

PUBLIC SCHOOLS REVIEW — SINGLE APPROACH

Statement by Minister for Education and Training

HON SUE ELLERY (South Metropolitan — Minister for Education and Training) [9.02 am]: I am pleased to advise the house that from next financial year, there will be a single approach to school review for all public schools in this state, including independent public schools. The McGowan Labor government is putting in place a robust regime to provide assurance to the minister of the day, the director general of the Department of Education and the community of Western Australia—parents, students and the general public—that every public school is operating effectively. School systems around the world have processes for ensuring that each of their schools is delivering a high-quality education. These processes usually include both self-assessment and some form of external assessment. The balance between the two varies from system to system. The Western Australian public school system has a history of school review dating back to the Labor government in 1990. The Expert Review Group was introduced in 2008, again under a Labor government, to focus on school performance and improvement strategies. Reviews of independent public schools every three years were introduced in 2012 under the previous government.

Under our new approach, there will be consistent and equitable access to a single system of review, feedback and improvement for all public schools. It will incorporate rigorous self-assessment, appropriate analysis of data and sound judgements about performance strengths and weaknesses. It will provide an opportunity for staff and the community to give feedback on their school's effectiveness. The proposed approach will be examined by a reputable education research organisation to measure quality assurance of the process against best-practice principles. While each review will be tailored to suit the context of the school, all reviews will focus on those aspects of school performance defined in the research literature as being central to school effectiveness, being student achievement and progress; high-quality teaching; strong school leadership; a safe and supportive learning environment; effective school relationships; and good resource management. Summary reports of each review will be included on each school's website.

A single approach to school review will also be more cost-effective. At a time when the government is making extensive efforts to repair the state budget, this must be a consideration. The government's focus on school review is part of its agenda to further improve public education across this state and deliver the best possible outcomes for students.