

CORONAVIRUS — SCHOOLS — AIR PURIFIERS

178. Hon Dr STEVE THOMAS to the Minister for Education and Training

I ask this question on behalf of Hon Donna Faragher, who is out of the chamber on urgent parliamentary business.

I refer to the minister's press statement entitled "Western Australian schools to safely open for learning in Term 1" of 25 January 2022, which states that —

... 12,000 air purifiers fitted with high-efficiency particulate air (HEPA) filters are being provided to schools State-wide, where required;

- (1) Have all 12 000 air purifiers been distributed?
- (2) If no to (1), how many air purifiers are awaiting distribution and how many schools are affected?
- (3) Have any schools requested additional air purifiers since the commencement of term 1; and, if yes, how many of those requests been approved?

Hon SUE ELLERY replied:

- (1) There have been 6 272 air purifiers distributed, including to all classrooms assessed as requiring one. An additional 2 100 air purifiers will be allocated to schools to use according to their specific needs. The remaining air purifiers have been reserved for distribution in response to changing climatic conditions—2 000—and for other needs as they arise—1 628—including for exams and testing, an allocation for regional offices and a provision for emergencies.
- (2) Not applicable.
- (3) There have been 223 additional air purifiers provided to schools on request.

I might just add that the ventilation system is based on: natural ventilation is the best; mechanical ventilation after that and then supported ventilation, if I can call it that, with air purifiers as needed. As the climate changes, we might not have windows open. If that is the case, we might need to add air purifiers. We have enough available. The use of them will change over the course of a year.