

STUDENTS — OECD ASSESSMENTS

153. Mr P. PAPALIA to the Minister for Education and Training:

Can the minister please outline to the house the performance of Western Australian school students in the recent Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development assessments?

Mr M. McGOWAN replied:

I can. It is important to remind members and the public of Western Australia of how well our students in this state are doing when compared with students in other states and countries. Last year, the OECD conducted a survey of 400 000 15-year-old students around the world, in which it compared the results and did an analysis in the areas of science, reading and mathematics. Western Australia was part of that survey. When compared with all the OECD countries around the world, Western Australia came third in science, sixth in reading and sixth in mathematics. These are our 15-year-old students—both public and private—who have completed most of their schooling. Western Australia defeated in each of those subject areas the United Kingdom, Germany, Denmark, Sweden, Norway, the United States, Japan and Switzerland, as well as a host of other countries. Western Australia also did better in each of those subject areas than every other state in Australia. I wanted to put that on the record so that people in this state will understand how well our schools and our students are doing. Members opposite might like to consider that before they start denigrating our school system.