

**Division 24: Education — International Education —**

[7.30 pm]

Mr P. Lilburne, Chair.

Mr D.A. Templeman, Minister for International Education.

Ms L. Rodgers, Director General, Department of Education.

Ms J. Healy, Executive Director, School Curriculum and Standards Authority.

Ms P. Moss, Director.

Ms R. Trotter, Acting Chief Finance Officer.

Ms P. Beamish Burton, Executive Director, Finance.

Ms K. Kelleher, Acting Executive Director, Service Delivery.

Mr R. Sansalone, Chief Financial Officer.

Ms S. Spencer, Deputy Director General.

Mr A. King, Executive Director, Strategic Policy.

Ms M. Shimmin, Program Director.

Ms R. Brown, Director General, Department of Jobs, Tourism, Science and Innovation.

Ms K. Ho, Director General, Department of Training and Workforce Development.

**The CHAIR:** Minister, is it the same advisers?

**Mr D.A. TEMPLEMAN:** Yes, we have the same advisers; there is no change.

**The CHAIR:** All right. I have a statement to make.

The estimates committees will be reported by Hansard and the daily proof will be available online as soon as possible within two business days. The chair will allow as many questions as possible. Questions and answers should be short and to the point. That is probably something you should be mindful of as well, minister! Consideration is restricted to items for which a vote of money is proposed in the consolidated account. Questions must relate to a page number, item or amount related to the current division, and members should preface their questions with those details. Some divisions are the responsibility of more than one minister. Ministers shall be examined only in relation to their portfolio responsibilities.

A minister may agree to provide supplementary information to the committee. I will ask the minister to clearly indicate what information they agree to provide and will then allocate a reference number. Supplementary information should be provided to the principal clerk by noon on Friday, 31 May 2024. If a minister suggests that a matter be put on notice, members should use the online questions on notice system to submit their questions.

I give the call to the member for Roe.

**Mr P.J. RUNDLE:** I refer to page 359 of volume 1 of budget paper No 2 and support to the School Curriculum and Standards Authority. About halfway down the page, paragraph 2 states —

The higher levels of income in the 2023–24 Budget and 2024–25 Budget reflect the continued expansion of the International Education Program.

The income forecast has been revised down due to phased commencement in the number of overseas schools implementing the Western Australian curriculum. Could the minister explain that to me? That has obviously been revised down. How many students or schools have been revised downwards in relation to that?

**Mr D.A. TEMPLEMAN:** I thank the member for the question. Obviously, the School Curriculum and Standards Authority has been in place for 37 years, as the member will probably be aware. As of 13 March 2024, 49 overseas schools were approved to implement WA curriculum programs. As of 8 March 2024, there were 1 919 student registrations in the authority's student information system from approved overseas schools under the IEP expansion. Obviously, that breakdown includes registrations in kindergarten to year 10 and years 11 and 12. As of 8 March, the authority was projecting a further 1 575 student registrations in 2023–24 before the end of June this year. There is corresponding information regarding fee collection.

I think the key point here is that this is a carefully phased program that ensures that capacity is delivered, or we are conscious of the capacity of implementation. I will ask Juanita whether she would like to make further comment on that question.

**Ms J. Healy:** As the minister explained, the School Curriculum and Standards Authority has offered licensing of the WA curriculum from kindergarten to year 12 since 37 years ago. Sunway College in Malaysia was our first school, and that school is still with us. We have had a phased expansion. At the moment, we have schools in about 15 countries, including Bangladesh, Cambodia, China, India, Indonesia, Japan, Malaysia, Mauritius, Singapore, South Korea, Sri Lanka, Thailand, Türkiye and Vietnam, as the minister shared before, with students from kindergarten to year 12. The students in senior secondary and years 11 and 12 undertake exactly the same courses as our students onshore here in WA. They sit the same ATAR course examinations with the same moderation processes. Our kindergarten to year 10 students also use the Western Australian curriculum. Our curriculum is highly valued offshore, and that has been recognised through receiving foreign equivalence in about five countries, including Bangladesh, India, Pakistan and Türkiye, where they formally acknowledge the Western Australian curriculum, which obviously gives their students flexibility to come onshore here to our local universities, but the qualifications are also recognised by their local universities.

**Mr P.J. RUNDLE:** The minister might be interested to know that when I went to China on a trip with former Speaker Peter Watson, we actually went to one of the schools that provides the WA curriculum. We got dragged up onto the stage to talk about all sorts of things! It was really interesting to me that the students at that school were actually studying the Western Australian ATAR courses.

My question is: how many staff or FTEs in SCSA or the department in general are involved in administering that program, and is there any way of identifying flow-on effects? Do those students usually eventually come to university in Western Australia? Are there any key performance indicators for that?

**The CHAIR:** Minister, there are three questions there, but I am sure you can handle it.

**Mr D.A. TEMPLEMAN:** Yes. I will make some general comments, and then I might ask the relevant officer to give us some information on staffing numbers, or it might already be magically appearing before me.

There are 13 FTE in SCSA. We can mention the Western Australian Certificate of Education bursary. The most recent figures are that there were 36 applications. Obviously, there is a process that assesses the eligibility of applications. Of those 36 applications, seven were deemed eligible, three applicants received bursary funding and the remaining four applicants' payments are currently being paid as of this week.

To answer the question about the legacy of students studying the Western Australian curriculum and what that means for the potential pipeline of students coming to Australia and particularly to Western Australia, obviously, because it is a Western Australian-identified curriculum, those pathways or connections are very strong. I think that the member was almost asking whether we track numbers. I know that, as an example, the relationship with Sunway College in Malaysia goes back over 30 years. It is a fact that the Western Australian curriculum has been very prominently delivered there. We quite often see students from Malaysia, for example, ultimately seeking to further their studies in Western Australia. Of course, the power of the alumni is forever present and cannot be overestimated, whether they be people who have experienced or studied the Western Australian curriculum and/or ultimately ended up studying in Western Australia. They are the best sellers of the state and, indeed, an important connector for visitors to the state through friends and family. I can assure the member that the benefits are huge. The member has probably already noted the suite of countries that Juanita highlighted. They are strategic to the Western Australian market. A huge raft of them are our neighbours to the north and into the gulf, but we are experiencing interest from other entities, and those assessments are done by staff. We should be very proud of the School Curriculum and Standards Authority's reach and operation. As Juanita said, the Western Australian curriculum is very highly valued and respected.

[7.40 pm]

**Mr P.J. RUNDLE:** Thank you, minister. Is there any tracing or tracking of those students?

**Mr D.A. TEMPLEMAN:** I will get Juanita to respond.

**Ms J. Healy:** We have commenced. As the minister said, we have been working closely with team WA and with our universities, training colleagues and registered training providers to commence looking at the onshore conversion. We also have a range of SCSA associates who have been verified by the School Curriculum and Standards Authority board and with whom we work very closely. Part of their job in working with us and with interested schools to implement the curriculum is working towards the conversion of those students onshore into our universities. We have commenced the development of that. We have about seven active SCSA associates at the moment and that is also a key part of their role when interested schools approach them and then go through to our board to be endorsed.

**The appropriation was recommended.**