



EDUCATION AND HEALTH STANDING COMMITTEE

MEDIA RELEASE

From: Ms J.M. Freeman, MLA, Chair
To: ALL MEDIA
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SCHOOLS LEFT TO THEIR OWN DEVICES

The absence of an ICT Vision Statement for the past three years has left secondary schools without fundamental guidance on how to implement digital technologies, the committee's inquiry into Digital Innovation in Secondary Education has found.

The Department of Education had an ICT Vision Statement that expired in 2016, but this only addressed infrastructure. The Department has acknowledged that its vision should encompass teaching practices and learning outcomes, but the document has still not been released.

The committee's inquiry report, *A better connected future: Opportunities for digital innovation in secondary education*, tabled in the Legislative Assembly today, contains 21 findings and 11 recommendations.

The inquiry found that digital technology had improved engagement and attendance at some schools. Particular types of technology, such as virtual reality, were considered to be particularly suited to the way Aboriginal students learn.

Digital technology can also assist students with a disability and with learning difficulties, but the extent to which it is used is unclear. The committee recommended that all students with special needs, including those who are gifted or are socially disadvantaged, be provided with digital technologies that can assist them to achieve at their full potential.

Some technologies require a substantial amount of bandwidth and the committee welcomes the State Government's recent announcement to increase bandwidth to 500 schools. However, bandwidth allocation requires further review in view of the much higher amounts some other Australian jurisdictions are providing schools.

The committee was concerned that some schools that have been supplementing their bandwidth allocation with a purchased service may not be receiving value-for-money, recommending the Department of Education review schools' contractual arrangements with internet retailers.

Copies of the report are available on the Committee's webpage, www.parliament.wa.gov.au/ehsc (under the 'Reports' tab).

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