

JOHN CURTIN COLLEGE OF THE ARTS — HEALTH AND SAFETY ISSUES

272. Mr P. PAPALIA to the Premier:

The Premier just told me to read the letter. I respond to that incredible attack on that principal who is the principal of an independent public school and who has spent the last 18 months in extensive consultation with the Department of Education that identified John Curtin College of the Arts as number one on the list of secondary schools most in need of significant renovation and developed a master plan for future buildings. In that letter to the parents, which the Premier has not responded to, the principal wrote that those issues —

... place the health and safety of our staff and your children at risk and also prevent —

Point of Order

Mr R.F. JOHNSON: Mr Speaker, that is by no means a supplementary question.

The SPEAKER: Member for Warnbro, I am being very lenient. There is to be no preamble whatsoever. If there is a question you wish to ask, I will give you the opportunity. I do not want to hear anything further.

Questions without Notice Resumed

Mr P. PAPALIA: What will the Premier do today to protect the health and safety of the children at John Curtin College of the Arts?

Mr C.J. BARNETT replied:

I think I just read out a detailed list of the work that has been done, but I will say this: if there are issues that put the safety of children at direct risk —

Several members interjected.

Mr C.J. BARNETT: If there are issues that put students or staff at direct risk —

Mr P. Papalia: You made him runner-up principal of the year, he must be pretty good.

Mr C.J. BARNETT: This question time is a waste of time, honestly. I am willing to take the question seriously, but no-one is interested. I can understand why you're not interested, coming from him. Opposition members are just a farce. We saw it last week on LEARN when they did no homework—shallow.

Mr P. Papalia: It is an IPS. He is runner-up principal of the year; take some notice of him.

The SPEAKER: Member for Warnbro, I have given you the opportunity to ask a supplementary question. Other members in this place might help the process if they did not interject post that supplementary question being asked. I am sure the member for Warnbro is interested in an answer, and from what is being indicated to me, the Premier is interested in providing an answer to that supplementary question. I do not want to hear from any other member in this place, no other member whatsoever.

Ms R. Saffioti interjected.

The SPEAKER: I give the Premier the call, member for West Swan.

Mr C.J. BARNETT: I have summarised the work that has been done at that school. I clearly recognise that it is an old school and that the layout and the quality of the facilities do not match a modern school, a new school or indeed some of the rebuild schools; there is no dispute about that. The point I make is that the principal may well feel aggrieved that his school did not get funding, but it is not open to a principal to write in those terms to parents. It is the responsibility of a principal to take those concerns to the Director General of Education.

Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER: Members!

Mr C.J. BARNETT: That is his responsibility. I was education minister for five years, and I have a pretty good feeling about the way in which the director general and senior people in the administration of the department should behave. If there are issues —

Mrs M.H. Roberts: There are.

Mr C.J. BARNETT: The opposition does not know that. The opposition was not right on LEARN, so let us just a step back a minute.

If there are direct safety issues for staff or students, the department will address those. I think they probably have been addressed. That is not saying that the school does not, at some stage, need a total redevelopment; it clearly does. I know the school. Students in my electorate attend that school from North Fremantle; therefore, I take the

issue seriously. But I just regret that the principal behaved in this way rather than dealing with it in a professional way through the department.

Mr M. McGowan interjected.

The SPEAKER: Leader of the Opposition! Member for South Perth.

Mr J.E. McGRATH: Mr Speaker —

Mr M. McGowan interjected.

The SPEAKER: Take a seat, member for South Perth. Leader of the Opposition, I formally call you to order for the first and second time today.

Mr P. Papalia interjected.

The SPEAKER: Member for Warnbro, I formally call you to order for the third time today. I have given the call to the member for South Perth. If the member for Warnbro wants to ask another question, he has the opportunity.