

SCHOOLS — “LET’S TAKE A STAND TOGETHER” ACTION PLAN

515. Hon COLIN TINCKNELL to the Minister for Education and Training:

I refer to the “Let’s Take A Stand Together” action plan. The plan refers to providing better support and advice for public school staff and advocates a consultative approach.

Can the minister please advise whether or not the government is listening right now and learning from the overwhelming community support for teachers who are unfortunate enough to find themselves in a position of having to act against aggressive behaviour; and, if so —

- (a) will the minister please advise what actions are reasonably expected of education staff in dealing with violence, as per action 4 of the “Let’s Take A Stand Together” action plan;
- (b) can the minister advise what is currently being done to achieve all 10 actions of the action plan; and
- (c) can the minister advise, for actions 1 and 2 of the action plan, how many exclusion orders have been made to the director general of the Department of Education, as well as the number of exclusion orders that have actually been approved since the action plan’s inception?

Hon SUE ELLERY replied:

This is an excellent question and I have an excellent answer, but because part (b) of the question asks what we are doing against each of the 10 actions, if I were to read it all out, it would take a long time. So I will give the member the bits that I can, and then I will ask that the answer to part (b) be incorporated into *Hansard*; otherwise, it will take up too much time.

The government has listened, is listening and will continue to listen to teachers and school communities.

- (a) The actions required of staff when students engage in aggressive or violent behaviour are clearly described in “Physical Contact With Students”, which I tabled on 11 April 2019.
- (b) This is the bit that I seek leave to have incorporated into *Hansard*.

Leave granted.

The following material was incorporated —

- (b) To achieve the 10 points of the plan the following actions are being undertaken:
 1. *Principals to suspend students who attack other students or start fights*
From the start of Term 1, 2019, principals have been directed to automatically suspend students who intentionally attack, or instigate a fight with, another student, or film fighting between students.
 2. *Principals to automatically move to exclude any student who physically attacks school staff*
From the start of Term 1, 2019, principals have been instructed to automatically move to exclude any student who physically attacks school staff.
 3. *New alternative learning settings for the most violent students*
Three pilot alternative learning settings have been established, located in the North Metropolitan, South Metropolitan and Southwest education regions. The program delivered in these settings is designed to restore students’ behaviour so they can safely return to school.
 4. *Clear advice for principals, teachers and education assistants on authority and responsibility to take action*
This advice has been provided to all staff through the two documents *Physical contact with students* and *Responding to fights between students*.
 5. *Provide training and support for school staff*
As a first step from 2019, there is mandatory training for every graduate teacher employed in a public school on how to de-escalate and manage aggressive behaviour.
 6. *New ‘good standing’ requirements to be added to school behaviour policies*
All schools have been provided with information on how to include good standing into their school behaviour policy.
 7. *Free parenting program for parents of young children*
The Triple P – Positive Parenting Program continues to be offered free to all Western Australian parents of Kindergarten children. During 2018, the Positive Parenting Program Stay Positive Campaign ran with a strong focus on parents and carers of Kindergarten children. Two hundred and eighty-one sessions were advertised and parent participation increased by 61 per cent from Semester 1 to Semester 2.
 8. *Review critical incident reporting and monitoring*
A police liaison officer is being appointed and will be based in the Department of Education’s central office to support response, management and followup of critical incidents involving violence. In addition, consultation has commenced with Western Australia Police Force to station a Department of Education officer at the Police Command Centre, to better connect principals with police despatch when critical incidents occur.

9. *Spark a community conversation about violence in schools – with community leaders and others*
Focus groups with young people, parents and stakeholders have been held and resources for parents, students and principals are being developed.
10. *A Premier's Youth Forum* was held at Ellenbrook Secondary College on 19 November 2018, attended by 18 students from both public and non-government schools, including several young people from a local youth organisation.
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Point of Order

Hon NICK GOIRAN: I just make the observation that standing order 106 says that answers to questions shall be concise and relevant. I say this in the same breath as I say that I recognise that this is not my question; and, if the member wants this information, I am quite happy to support him. I do not think we need to be embarking on a process regularly whereby ministers ask to have their answers incorporated into *Hansard*, which I, as another member who does not receive it, do not get the opportunity to hear.

The PRESIDENT: I have noted that a significant number of excessively long questions that require an enormous amount of detail have been asked during this session. I think, on occasion, that has led a number of ministers to seek to incorporate all the answers into *Hansard* rather than taking up the whole of question time, which might then deny other members an opportunity. Nothing prevents any other member from asking for a copy of an answer to a question.

Questions without Notice Resumed

Hon SUE ELLERY: Madam President, I make the point to the house that I try to ensure that there is enough time for everybody to get a question.

The answer continues —

- (c) Since the commencement of the 2019 school year, 34 recommendations for exclusion have been made to 14 May 2019. Of these, 24 students have been excluded, five students have not been excluded, two recommendations were withdrawn and three recommendations are pending.