want to know whether that is correct or not. I would like to know of any limitations, please.

Hon SUE ELLERY: I will make some general comments and then I will find an officer who can give you some more information. There was an increase in funding to be allocated through the disability allocation. This is to the individual student. This is in recognition that we are getting more and more students with a diagnosed disability. We needed to keep up with the growth in the number of students. The issue of allocation of individual EA time to individual students is one that has long been fraught.

Hon ALISON XAMON: Always!

Hon SUE ELLERY: To a certain extent, how long is a piece of string? We could keep putting more money into this to enable every single child to be the very best that they could be. We could keep adding money to that endlessly, but in times of financial restraint, that is not always possible. But, frankly, even in good times, you could just keep adding money to provide assistance. I will get Lindsay Hale to make some comments in respect to the allocations and the base formula around allocating EA time.

Hon ALISON XAMON: Part of it was wanting to know whether there are specific limitations that are put around how the funding can be used.

Mr Hale: Perhaps if we go back a step, the funding is based on an individual allocation for a child. That funding does go to the school, but it is calculated—it is a judgement based on diagnosis and response to that that identifies the quantum of funding for that individual student. That are under eight eligible areas. That in itself is an issue that is going to require thought in the future, but, alongside that, we also provide to schools what we call an educational adjustment form of funding. That is simply using NAPLAN as a proxy to identify the potential that a child may have learning difficulties and allocate some extra resources. When it comes to how either of those resources—the educational adjustment funding or the individual disability allocation funding—is used is determined by the school. The department did at one time fund for specific amounts of time in relation to education assistants. That is no longer the case. The flexibility is with the school to determine how best to use that resource, and that may well include allocation of education assistant time. In addition, though, we recognise that that can be a challenging process for a school to go through, particularly depending on the nature of the disability, the severity or the number of children. You might have heard earlier mention of our schools of special educational needs that are part of statewide services—SSEN, in particular there is SSEN: Disability. There is also a related one alongside that, SSEN: Sensory, which is particularly for sight or hearing impairment. There is also SSEN: Medical and Mental Health. Although we are not talking about behaviour issues here, often there is some overlap between behaviour issues and disability issues, so SSEN: Behaviour and Engagement sometimes is involved as well. Their involvement will be to do things like provide advice to the school about how that resource will be best used to assist in producing an appropriate individual education plan with the families, in some cases to provide a visiting teacher service that

may be providing support to particular teachers in the school but also monitoring the adjustments that are being made for that child or young person and making sure that they are being done appropriately or adjusted as they need to be and also monitoring how the child or young person is responding to that. It is true to say that now schools make that determination of the plan, but individual plans are always co-signed with parents. But they do not do that in a vacuum. They can access support from experts to help them in formulating those plans.

Hon ALISON XAMON: Can I confirm then from that answer that you are confirming that there are not necessarily arbitrary limitations on how the funding can be spent; it is simply being determined on a case-by-case basis.

Mr Hale: There is no prescription as to how the resource is funded, except that there is broadly an expectation that schools will adopt evidence-based practices. There are limitations when perhaps people have some rather, let me say, odd ideas about how to respond to student needs. It is not open slather. It is a matter of judgement in the school, agreement with the parents, and support from the system using evidence-based approaches.

Hon COLIN de GRUSSA: I refer to the asset investment program, which I think begins on page 318 of budget paper No 2, volume 1. I have a general question in regard to building condition assessment reports. Has there been any change to the methodology or criteria by which those reports are produced or assessed since this government came in?

Hon SUE ELLERY: There was certainly a review done by the previous government, but I will get some information for you.

[11.00 am]

Mr Fischer: Building condition assessments are done approximately every three years. There was one undertaken in 2013 and the most recent one was undertaken in the period 2017–18. The work that had been undertaken in working out the methodology for the latest survey has been done over a number of years—probably from 2013. In respect to the last two surveys, yes, there is a difference in the methodology. It is still assessing the identified, or the visual, needs in a school but it expanded that information to try to look at other information about the school that might be helpful in understanding the functionality of the school or the condition of the school that could be used in determining priority programs in the future. The fundamental drivers for the building condition assessment are very similar. They are trying to look at visual identified maintenance needs in schools, prioritising that over a period of time and to be able to use that information to develop programs that help meet maintenance both globally, strategically and provide advice to a school about identifying specific needs.

Hon COLIN de GRUSSA: Is it possible to get that in a tabulated form? Is that information available easily in terms of the criterion and perhaps the changes that have occurred? Is that something you could take on notice, for example?

Hon SUE ELLERY: We will take that on notice.

[*Supplementary Information No A6.*]

Hon COLIN de GRUSSA: I am just going to talk about a localised issue. I cannot find in the works in progress anything about Castletown Primary School, which is down in Esperance.

Hon SUE ELLERY: Which primary school?

Hon COLIN de GRUSSA: It is Castletown Primary School. The minister is probably well aware of the situation there were about 160, or just over 160, students have been removed from their classroom

due to health and safety concerns. I am just wondering what work the department is preparing to do at Castletown Primary School to ensure those students are back in.

Hon SUE ELLERY: I am being advised that the board chair issued a media release. It has today's date on it. The board are expressing the view that there is a problem. They do not think the BCA process has provided meaningful information.

Hon COLIN de GRUSSA: If I may, minister, there is a significant difference in the 2013 building condition assessment report which identified \$800 000 of work and only \$36 000 in 2018.

Hon SUE ELLERY: I see that, yes. The most recent inspection in March last year estimated \$36 490 worth of work that needed to be done. I am trying to find an explanation for the difference. I will give you the information that I have now, but I might actually take it on notice as well, because it appears to me that it is an evolving issue. It appears at first blush that perhaps there were different weightings applied by the most recent BCA assessment. That is an explanation of the discrepancy—that different weightings were given. But there is a clear discrepancy—a significant discrepancy—in those two amounts of money. That needs to be investigated. I will take it on notice, but I might put a caveat to it that if the investigation takes longer than, I think, the 10 days that we have to provide an answer, I will give you an undertaking that I will get you a detailed answer soon as I can after that.

Hon COLIN de GRUSSA: Thanks, minister; I appreciate that.

The CHAIR: Let us allocate that a number, noting the caveat that it may take longer.

[Supplementary Information No A7.]

Hon COLIN de GRUSSA: Can we expect then there to be some work? Obviously, those children already had to be removed from the classroom and there has to be at least some temporary work done to, I guess, find them a home and fix up the rooms.

Hon SUE ELLERY: I will get Mr Fischer to give you some detail about that.

Mr Fischer: There are probably a couple of issues here. The first one is to do with the building condition assessment and the variation in the outcomes of those assessments. As the minister mentioned, we are looking at that to try to understand a little bit better why there is this discrepancy. The second issue is about the day-to-day faults that you see in a building and how we address that. There has been reported, on that school, a number of faults that have occurred relating to flaky paint et cetera and some mould issues in the school, and they have been addressed. Most of those have been addressed to date. There were questions about the structural stability of the steel in the school. We have had a structural engineer go out there and assess that. So that work has been addressed and there is some work planned to be undertaken in the July holidays to address. Most of the work that has been identified by the school and in response to the issues raised by the school are addressed under the maintenance program. At this stage, there is no plan to have major capital works or any significant works undertaken at the school; they are all undertaken through the maintenance program.

Hon COLIN de GRUSSA: I will change tack a little bit now and refer to the significant issues impacting the agency on page 313. There has been plenty of discussion on item 8 about safety and the 10-point action plan, which is progressing. I am interested, in particular, in point 9 of that action plan, which is about the community conversation around violence in schools. I am trying to get an understanding of how that is going to happen, I guess, and what the outcomes might be that we will be looking for.

Hon SUE ELLERY: It is an ongoing commitment. I talk about it a lot. You would have noticed, I think it was last week, that the director general had an opinion piece in *The West*. That was the second opinion piece; one that was signed by all the stakeholders appeared when we did the first announcement. There are a range of ways that the conversation occurs; for example, as part of putting the plan together, I consulted with—I cannot remember the name of it—the youth advisory committee that advises the Minister for Youth. I consulted with them. I met with them and asked them to make sure that they kept up that conversation as well. In addition, we have put up advice on the department's website for parents. We are also now working on a social media campaign to see if we can use a social media campaign to get the message out more effectively to people.

This policy applies in public schools, but all the stakeholder groups, including non-government schools, have committed to continuing that conversation in all of the forums that they have. WACSSO plays an important part in that conversation as well. Although, I hasten to add, my example earlier of the parent who turned up at a school with a gidgie and a hammer looking for trouble is probably not the kind parent who is engaged in the P&C. I would hope not. That is probably the most difficult part of the plan to achieve. It is the easiest thing in the world to pick a social ill and people will tell you that you can fix it if you just add it to the curriculum of schools. You know, drugs, sex and rock'n'roll, you can fix all of those things if you just add it to the curriculum of schools. Schools do not operate in isolation. The things that are happening in our schools are a reflection of what is going on in our community as well. That is the hardest part of the action plan to actually measure success.

Hon COLIN de GRUSSA: I agree and understand. It strikes me that there is a great degree of cross-agency work that needs to happen there. Are agreements being struck between different agencies and funding agreements as well on that aspect of this program?

Hon SUE ELLERY: In establishing it, we set up a working group, which had Child Protection, Justice—somebody will be able to give me the list of the agencies—and there is ongoing consultation about those things. In terms of specific money allocated across agencies yet—no; part of the alternative learning placements is that we want to do an evaluation to see what is working and what is not, and what we might need to do better. Police are involved in discussions, really good conversations with the Children's Court as well, and a much stronger working relationship with police, in particular, about how we might work much better together. I might ask if the director general wants to add anything.

[11.10 am]

Ms Rodgers: The Commissioner of Police and I are in constant text conversation, and I cannot thank the police enough in terms of their response to violence in schools. With the parent with the gidgie and the hammer, they were on site immediately, and regardless of any MOU—I am not sure we need an MOU—we are absolutely aligned to get the best possible response to support teachers, parents and kids in schools.

Hon COLIN de GRUSSA: Further to this 10-point program, is this only for schools and school-age children? There are obviously some issues occurring, perhaps in TAFE colleges as well, of a different kind.

Hon SUE ELLERY: Nowhere near as many.

Hon COLIN de GRUSSA: Yes, I understand it might be different, but is there an extension of this or a separate program to provide that sort of —

Hon SUE ELLERY: No, there is not. I am not saying that I am averse to it or that I would rule it out, but there is just nowhere near—there is an occasional incident, a very occasional incident in a TAFE

college. I could probably say that in the two and a half years that I have been the minister for training, maybe a handful. I do not think the need is anywhere near that, but I am not averse to it, if it was demonstrated that there was a need.

Hon COLIN de GRUSSA: Clearly there might be some learning to be shared anyway.

In terms of that alternative learning program, then, you talked earlier about students maybe being diverted to SIDE for their studies, I presume that there is a degree of training. An online interaction with a student is very different to a physical interaction, so obviously those teachers there are well equipped to do that because that is their job. But in terms of dealing with a potentially very difficult student, does that require them to have further training and other programs in place?

Hon SUE ELLERY: It is less about further training and more about it being part of the wraparound service that is provided. It is not going to work for every student. It is not just going to be a case of if you live outside of Perth, the way we are going to deliver your education if you are part of this program is through SIDE. That is not the case. It has to be to the individual's needs, because, in fact, there might need to be greater supervision for some of those students than others. For some, it will absolutely not work. It just will not be appropriate. Really, it is a tailored program for each student. I might get the director general to add some comments to that.

Ms Rodgers: We have to be careful about how we think about the students. There are some students who have been excluded who have really hung on, and education has been a godsend for them. Whilst they had gone to school, and for whatever reason they have exploded and they have behaved in a way that is not acceptable in school, they still want to continue to study. We have a couple of students that are absolutely engaged with their study, and they want to get their WACE. They are actively engaged in online learning in order to get their WACE. At that point, they just have not been able to control their behaviour in a mainstream school setting.

Hon NICK GOIRAN: I refer to the government's commitment to provide funding to allow public secondary schools to choose to use the Safe Schools program that meets their school needs. How much has been allocated in the budget for 2019–20 for this purpose?

Hon SUE ELLERY: I will begin by saying that the Safe Schools program, as it is, no longer exists in Western Australia. There is an Inclusive Education WA program. The Safe Schools program itself continues to be made available by the commonwealth government on the commonwealth government's Department of Education website, but what is delivered and available in Western Australia is Inclusive Education. I will just get the note on that, so give me a minute.

Hon NICK GOIRAN: I will rephrase the question. Thank you for that explanation, minister. How much money has been allocated in the budget for 2019–20 for the Inclusive Education WA program?

Hon SUE ELLERY: There is an agreement for the delivery of the —

Hon NICK GOIRAN: Minister, all I need is a figure.

Hon SUE ELLERY: I am providing the honourable member with the answer, and if you let me do that, that is what I will do. There is an agreement with the WA AIDS Council from November 2017 to October 2019, valued at \$335 000, to provide professional learning and support to those public secondary schools that choose to engage.

Hon NICK GOIRAN: Is the amount that has been allocated in the budget for 2019–20 for this purpose \$335 000?

Hon SUE ELLERY: It is a component of that. It is \$335 000, as I understand it, over the life of the agreement from November 2017 to October 2019, so the component that would appear in the budget for 2019–20 would be a component of that \$335 000.

Hon NICK GOIRAN: Thanks, minister. What is the amount of that component?

Hon SUE ELLERY: We will take it on notice, because we will need to check the timing of the payments.

[Supplementary Information No A8.]

Hon NICK GOIRAN: Minister, while you are doing that, can you also inform us of the amount appropriated for that purpose in 2018–19?

Hon SUE ELLERY: Yes, we can add that to the same number.

Hon NICK GOIRAN: Minister, you indicated that there is a partnership that exists between the department and the WA AIDS Council to support WA public schools for this purpose. What is the cost of that partnership? Is that the \$335 000?

Hon SUE ELLERY: Yes.

Hon NICK GOIRAN: Is that partnership subject to some kind of documentation, memorandum of understanding, or something similar that you might be able to table?

Hon SUE ELLERY: There is a contract. They are contracted to provide the service. There is a contractual arrangement, if you are asking for a copy of that. I will take that on notice, because I will just check that, from the WA AIDS Council point of view, there is no commercial-in-confidence requirement. I will take that on notice.

The CHAIR: We will just take that as further to supplementary information A8.

Hon NICK GOIRAN: Thank you. Minister, is the Inclusive Education WA program separate to the Respectful Relationships program?

Hon SUE ELLERY: Yes.

Hon NICK GOIRAN: In the document that you tabled in the house on 14 May this year, it suggests otherwise—that the Respectful Relationships teaching program is in actual fact a program that has the support of the WA Department of Education and the WA AIDS Council.

Hon SUE ELLERY: I do not know what document you are referring to. If you want to give me a copy, I am happy to have a look at it.

Hon NICK GOIRAN: It is tabled paper 2686, and it was in response to either question on notice or question without notice 2065.

Hon SUE ELLERY: If you want to give me a copy, I am happy to look at it, and then I can answer your question.

Hon NICK GOIRAN: Okay, but you are saying that the Inclusive Education WA program is definitely different to the Respectful Relationships program.

Hon SUE ELLERY: It is, but if you give me a copy of the document in which you suggest I say it is not, I am happy to provide you with a proper answer to the question, but I am not going to give you an answer to a question about a piece of paper that I do not have in front of me.

[11.20 am]

Hon NICK GOIRAN: No problems. If you get the opportunity, minister, just have a look at the answer on 14 May this year.

Minister, I congratulate you on the creation of the multi-agency protocols for education options for young people charged with harmful sexual behaviours, and I note the expectation that RAMPs are to be emailed to a central email address. I ask: who monitors that email account?

Hon SUE ELLERY: I will start with Lindsay Hale, but perhaps Martin Clery might provide you with a response as well.

Mr Hale: I probably will have to ask Mr Clery to assist us on the detail, but to broadly answer, yes, these are retained and monitored by our statewide services area. One of the reasons, apart from the fact that that is where the coordination and monitoring of the broader service occurs, is also because of the sensitivity of the communications. So, we have to be very careful that we do not inadvertently divulge information that normally up until quite recently even we were not able to access. To make sure that information is as safe as possible, we rely on our school psychology service record system, because that is independent and, therefore, would maintain a high level of confidentiality.

Hon NICK GOIRAN: What is the budgeted cost for monitoring those RAMPs in 2019–20?

Hon SUE ELLERY: It is not allocated a separate amount of money; it is part of the provision of the service that is provided through statewide services.

Hon NICK GOIRAN: How many RAMPs were received in 2018?

Hon SUE ELLERY: There are 105. I want to get the right period of time. I think it is for this period—May 2017 to 17 June 2019. If you want that broken down into school year 2018, I would have to take that on notice. Of that 105, 90 were public schools, three were Catholic schools, 12 were independent schools.

Hon NICK GOIRAN: Yes, if we could take on notice the breakdown of those 105 RAMPs per calendar year.

Hon SUE ELLERY: I will take that on notice.

[Supplementary Information No A9.]

Hon NICK GOIRAN: Since the introduction of these protocols, on how many occasions did the department decide that the appropriate education option for the student was to remain at their current school?

Hon SUE ELLERY: I can tell you that of that 105, 68 are currently enrolled in a public school. I cannot tell you if it is the same one, but I will see if I can get that information for you. That 68 included three that have transferred from non-government schools, 11 school-aged students left public schooling, one moved interstate, one has an apprenticeship, two are enrolled in TAFE, three are in care schools, and four are under the heading “Other sources or destinations”, so that is not a school. Thirteen of those students are post-compulsory, and for the non-government schools, 12 are currently enrolled in a non-government school. Again, I cannot tell you off this note if that is the same one, but I can see if I can find out. Three of those transferred to a public school, and that is included in that 68 that I gave you originally. I am just going to check if I am able to give you that information about whether they are at the same school. If not, I will take it—no, I cannot. I will take it on notice and I will see if we can get you that information.

[Supplementary Information No A10.]

Hon NICK GOIRAN: Out of those 105 RAMPs and the decision that was made by the department, did any of them involve a change to SIDE for the student?

Hon SUE ELLERY: It would appear not from the information in front of me. I will take it on notice just so that we double-check.

The CHAIR: We will keep that as part of A10.

Hon NICK GOIRAN: What about any change to an engagement centre or alternative?

Hon SUE ELLERY: As I indicated in that list that I just read out to you before, three have engaged in care schools.

Hon NICK GOIRAN: Those three who are engaged with the care schools, is that the only scenario in which a decision would be made to change the student to an engagement centre or alternative?

Hon SUE ELLERY: I cannot tell you, because I took that bit on notice, if they have changed schools, but 11, as I read out to you before, have left public schooling. That is 11 school-aged students—right—have left public schooling and three of those 11 went to care schools. I do not know that I can answer you any further than that because I have taken that bit on notice about whether they went to a different public school, for example.

Hon NICK GOIRAN: What was the shortest period of time in which a decision was reached?

Hon SUE ELLERY: A decision about?

Hon NICK GOIRAN: If you look at the protocol, it requires the department to make a decision as to whether the student stays in the same school, goes to a different school, goes to SIDE, goes to an engagement centre or alternative.

Hon SUE ELLERY: Okay. I understand what you are asking now. The amount of time that is taken to make a decision is not recorded. The decision, you would appreciate, would be based on the particular circumstances at the time, so some might be done very quickly and some might take a bit longer, but we do not actually record the amount of time that it takes to make that decision.

Hon NICK GOIRAN: Would it be in the best interest of the school community if the decision was made in the shortest period of time possible?

Hon SUE ELLERY: It would depend entirely on the circumstances.

Hon NICK GOIRAN: Are we able to obtain any data to ascertain what is the average period of time that this decision-making process is taking?

Hon SUE ELLERY: I will take it on notice. I will see if we can provide whether there is an average, but given we do not actually record specifically the amount of time it took to make a decision, I expect it will require a manual exercise as to when the notification came in and when the decision was made. I am going to see how much work that will take. From my point of view, the important measure at the this point, given the protocol is so new, is not how much time it takes to make a decision, but, basically, whether we have got the decision right in all of the particular circumstances. The decisions are clearly, though, made prior to any student who has been charged returning to school. So they do not return to school while we are still thinking about what the decision might be. Clearly, the decision is made before they get back to school.

Hon NICK GOIRAN: What education options exist for that student in the interim while the decision-making process is being undertaken?

Hon SUE ELLERY: Again, it will depend entirely on the circumstances and it will depend on how long it looks like it is going to take to make the decision. So a short period out of school with work sent home may be one option. If it looks like it is going to take longer, the department does what it does generally with students who might for a whole range of reasons, not just related to whether or not they have been charged with one of these offences, so it will depend entirely on the circumstances.

Hon NICK GOIRAN: All right. Can we take on notice, then, what is the shortest period of time in which a decision was reached, what was the longest and what is the average?

Hon SUE ELLERY: I will take it on notice, but I am going to add the caveat—because it will have to be done manually—that if in fact I receive advice that it is going to take up too many resources to actually do that piece of work, then I may not provide you with that information.

The CHAIR: That is all still part of A10, noting the caveat about the resources.

Hon NICK GOIRAN: Minister, I note that in the RAMP template, in particular at page 3, if a student reoffends on a school site, it is noted as a major risk, with the specific risk being management of critical incident, and the listed customised strategy to mitigate the risk is, and I quote, “follow the ECIM”. Would you be willing to—and I am sure if you are willing to do it, you would need to take it on notice—table the ECIM or a template of the ECIM?

Hon SUE ELLERY: Yes, we will take it on notice with the caveat that if I am able to, I will.

[Supplementary Information No A11.]

[11.30 am]

The CHAIR: Of course, minister, you have a range of mechanisms available to you regarding the status of those documents as well. Let us move on to Hon Matthew Swinbourn.

Hon MATTHEW SWINBOURN: My question relates to page 13 and specifically point 15 regarding new primary schools. As the minister would be aware, there is continuing enrolment pressure on Woodland Grove Primary School in the Byford region. Has the minister got the right page? It is page 318, point 15, which talks about the construction of new permanent facilities. As I say, my question relates to the building of the new Byford south primary school. My understanding is that it is required because of the growing pressure happening in the Byford area. I think there is a particular issue with the enrolment numbers at Woodland Grove Primary School—the number of demountable classrooms and those sorts of things. I might add that this has been an important issue that constituents in that area, particularly teachers in the surrounding schools, have raised with me—the growing pressures there. I am interested in an update of the progress of the building of the new Byford south primary school.

Hon SUE ELLERY: The school is due to open next year. It will open with the base capacity of 540 students and \$19 million is being spent on that project. It will have a dental therapy centre adjoined to the admin block, a library resource centre, an early childhood teaching block and a covered assembly area and music room, in addition to the general teaching blocks and other facilities. As the member has noted, that particular area of the south east of the metropolitan area is growing rapidly. Literally every time I drive there, new houses are up, so it is important for us to manage those enrolment pressures well.

In addition to money for Byford south, we have invested a total of \$452.8 million in 2019–20 to either build new schools or expand existing ones to meet student enrolment growth across the state. That includes an extra \$21 million for acquisition of land. Further to this, one of our election commitments was that I work with the Minister for Planning to identify a better model for predicting new school growth and infill areas, so that work is underway as well. We held a workshop sort of thing between the two ministerial offices with the relevant agency people there as well. One of the bits of work included in that applies less to those outer suburbs, but we also need to get it right around infill. I think the model previously was all around new developments and new houses with young families. I do not think we have got right yet the capacity to model properly for where you have mixed density. It is now the case that people are raising young families in apartments. That was unusual for Western Australia before. It used to be the kind of young barista hipsters—if I can call them that—that lived in infill apartments. I mean no disrespect to either hipsters or baristas. But it is now the case that in fact young families are being raised in those higher density areas, so

we need to take account of that as well. But the rapid growth, particularly in that south east metropolitan area, is something that we need to take account of.

Hon MATTHEW SWINBOURN: Just a follow-up to that, do we know if the school leaders have been appointed to the new Byford south primary school?

Hon SUE ELLERY: They will have been by now. The school is due to open in February next year. I am advised they will be ready to start at the beginning of next semester.

Hon MATTHEW SWINBOURN: I notice in this line item here, and I think you have covered it to some degree, but I make the point that a lot of these new schools are being built in my electorate of East Metropolitan Region. I would say it is, but I want the advice of the department on whether it is a particular pressure area for this population growth and the need for new facilities.

Hon SUE ELLERY: That outer ring of the metropolitan area, whether it is north, south or east, is where there is significant growth. I think that that area around Byford is going gangbusters. There is no question that that is an area of significant growth, but, equally, in the south—in my electorate, for example—if you go around Piara Waters and Harrisdale, that is massive and that is on the eastern side of the south metro, but equally, go north as well, where there are pockets too.

Hon COLIN TINCKNELL: First of all, if you could turn to page 316, I have some questions regarding FTEs in primary schools. It is under “Employees (Full-Time Equivalents)” in the public primary education table. You will notice that between the 2018–19 budget and the actual in 2018–19 there is quite a bit of a difference. What is the reason for this? There is an amount of 24 066 in 2018–19 and the actual was 23 737.

Hon SUE ELLERY: There is a decrease in the reduction of the state government’s—I want to make sure we are talking about the same thing.

Hon COLIN TINCKNELL: Yes, a decrease, that is right—just a slight decrease.

Hon SUE ELLERY: The net cost of service—is that what you are looking at? I cannot read this properly.

Hon COLIN TINCKNELL: No, a slight decrease in the primary school FTEs across the forward estimates.

Hon SUE ELLERY: I will get Mr Peckitt to provide you with a response.

Mr Peckitt: As part of the budget process each year, we set an estimate of what the FTEs are likely to be based on enrolment growth, but with our funding model for schools, they have flexibility to use their funds between salaries and non-salaries. As it is only an estimate, these numbers are more accurate and reflect that schools have made local decisions about using their funds in different ways.

Hon COLIN TINCKNELL: We will move to page 318. I note point 6 about the \$50 million investment in John Forrest Secondary College. Could the minister advise on what those facilities are?

Hon SUE ELLERY: Yes, I will. I will get Mr Fischer to talk about that in a minute. I make the point that I visited John Forrest when we were in opposition. The school is the same age as me —

The CHAIR: Pretty old then.

Hon SUE ELLERY: Very young, thank you! I noted particularly in the D&T area that there were literally the same wooden kind of workbenches—they looked to me like they were put there in 1962, which was a great year, and they were still there, so I was keen to make sure we gave that school an upgrade. I will get Mr Fischer to spell out what that \$50 million for John Forrest will buy.

Mr Fischer: I do not have all the details, but it certainly provides for major refurbishment and rebuild of the facilities there. It keeps the enrolment similar to what it currently has, but, as the minister

said, the functionality of this school compared to what is provided in new schools is significantly different. We will upgrade this school so it has the same sort of functionality so that its provision for curricular and support service for students and staff reflect what is provided in schools today.

Hon SUE ELLERY: If it is helpful to the member, I can get you a more detailed list of what that \$50 million will actually purchase.

Hon COLIN TINCKNELL: It is a lot of money and I would like to know what it would cover.

[Supplementary Information No A12.]

[11.40 am]

Hon COLIN TINCKNELL: Thank you, minister. My last question is on page 319, point 33—the page opposite—we are talking about \$154 million regarding investment building on other primary schools. I am asking whether the new primary school sites have been identified—that is number one—and, if they have been, what would be the cost breakdown for each?

Hon SUE ELLERY: We will not yet have announced all primary schools to be captured in that amount of money. But I might get Mr Fischer to provide you with some more information about that \$154.9 million.

Mr Fischer: The budget provides for new primary schools right through the budget period. Roughly about four primary schools a year are provided for in the budget, and then these announcements are recorded in the budget in detail. The \$154.9 million refers to the money to the period for schools that have yet to be announced—that is for 2022, 2023 and 2024. There will be money spent on those schools in that period to develop those. Each year, the department undertakes an enrolment assessment to identify where the growth is occurring and where the need for new primary schools is required, and that information is then presented to government to make a decision about and to announce those schools that will be required. We monitor hotspots from around the whole state where there is significant pressure being put on existing schools or where there is development occurring, and then the analysis from that information will provide the best advice for where schools should be built. But that is generally announced two years prior to the school being opened. In the budget, at the moment, there are details of the schools that will open through to 2021, and we would anticipate at the end of this year there would be an announcement about this new primary schools that would open in 2022.

Hon COLIN TINCKNELL: So, you have not identified them yet?

Hon SUE ELLERY: No. The normal practice is that the government will announce the new schools closer to the actual time.

Hon KYLE MCGINN: Obviously, coming from a mining and pastoral electorate, there will be no surprises that these questions will be around regional education. In reference to page 320, point 43, regarding the provision of \$9.5 million for administration upgrades, library resource centres, toilet upgrades and replacements and covered assemblies, can the minister please provide an update on this investment and how this will be benefitting regional WA?

Hon SUE ELLERY: Yes, I can. Thank you for the question. In addition to the conversation I had earlier with another member about upgrades, later today I will be announcing the next tranche of investment upgrades at older WA public schools, and that includes in the regions as well. Of that money, that will be \$6.7 million for administration upgrades, \$2.1 million for toilet upgrades and \$510 000 for covered assembly areas. Twenty-six schools have been selected to receive that money in 2019–20. A significant number of those schools—I am seeing if I have got the number. I think I might have it. A significant number of those schools are in regional WA. Just let me check. Thirteen

of the 26 are in regional Western Australia, and O'Connor Primary School in your electorate, is one of those; it is going to receive an \$80 000 allocation out of that money. It is the case that some of our schools across Western Australia are ageing. It is important that a regular maintenance upgrade includes toilets and admin buildings. I am pleased that later today we will announce the full list of schools getting that allocation.

Hon ALISON XAMON: Can I please move to page 327, "Details of Administered Transactions", "Expenses", "Students at Risk", and I ask: how is this funding allocated and what criteria is being used; and, where is it being allocated?

Hon SUE ELLERY: Yes, I can see it. It covers two grants made to Catholic Education WA and AISWA—the independent schools—to assist them to provide support for students at educational risk. The Catholic Education retention and participation program is what they use that money for—that is with improving educational outcomes for students at risk, providing some support to care schools, increasing educational attainment and engagement of Aboriginal and refugee students, and successfully transitioning students at risk into further education training and employment. The AISWA care project includes providing curriculum support service to independent schools in respect to teaching and learning strategies for students at risk, strategies to meet the needs of students at risk in independent schools and focusing strongly on a group of independent schools comprising the compact for re-engagement in education. AISWA received \$753 000 and Catholic Ed received \$520 000. The AISWA funding includes \$150 000 for psychology in care schools, and the Catholic Education funding includes \$150 000 for Catholic Ed to fund a psych in the Kimberley region.

Hon ALISON XAMON: Can I ask why is the amount that is budgeted for this year, and, indeed, in the forward estimates, less than the 2017–18 actual?

Hon SUE ELLERY: Good question. I will ask Mr Peckitt to provide you with a response.

Mr Peckitt: The actual figure includes a one-off increase to one of the grants. As part of the agreement, there was the ability to provide indexation for that year, which was provided, but it is no longer included in their future agreement.

Hon ALISON XAMON: Thank you. I refer to page 313, "Significant Issues Impacting the Agency", specifically point 11, regarding the management of student attendance. My questions are also informed by the "Setting the Stage for Improvement: Department of Education's Management of Student Attendance" report and the recommendations arising from that. What I wanted to know is that recommendation 2 had talked about the need to have pilot programs encouraging greater input from parents and communities to address student non-attendance, and I wanted to know whether any pilot programs have been funded in accordance with that recommendation; and, if yes, where?

Hon SUE ELLERY: The department has initiated a full review of its approach to attendance in response to the Public Accounts Committee report. I just want to make sure we are talking about the same report. I will give you some information and then perhaps to save the committee's time I might take it on notice. In any event, the most important piece of work, I think, is that the department has initiated our own review of our approach to attendance, and that will take into account all of the matters that were raised in a recent coronial inquiry, the Ombudsman inquiries, the royal commissions, and that Public Accounts Committee report.

[11.50 am]

Hon ALISON XAMON: I have several parts this question, so maybe what I would suggest is that rather than take this on notice, I am happy to reframe the questions and to put them on notice after the hearing if that would help to facilitate the final minutes. In that case, I have one small question, if that is okay, before we move to Hon Donna Faragher. I refer to page 324, "Details of Controlled

Grants and Subsidies” and the fourth line item “Other”. What is the nature of this item and why is it decreasing by so much?

Hon SUE ELLERY: Good question. Mr Peckitt will provide you with the response.

Mr Peckitt: The main reason for that reduction is that some items that were previously captured as grants have been moved under another line item for service agreements. For example, child and parent centres were previously captured as grants and they are now captured in another line item. So there has been no reduction; it is really a line item change.

Hon ALISON XAMON: Is it possible for me to take on notice just a breakdown of the primary changes that have occurred with the way that line item has been dealt with?

Hon SUE ELLERY: We can take that on notice.

[Supplementary Information No A13.]

Hon DONNA FARAGHER: I refer to page 316, under “Services and Key Efficiency Indicators”, and both “Public Primary Education” and “Public Secondary Education”. Perhaps I am going to ask the question in the context of public secondary education, because I am not quite sure where it is, as it is not specifically identified, but it is in and around agricultural colleges. I hope the minister will take the questions in and around that section.

Hon SUE ELLERY: Sure.

Hon DONNA FARAGHER: Is there a review currently underway with regard to agricultural curriculum that is delivered in agricultural colleges?

Hon SUE ELLERY: I am advised that SCSA has a normal cycle of review of various elements of curriculum and that is what is going on now. I will get Juanita Healy to provide you with some more information.

Ms Healy: As the minister has outlined, the School Curriculum and Standards Authority has a yearly cycle of reviewing senior secondary courses. That cycle is based on feedback from teachers, examination of performance data and examination data. The two senior secondary courses related to agricultural education, animals and plant systems, are being reviewed this year.

Hon DONNA FARAGHER: So, that review is being undertaken by SCSA and the answer to that is yes.

Ms Healy: Correct.

Hon DONNA FARAGHER: Is it anticipated that the results of the review or any recommendations will be in place for the next school year?

Ms Healy: The review has just commenced, so we have curriculum advisory committees that are made up of stakeholders—teachers, people from community, industry, university. The curriculum advisory committee for those two courses have provided our board with feedback and I think the board will go out to broader consultation from the teaching community. Cutting back to your first question, no, they will not be in place for next year. We are in the consultation process at the moment.

Hon DONNA FARAGHER: I might come back to that in a moment, but given the time, I have another question. I am not quite sure whether the minister might be able to answer this, but it is in relation to the agricultural education farm provisions trust fund. Obviously, that was part of the budget repair measures that the minister announced with regard to the additional dividend. I appreciate this would fluctuate, because it depends on how much income is derived from the agricultural colleges, but does the minister have an understanding as to how much additional funds are expected to be received through that additional take that the government is now implementing?

Hon SUE ELLERY: I cannot give you an answer on that now. I would not have it in front of me now, but I am happy to take it on notice and if I am able to provide you with more detail, I will.

Hon DONNA FARAGHER: Thank you, and on that, and again, this might need to be taken on notice, in the context of the funding withdrawals from the trust, is it done on an annual basis or is it done monthly in line with the contributions that are made by the agricultural colleges?

Hon SUE ELLERY: Good question. I will provide you with that detail, if I am able to, in the one that we just said we would take on notice.

Hon DONNA FARAGHER: Thank you; I appreciate that.

[Supplementary Information A14.]

Hon DONNA FARAGHER: Just going back then to the curriculum and agricultural colleges, not so much the review that has just been referred to, within the department, are there officers who are specifically assigned to curriculum support and development, and general assistance to agricultural colleges?

Hon SUE ELLERY: I will ask Mr Hale to provide you with a response.

Mr Hale: We have a small team in statewide services that provides support to all the agricultural colleges. Some of that is business support and so on, but there is also now—this is the advantage I think of it having moved to statewide services—a curriculum support component to that. A lot of that is about integrating other opportunities from across our curriculum support areas in ways that apply in agricultural education. For example, we have massive initiatives currently in STEM and this has a much stronger conduit now between those programs and the agricultural colleges, because, obviously, the agricultural industry is heavily engaged in a whole range of STEM-related activities. There is also an effort simultaneously in the other direction which is to support other schools also to provide better understandings about agricultural education—for instance, source of food and food production—across the curriculum as well.

Hon DONNA FARAGHER: Am I able to get a breakdown of the officers and their roles within the small team that you referred to?

Hon SUE ELLERY: We can take that on notice.

[Supplementary Information A15.]

Hon DONNA FARAGHER: With regard to that small team, to use your words, notwithstanding the fact that they might work in the context of other mainstream curriculum, if I can put that way, are they specifically targeted to working on matters surrounding agricultural colleges and agricultural education or do they have other roles outside of that?

Hon SUE ELLERY: I will get Mr Hale to provide you with some information about that, but I might just say that Minister MacTiernan and myself have undertaken to work more closely together on agricultural education across the board to make it less segregated, so I expect we will have more to say about that in the future.

Mr Hale: We will have to confirm this for you to give you a broader picture. When I say “a small team”, there are only a couple of dedicated people, as I understand it, one in the business area and one in the curriculum area; however, they are part of the broader curriculum team, so there is a director who has oversight, there is a manager who has oversight and their work is connected across the curriculum area. It is a little hard to put a number on the people who would be engaged from time to time with supporting agricultural education.

Hon DONNA FARAGHER: Thank you, I accept your response there. Perhaps if it is two dedicated officers or three, that is really what I want to know. How many officers are solely dedicated to matters surrounding agricultural colleges and agricultural education, and what is their job description? I think that would help. On that, in previous years were there more officers dedicated to matters surrounding agricultural education?

Hon SUE ELLERY: It might be helpful if in the answer we provide you a more fulsome explanation of how agricultural education is supported, and then if you have follow-up questions from that, I am happy to pursue them.

Hon DONNA FARAGHER: I think that would be a useful way to go.

The CHAIR: We will note all of that as A15.

Hon DONNA FARAGHER: I refer to page 313 and the eleventh item about student attendance. Again, I am happy for the minister to take this notice, but I am keen to get a more fulsome response about where the further work is being undertaken by the department in terms of their implementation of the recommendations of that report. I expect that would be one to take on notice.

Hon SUE ELLERY: I will take it on notice. I make the point as well that part of the department's review, which I referred to earlier, is engaging with the Telethon Kids Institute as well, because they have done significant work on attendance and the impact it has. We will provide you with a bigger picture about what is going on with respect to attendance.

Hon DONNA FARAGHER: I refer to attendance. My question is quite specific. I noted this in my reply to the budget speech and I appreciate I have not had the opportunity to speak to the minister about it, but the Hedland attendance strategy has been showing some very positive results. I understand they have funding until the end of term 2 for the provision of their bus. I am happy for the minister to take this on notice, but I would be keen to see whether there are opportunities for a continuation of that service.

Hon SUE ELLERY: We are going to find a way to make that continue, so we are working with the other agencies as well to find the money to make it happen.

The CHAIR: On behalf of the committee, I thank you for your attendance today. Can I have a bit of quiet, please. That is a school thing; that was a school reference, Hansard; I held up my hand! The committee will forward the transcript of evidence, which includes the questions you have taken on notice highlighted on the transcript, within seven days of the hearing. If members have any unasked questions, please submit them via the ELS by 5.00 pm, Friday, 28 June. Responses to these questions and any questions taken on notice today are due by 5.00 pm, Friday, 26 July. Should you be unable to meet this deadline, please advise the committee in writing as soon as possible before the due date. The advice is to include specific reasons as to why the due date cannot be met. Once again, I thank you for your attendance today.

Members, we will reconvene at 1.00 pm with the Department of the Premier and Cabinet.

Hearing concluded at 12.02 pm
